

Legends of the Chisholm Trail returns this weekend

Special to the Journal

Step back in time and celebrate Belton's rich heritage with a weekend of music, culture, and cowboy traditions at the second annual Legends of the Chisholm Trail event on May 8-9.

This family-friendly event features a campfire, games, and cowboy songs and stories from 6-9 p.m. Friday, May 8, and concludes with a fiddle competition on Saturday, May 9, at the Landing at Creekside Park behind The Gin at Nolan Creek in Belton.

Saturday's line-up includes Texas Buffalo Soldiers, Native American musicians and dancers, and 1st Cavalry Division soldiers comparing 1800s equipment and life to the modern era.

Other Saturday



File Photo

Legends of the Chisholm Trail returns this weekend to the Landing at Creekside Park, beginning Friday evening and continuing all day Saturday.

events include a free Chuckwagon tasting, a fiddle contest, and a STEAM project by the Belton Library.

A mustache contest will be at 2:30 p.m., followed by a separate contest for women and chil-

dren, who are encouraged to bring creative, handmade mustaches.

The event grounds will feature a curated selection of Western and Native American-themed vendors selling unique handmade goods and sou-

venirs.

"Legends of the Chisholm Trail is more than just a festival; it's a tribute to the cowboys, soldiers, and Native Americans who crossed paths

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Stephen Harrigan

Bryan Burrough

Celebrated authors to speak at Spring Lecture Series Finale

Special to the Journal

The Bell County Museum will host the highly anticipated finale of its 2026 Lecture Series on Friday, May 8, featuring two of Texas's most celebrated authors, Stephen Harrigan and Bryan Burrough.

Burrough is a Temple native and graduate of Temple High School.

Between them, Harrigan and Burrough have authored more than twenty books and contributed countless articles to major national publications, including Texas Monthly and Vanity Fair.

Their work has played a significant role in shaping contemporary

See LECTURE, Page A2

Belton ISD honors crossing guard



Courtesy Photo

Marinella Vasquez along with her fellow crossing guards and district staff celebrate the dedication of a crosswalk named in her honor at the intersection of West Avenue D and South Saunders Street in Belton.

Special to the Journal

Belton Independent School District dedicated the Marinella Vasquez Crosswalk on Wednesday, April 29, at the intersection of West Avenue D and South Saunders Street in

Belton, honoring a woman who faithfully served as a crossing guard at that exact location for 27 years.

District leaders, colleagues, students and community members gathered to celebrate Vasquez's lasting impact on the Big

Red Community and the generations of students she safely guided across the street since 1997.

Over her 28-year career, Vasquez grew alongside the district, beginning her service under the City of Belton before transi-

tioning to Belton ISD administration in 1998.

She later served within the Transportation Department and, most recently, became part of the district's Safety and Security Department in August 2024.

Her presence at West Avenue D and South Saunders Street became a constant for families across three generations of Belton Tigers. Known for her warm smile, steady leadership and unwavering commitment to student safety, Vasquez greeted thousands of students with the same level of care and compassion that defined her very first day on the job.

"Mrs. Vasquez represents the very best of Belton ISD," said Felicia Gibson, principal of Southwest Elementary. "For our Southwest Elementary students and families, she has been a constant, greeting them each day with care, consistency and a smile. Her impact goes far beyond the crosswalk, and we are grateful for the role she has played in keeping our students safe and supported for nearly three decades."


"Marinella's impact is felt far beyond this intersection," said Malinda

Golden, superintendent of Belton ISD. "For nearly three decades, she has been a steady and trusted presence in the lives of our students and families. She represents what it means to serve with heart, and her commitment to keeping students safe has made a lasting difference in our Big Red Community."

In addition to her daily role supporting students, Vasquez's veteran leadership continued to play an important role in mentoring and strengthening the district's crossing guard team.

The dedication of the Marinella Vasquez Crosswalk ensures her legacy will remain a permanent part of the community she has served so faithfully, marking not just a place on a map but a lifetime of commitment to keeping students safe on their journey to and from school.

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Incumbents for Belton ISD get the nod from voters

By Lynette Sowell-Stevens
The Belton Journal

The voters of Belton ISD have spoken, and two incumbents, Rucker Preston and Brandon Bozon, were reelected to at-large positions on the Belton ISD board of trustees in Saturday's election.

Preston received 1,125 votes, with Bozon receiving 1,138 votes, and the third candidate, Maria Martinez, received 392 votes.

Rucker Preston has served a three-year term on the Belton school board and was first

elected in 2023.

Brandon Bozon was appointed in 2023 to fill a vacant position on the board.

The results are considered unofficial until the board of trustees canvasses the results.

Trustees are elected to three-year positions.

The City of Belton canceled its May 2 general election.

John R. Holmes Sr., incumbent, filed for Place 2. Dave Covington, incumbent, filed for Place 2.



Brandon Bozon



Rucker Preston

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Two Belton men among 11 arrested during DPS human trafficking operation

By Lynette Sowell-Stevens

The Belton Journal

The Texas Department of Public Safety announced on Monday that its Criminal Investigation Division and Texas Highway Patrol (THP) working in conjunction with the Department of the Army Criminal Investigation Division (Army CID) and the Bell County District Attorney's Office, conducted a three-day human trafficking operation in Bell County targeting individuals attempting to solicit sex online.

As a result, two Belton men, Omar Katrell Cherry, 45, and Ramon Antonio Rivera-Colon, 37, were arrested for solicitation of prostitution of a person under 18 years of age and booked into the Bell County Jail. Cherry's bail was listed at \$100,000.

All 11 of the suspects engaged in sexually explicit online conversations with individuals who identified themselves as 13, 14, 15, and 16 years of age.

Nine were charged with solicitation of prostitution of a person under 18 years of age, and two were charged with online solicitation of a minor.

Of the 11 men, four are active-duty military members.

Along with Cherry and Rivera-Colon, the following individuals were arrested and booked into the Bell County Jail:

Hae-Yong Pae, 44, Copperas Cove – Online Solicitation of a Minor

Xavier Alexander Barreto, 21, Fort Hood – Solicitation of Prostitution of a Person Under 18 Years of Age

Ryan Lee Howard, 32, Buda – Online Solicitation of



Courtesy Photo

Pictured above left to right, top to bottom: Hae-Yong Pae; Xavier Alexander Barreto; Ryan Lee Howard; Joseph Andrew Paine; Christopher Matias; Samsus Moise Perfection St. Loth; Omar Katrell Cherry; Ramon Antonio Rivera-Colon; Dwayne Dion Sherman; Shaun Keenan O'Hara; Tyron Lydell Williams.

a Minor

Joseph Andrew Paine, 37, Temple – Solicitation of Prostitution of a Person Under 18 Years of Age

Christopher Matias, 27, Fort Hood – Solicitation of Prostitution of a Person Under 18 Years of Age

Samsus Moise Perfection St. Loth, 40, Killeen – Solicitation of Prostitution of a Person Under 18 Years of Age

Dwayne Dion Sherman, 32, Killeen – Solicitation of Prostitution of a Person Under 18 Years of Age

Shaun Keenan O'Hara, 38, Gunnison, Colorado – Solicitation of Prostitution of a Person Under 18 Years of Age

Tyron Lydell Williams, 55, Killeen – Solicitation of Prostitution of a Person Under 18 Years of Age

Suspicious behavior can be reported through the iWatch Texas program via the mobile app, online at www.iwatchtx.org or by calling 1-844-643-2251. All reports are confidential.

Walmart celebrates re-grand opening with ribbon cutting and giveaways on May 15

By Shalee Corey-Wiebe

The Belton Journal

Walmart is having its re-grand opening on May 15th, starting with a ribbon-cutting ceremony at 10 a.m., with the event ending at 2:00 p.m. Local vendors and Members of the Chamber of Commerce will be present to celebrate the updates to the produce, electronic, garden, automotive, and apparel departments.

Other updates include wider aisles and a new online grocery pickup location, as well as UMHB and local Belton high school specific sports merchandise.

Rudy Garcia, the store manager, says, "It's a remodel we've done for the store to modernize it first and foremost. From the outer perimeter all the way through the inside, everything will be completely redone."

The first 100 customers will receive a "Walmart

bag with Walmart swag," with four of these bags containing a surprise gift. In addition, there will be family-friendly activities throughout the day.

Rudy says, "We just have really big plans for this grand opening day on May 15th, and I just want to be able to reach all of the community of Belton to come out and celebrate that with us. We have lots of plans for multiple vendors and things like that to be with us that day."

Lecture - From Page A1

understanding of Texas history, culture, and storytelling.

"The Spring Lecture Series is an opportunity for everyone in Bell County to gather, engage, and learn together, as a community," said Executive Director Coleman Hampton.

The evening will feature a special

conversation-style program, with Bryan Burrough interviewing Stephen Harrigan about his life and career as a journalist and author.

Harrigan is widely known for acclaimed works such as *The Gates of the Alamo* and *Big Wonderful Thing*, among others.

The discussion will offer attendees a rare, behind-the-scenes look at Harrigan's writing process, inspirations, and enduring impact on Texas literature.

The lecture conversation will run from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m., held at the Bell County Museum.

Admission is free and open to the

public; however, registration is required.

A Members' Reception will be held from 5–6 p.m. prior to the lecture.

For more information or to register, please contact the Bell County Museum at 254-933-5242 or visit its official website at bellcountymuseum.org.



Courtesy Photo

The 17th Class of the Citizen Police Academy graduated on April 22. Capt. Richard Spurgeon and Officer Keri Bailey led the class of community members.

Legends - From Page A1

right here in Belton," said Adam Trujillo, recreation superintendent for the City of Belton. "Legends of the Chisholm Trail brings history to life while creating a memorable day of fun for all ages in a free, family-friendly environment."

Friday's schedule:

6 p.m. – Campfire starts, games, fishing (license required)
6:30 p.m. – Live cowboy music
8:30 p.m. – Legends of the Chisholm Trail storytime
9 p.m. – Campfire ends

Saturday's schedule:

10 a.m. – Vendor set-up, Texas Buffalo Soldiers, Belton Library STEAM project, Bell County Museum demonstration, 1st Cavalry "Yesterday and Today" program

10:30 a.m. – Cowboy performance, live Native American flute music
11 a.m. – Chuckwagon food samples
12:30 p.m. – Native American dance demonstration by Austin Powwow
1:30 p.m. – Cowboy show
2:30 p.m. – Mustache competition
3 p.m. – Fiddle competition begins
6:30 p.m. – Fiddle competition awards
7 p.m. – Event concludes

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Publisher: David Tuma, David@BeltonJournal.com; **Classifieds & Legals:** Elsie Wiley, Legals@BeltonJournal.com; **Advertising:** Shanna Grote, Marketing@BeltonJournal.com, Randa Miller, Sales@beltonjournal.com; **News Editor:** Lynette Sowell, News@BeltonJournal.com; **Sports Editor:** Clay Whittington, Sports@BeltonJournal.com;

Sports Reporters: Tony Adams, Aries Ramos **Graphic Artist:** Jason Bachie; **Creative Consultant:** Susan Kolodziejczyk;

News Reporters: David Stone, Michelle Rodriguez, Annie Dockery, Michele Weisman, Shalee Corey-Wiebe

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To be considered for inclusion in the Belton Journal, all submissions must be received by 5:00 p.m. on Monday of the week in question.

Opinions expressed (including Letters to the Editor) are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions held by the Belton Journal's management, staff or advertisers. Letters to the Editor should not exceed more than 350 words. Contact us at (254) 939-5754.

Belton Chamber to hold Better Together Benefit

Special to the Journal

The Belton Area Chamber of Commerce is currently accepting registration and sponsorships for the second annual "Better Together Benefit" scheduled for 4-9 p.m. Saturday, May 16, at The Commonwealth, located at 11830 W. Adams in Temple.

This event will serve as a special fundraiser dedicated to providing student scholarships.

The "Better Together Benefit" will include live music with Jared Johnson, casual pickleball play, and food and drinks.

As a bonus, beginning pickleball players will be able to participate in a one-hour lesson prior to the kickoff event. Registration is available for both players and spectators.

"This non-tournament event is perfect for everyone, whether a seasoned pickleball pro or completely new to the game," stated Rebecca Briggs, Chamber Board Member and Committee Co-Chair. "So grab your friends, sign up or sponsor, and get

ready to Dink, Drink, and Donate for a great cause."

In order to make the event fun for players of all levels of experience, the plan is for pickleball courts to be designated by experience level. The "Paddle Pushers" court will be designated for casual play for less experienced players. The "Dinking Drinkers" court will be for all levels looking to have a good time, with a reward given to teams who win with a drink in their hand. The "Heavy Hitters" court will be for more experienced players looking for good competition (4.0 rated and above).

Chamber Board member Kayla Potts is also co-chairing the event and is excited to bring this opportunity to our community after previously chairing pickleball and tennis tournaments.

"Anytime we can come together to support our graduating seniors, it's a win for the community," stated Potts.

Community sponsor is Imperium Real Estate, and Partner sponsors in-

clude Scot Hrbacek, Edward Jones, and Messer Potts and Messer.

"We are excited about this new opportunity for our community to support our graduating seniors," stated Randy Pittenger, Belton Area Chamber President/CEO. "We appreciate our Board and sponsors working together to bring this great event to our community."

For more information about this event, sponsorship opportunities, or membership in the Belton Area Chamber of Commerce, visit the website at www.beltonchamber.com, call 254-939-3551, or email info@beltonchamber.com.



OBITUARIES

Stroud

Ronald Lynn Stroud
September 29, 1961 – April 24, 2026

Long-time Leander resident, Ronald Lynn Stroud, born September 29, 1961, passed away on April 24, 2026, after a lengthy battle with MS.

Ron is survived by his sister and brother-in-law, Sandra and Jim Nodler of Bastrop, his niece and her husband, Morgan and Chris Nutt of Bastrop, his nephew Quentin Nodler of Austin, long time best friends Rinn and Leslie Harper of Leander, as well as many loved, extended family members and several former high school friends.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Fred W. and Betty Stroud, paternal grandparents, Fred and Etta Stroud, and maternal grandparents, C.J. and Louise Spence.

Ron graduated from the University of Texas in 1989, with a degree in history. He had a lifelong interest in art and art history and considered viewing the Sistine Chapel in Italy a highlight of his travels. He loved dachshunds, especially his last companion, Duke; Blue Dog artwork by George Rodrigue; chatting with his sister every Sunday; having lunch as often as possible with his best friend; and getting together with his high school friends.

Ron's family held a visitation on Friday, May 1, 2026, at 12:00 p.m., at Harper Talasek Funeral Home in Belton, Texas. Following the visitation, a funeral service was held at 1 p.m. Ron was laid to rest at North Belton Cemetery, in Belton, Texas.

Belton ISD awarded \$863,000 in state grants

Special to the Journal

Belton Independent School District has been selected as a recipient of two competitive grants through the Learning Acceleration Support Opportunities Cycle 4, totaling \$863,000 to support and strengthen math instruction across the district.

The majority of the funding comes from a \$743,000 LIFT grant, which will support the implementation of high-quality Bluebonnet Math resources and systems across all kindergarten through fifth grade classrooms, creating consistent, high-quality Tier 1 instruction and strengthening foundational math learning for elementary students districtwide.

The grant also will fund instructional leadership and a Bluebonnet implementation specialist, a grant-funded role dedicated to teacher support, collaborative team coaching, materials management and long-term sustainability as campuses build strong foundations in mathematics.

In addition, Belton ISD was awarded a \$120,000 specialized grant add-on to continue strengthening pro-



fessional learning community practices at Southwest Elementary.

As the district continues to refine and strengthen its instructional support models, this investment represents a significant opportunity to build internal capacity in math instruction and drive continuous improvement in student outcomes.

The district's implementation plan also includes

summer launch training, campus leadership development and ongoing coaching cycles throughout the school year, ensuring teachers receive sustained support as the work takes shape in classrooms.

"These grants allow us to deepen our work in mathematics in a way that is both strategic and sustainable," said Gabi Niño, assistant superintendent of teaching and learning. "By investing in high-quality instructional resources, strong campus leadership and collaborative practices, we are ensuring our teachers are supported and our students are set up for success in every classroom."

Belton ISD is currently participating in state kickoff sessions and completing the required eGrants process to formalize the funding.

District leaders will continue planning for implementation and will share additional details, including timelines and campus-level impact, in the coming weeks.

Cancer survivor has been participating in Relay for Life since 1992

By Shalee Corey-Wiebe
The Belton Journal

The American Cancer Society held its annual Relay for Life at the Cadence Bank Center on Saturday, May 2nd from 12:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m. Survivors and their families walked the path, past rows of vendors who showed up to give their support. People also participated in activities like zumba and yoga, and the Ellison jazz band came to perform. At 5:30 p.m. was the survivors lap, and at 5:45 p.m. was the caregiver lap. An hour after the vendors closed, the lu-

minaria ceremony began, a ceremony with lanterns to remember those who have lost their battle to cancer and to honor those who are still fighting.

Most people at the relay, if not everyone, knew someone fighting cancer, had experienced loss to cancer, or had their own battle with cancer at some point or another.

Tori Uceda has been doing the relay for life since 1992. She said, "Everybody walks for relay for different reasons. So I started walking with my mom." She talked about losing her mom to cancer, then getting cancer her-

self and beating it.

Tori said, "unless you have that person in your life that you see suffer or you suffer yourself, you don't see the disease that's so terrible out there, that's so awful, and that's what we're trying to do. We're trying to get people out there to understand that even if you don't have this touch in your life, you still need to be a part of it, because we can't make a change unless we have everybody."

Tori talked about how watching a loved one suffer is one of the hardest things to go through. "When I walk, I

don't walk just for me. I walk for my mom that I lost, who's in heaven. I walk for my dad, who was here visiting today. I walk for my stepmom. I walk for the people that can't walk no more. And that's what people have to realize. One ripple makes a huge effect."

Crystal Bell remembered her father. "We lost him about four months after diagnosis. He was a big part of Belton ISD. He was a bus driver." She said, "This is an awesome event for us to come out and be able to give back to the community."



Photo Credit: Ellison Screaming Eagle Band

Members of the Ellison Screaming Eagle Band performed for participants at this year's Relay for Life on May 2 at Cadence Bank Center.

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CASA of Bell & Coryell Counties swears in largest advocate class to date

Special to the Journal

CASA of Bell & Coryell Counties has announced the swearing-in of its largest advocate class to date, welcoming 18 new Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) to serve children in foster care across the community.

The class was officially sworn in by Dallas Sims, marking the beginning of each advocate's commitment to providing a consistent, caring voice for children who have experienced abuse or neglect.

These new volunteers come from a wide range of backgrounds, united by a shared dedication to making a difference in the lives of local children.

"We are incredibly proud of this group," said Maddy Ramos, Director of Volunteer Engagement for CASA of Bell & Coryell Counties. "Each advocate brings unique experiences and perspectives, but they are all here for the same reason—to ensure every child has someone advocating for their best interests."

A special acknowledgment goes to

Vista Community Church, which had nine members participate in the training class—making up half of this record-breaking group and marking the largest single church representation in a CASA training to date. Their commitment reflects the powerful impact of faith communities stepping forward to serve vulnerable children and families.

CASA also extends heartfelt gratitude to CASA Board Member Joel Perritte, pastor at Vista Community Church, for helping connect CASA's Faith Outreach Team with the congregation. His leadership and support were instrumental in strengthening this partnership and helping make this our largest training class yet. Through these connections, more individuals were inspired and equipped to step into advocacy roles that will directly impact children in foster care.

The swearing-in ceremony also included a heartfelt moment that captured the spirit of the program. One advocate, delayed due to jury duty, arrived just after the group ceremony had concluded. In a powerful show of support, her fellow classmates



Courtesy Photo

The largest number of child advocate volunteers – 19 – celebrates after a swearing-in ceremony last week.

stood behind her as she took her oath, celebrating her commitment with joy and encouragement—an inspiring reflection of the community being built within each CASA class.

CASA advocates are trained volunteers

appointed by judges to advocate for the best interests of children in foster care. They work closely with the court, child welfare professionals, and families to ensure each child's needs are met and their voices are heard.

CTRW to hold May 11 Networking Luncheon



Debra Coffey

Special to the Journal

The Central Texas Republican Women are holding a Networking Luncheon on Monday, May 11, featuring Debra Coffey.

Debra Coffey has worked as a Volunteer in Texas Republican politics for more than 30 years, serving as a Precinct Chair in Tarrant County, Chairing pre-

cinct and senate conventions and served as a delegate to Republican County and State conventions and TFRW Conventions for 30 years.

The luncheon will be held at the Harris Community Center, 401 N. Alexander Street, Belton. Doors open at 11 a.m., with the meeting called to order at 11:30 a.m.

RSVP is due by Friday, May 8. Email RSVP to rsvpctrw@gmail.com to pay at the door with cash or check or pay by credit card at www.ctrw-pac.com/events. The menu will feature meatloaf, mashed potatoes, fried cabbage, salad, roll, dessert, and drink. Tickets are \$20 cash/check or \$22 by card for a catered lunch, \$10 cash/check or \$12 card, no lunch.

A ticket is required for each attendee, and no outside food is allowed. Conservative Republican Candidates and Objectives.



Neill Plemons
Named Principal of
Belton New Tech
@Waskow



Neill Plemons named principal of Belton New Tech @Waskow

Special to the Journal

Belton ISD has selected Neill Plemons to serve as principal of Belton New Tech @Waskow.

Plemons currently serves as the interim principal of Belton New Tech @Waskow and brings nearly a decade of experience in education, along with a proven record of campus leadership, instructional innovation and a deep commitment to the project-based learning model that defines the New Tech experience.

Plemons joined Belton New Tech @Waskow in 2021 as an English I teacher and Career and Technical Education government program lead.

He was named assistant principal in March 2024 and assumed the role of interim principal on March 23, 2026, following the departure of former principal Dr. Kim Winters, who accepted a central office position with Waco ISD.

During his time in Belton ISD, Plemons has led efforts that contributed to academic growth, including helping the campus move from a B rating to an A rating while earning multiple distinctions in student achievement,

including AP Honor Roll recognition for the past two years, and SAT scores that exceed state, national, and global averages.

"Neill Plemons is an innovative leader who understands the unique culture and vision of Belton New Tech @Waskow," said Ben Smith, executive director of campus leadership for secondary campuses. "He is committed to creating opportunities for students to think critically, collaborate and take ownership of their learning. We are excited to see him continue building on the strong foundation already in place."

Plemons has prioritized strategies that expand access and opportunity for students, including increasing freshman enrollment through targeted outreach and strengthening campus systems to better support student success. His leadership emphasizes collaboration, real-world learning and meaningful community partnerships.

Belton New Tech @Waskow is known for its focus on project-based learning, where students engage in hands-on, collaborative experiences that prepare them for college, careers and beyond.

Plemons officially begins his role as principal on July 6, 2026.

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Czech-Texas cultural music celebration set for May 16

Special to the Journal

Empresario Wines will host a free Czech brass band concert featuring Pardubická Muzika, an international youth brass ensemble from the Czech Republic, on Saturday, May 16, in downtown Salado.

The free community concert will take place from 4 to 6 p.m. at Empresario Wines, 7 N. Main St.

Guests are encouraged to arrive early for 30 minutes of pre-show music beginning at 3:30 p.m., featuring Michael, Alfred, Danny, and David.

The event is designed to celebrate Czech music, heritage, and the long-standing cultural connection between Texas and the Czech Republic.

Organizers are inviting Czech and Slovak families, cultural organiza-

tions, dignitaries, local leaders, press, and music lovers from across Central Texas to attend.

“This is more than a concert,” said Randy Duncan of Empresario Wines. “It is a chance to bring people together, celebrate Czech heritage, and create a memorable cultural experience right here in Salado.”

Special invitations are being extended to Czech and Slovak community representatives, including Honorary Czech Consul Brian Vanicek and his wife Joan, and Honorary Slovak Consul Martin Valko and his wife Martina.

Organizers are also working with area Czech heritage supporters and community partners to help promote the event throughout Central Texas, including outreach into Austin, Temple, West, Ennis, Caldwell, Taylor, Grang-

er, La Grange, and other Czech-Texan communities.

During the event, sponsors and donors will be recognized and thanked at intermission. Current supporters to be recognized include Governor Netolicky, Dominik, Danny, and David, with additional supporters expected to be added. Businesses and community partners may also have an opportunity to briefly share their mission or product with attendees.

Stagecoach Saloon will be on-site selling beer from its specialized beer trailer. Additional event features may include Czech baked goods, cultural displays, community information tables, and local business participation.

The concert is free and open to the public. Seating may be limited, and guests are encouraged to arrive early.




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Local library resources that might surprise you

Local libraries have a lot to offer. While the chance to borrow a great book free of charge is reason enough to visit a local library, libraries also offer a host of additional resources, some of which might surprise you.

- **Museum passes:** Some libraries allow residents with library cards to borrow passes for complimentary admission to popular museums and other cultural attractions. Museum entrance fees can be costly, so this benefit can provide ample cost savings, particularly for families with children who might otherwise need to purchase multiple passes for a single visit.

- **Park passes:** Library cardholders also might be eligible to borrow passes to state or national parks. Parks provide a unique way to experience local culture and the beauty of nature, so this is a benefit worth looking into for those who can't get enough of the

great outdoors.

- **Help with forms or registration:** Many local libraries offer assistance to local residents looking for help with certain government forms or registrations, including passport applications or renewals. These programs can help residents navigate application processes that can be more complex and confusing than residents may realize.

- **Book clubs:** Books are arguably the most well-known offering available at local libraries, so it makes perfect sense that some facilities organize book clubs for local readers. Many host clubs for readers of all ages, and some may even host genre-specific clubs, meaning there might be a club for anyone, whether they're avid fantasy fans, mystery devotees or students of sci-fi.

- **Streaming content:** Print books might be a specialty at local libraries, but many also offer

cardholders access to movies or television shows via a streaming service like Kanopy. Audiobooks and e-books also may be available to borrow free of charge.

- **Professional resources:** Volunteers at local libraries may offer their professional services free of charge. Volunteers may be local residents with extensive experience in business who can help young professionals identify opportunities and how to make the most of them or assist established professionals brush up on their résumé-writing skills.

- **Board games:** If game night is a popular pastime in your household, then you might want to see if your local library allows cardholders to borrow games. Many provide such services, which can help ensure no two game nights are the same.

Local libraries offer books and much, much more, typically at no cost to cardholders.

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LIFESTYLES

THE BELTON JOURNAL

Killeen Kickers move to Belton, celebrating 51 years of square dancing



Courtesy photo

The Killeen Kickers square dance group pause for a photo at their 51st anniversary celebration.

By Michele Weisman
The Belton Journal

Square dance in Belton with a seasoned group, the Killeen Kickers, who on Friday, May 1, gathered to dance at their new location to celebrate their 51st anniversary.

Keys Valley Baptist Church in Belton welcomed the Killeen Kickers to make the Fellow-

ship Hall their new home. The church took out its carpet and put in a wood-
en floor for the dancers.

Guest caller for the celebration, Tim Tyl, calling since he was 15, needed no introduction.

"I had a big team club. I had my whole high school dancing because I grew up around it. My mom and dad danced. It's good for a couple, for

the singles, families, old folks, and young folks. It's a very social activity," said Tyl.

"If you walk in, everybody is gonna talk to you and they're gonna hug you and shake your hand," said Tyl.

Square dancers dance to more than country music. At their 51st anniversary, Texas Flood by Stevie Ray Vaughan and

Celebration by Kool & the Gang played.

President and Caller for the Killeen Kickers, Christina Wiggins, began square dancing in 1989 and met her husband while he was stationed at Fort Sill in Oklahoma.

"The Oklahoma State Dance Festival was taking place in Oklahoma City," said Wiggins. They were married about a year later.

She teaches beginner classes on Tuesday nights. Over 15 to 20 weeks, the course teaches 50 moves.

Dancers are asked not to drink alcohol before the dance time, and no alcohol is served at the event.

"You have to be quick on your feet, thinking sharp and quick," said Wiggins.

For special dance ex-

cursions, they have square danced on the beach in Galveston, in a pool at a pool party, and in the dark with glow sticks.

Killeen Kickers meets on the first and third Fridays of the month from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Find out more about the classes on Tuesday nights at their website, killeenkickers.weebly.com.

Belton Masonic Lodge, building on a legacy of giving locally

By Michele Weisman
The Belton Journal

Caring about the community, Belton Masonic Lodge #166 took part in the Fantastic Tooth Program through the Texas Masonic Group.

Tom Cumming, past master, helped coordinate with BISD and lodge members the ordering, assembling, and delivery of dental kits for first graders.

"We delivered over 670 dental kits to first graders at

eight schools," said Cumming.

Between March and April, the lodge delivered the kits to the schools on its list. Checking in from time to time with Ms. Fanning, the head nurse for the district, to see if the count of children had increased, not wanting anyone to miss out on a kit.

The Fantastic Tooth Program is a statewide coordinated effort of the Texas Masonic group that began several years ago.

Most important to the lodge members is to have a good time when delivering the kits, so that the children enjoy the experience. Cumming is a retired schoolteacher of 34 years, having taught second, third, and fifth graders. He knows they have only 15 minutes to explain what's in the bags and what to do with them.

Cumming said, "The kids get fidgety."



Courtesy Photo

Tom Cumming, past master, Alex Swieczkowski a brother, pictured with students who received dental kits.

They have teachers, gym coaches, nurses, and music teachers help at the presentation. The children are instructed not to open the bag until they get home and are with their mom and dad, making it a family discussion.

The project starts in February with ordering the supplies for the kits from the Texas Masonic Group. A shipment of toothbrushes, dental floss, two-minute timers, toothpaste, stickers, and for the parents, a clean-

ing schedule checklist with dental care tips and cute self-closing bags to hold it all.

Masonic members of #166 get together at the lodge to pack the bags. They always have a good time loading up the bags for the first graders.

They also gave 30 extra kits in Killeen to a women's shelter. When a woman arrives in the middle of the night with their kids, the shelter will have these kits already on hand.

Cumming said, "The

lodge likes to do things that show they care and that they're looking out for the community."

The lodge gives food to food banks, handed out hundreds of hot dogs at the last Christmas parade, and holds a regular blood drive.

If you'd like to know more about the Belton Masonic Lodge #166 or are interested in joining, go to their Facebook page, Belton Masonic Lodge #166 A.F. & A.M.

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When Time Stands Still for Old Friends



John C. Perry

Well, I recently had my 60th Temple High School Reunion, yes, I'm officially that old! We've held reunions every ten years, which means it had been a full decade since I'd seen most of my classmates. About 63 members of our class attended, not counting spouses and guests. It was good for the soul to visit, share memories, and swap stories.

We packed two days with activities. We toured the beautifully restored Arcadia Theater in downtown Temple, our old goto spot for dates back in the 60s. That evening we gathered at Dead Fish Grill for a social, full of laughter, memories, and the kind of connection that only six decades of shared history can create. The next morning brought a phenomenal tour of Temple High School. Our class was the first to graduate from that building, and it has changed dramatically. I'd guess it's three or four times larger than when we roamed the halls, and far more advanced. We were honored to meet Dr. Bobby Ott, TISD Superintendent, who took time to greet us personally. I think we all walked away impressed. Temple High has done it right, offering everything from voca-

tional programs to the International Baccalaureate track. What struck me most was how integrated the curriculum is. Students can prepare for college while still taking skilled vocational courses. It's a school that recognizes there are many paths to a meaningful future. Our final event was a dinner at the Oscar Store, with about 100 people attending. We were honored to have Temple Mayor Tim Davis and his wife join us. He presented a proclamation declaring that day "Class of 1966 Day" in Temple, a moment that made us all stand a little taller. We handed out some fun awards, played a 1966 Top 40 music contest, and took a solemn moment to remember the more than 100 classmates who are no longer with us. Out of a class of just over 300, that number is sobering. It reminds

you that none of us are guaranteed another day. That realization led us to a unanimous decision: ten years is too long to wait for another reunion. From now on, we'll gather every April, less formal, but still a chance to see each other while we can. I had the privilege of chairing the reunion, but I had an amazing committee beside me. We met monthly, planned, laughed, and worked hard. It was a lot of effort, but also a lot of joy. We ended the evening the way reunions should end, visiting, reminiscing, and savoring the time we had together before saying our goodbyes. And that's where the spiritual reflection naturally comes in. Thinking about our departed classmates makes you think about your own

mortality. But as a Christian, I'm comforted by Jesus' words in John 11:25-26: "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die." Those words remind me that while we said goodbyes that night, and while some of those goodbyes may include be our last on this side of heaven, they are not the final goodbye. For many of us, there is a reunion yet to come, one that time cannot interrupt and age cannot diminish. And that is a hope worth celebrating! *John C. Perry is the Immediate Past Lay Leader with New Life Methodist Church. They meet every Sunday at 9 a.m. (Bible Study) and 10 a.m. (Worship Service) in the Salado Middle School at 1169 Williams Rd.*

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY



Day trips make Mother's Day special

Mother's Day 2026 will be celebrated across the United States, Canada, Australia, and many other countries on Sunday, May 10. Mother's Day is celebrated on the second Sunday in May, and has been since 1914, when President Woodrow Wilson signed a proclamation establishing the day as a national holiday.

There are plenty of ways to celebrate mothers, grandmothers, and stepmothers, including with gifts and celebrations. However, gift givers also may want to trade wrapped presents for a shared experience. Consider day trips or overnight excursions as options for treating Mom to something special. Here are some day trips that can make lasting memories.

- **Wine country:** For moms who love wine, a visit to a nearby vineyard is an elegant way to celebrate. However, there's also the option to travel to historically popular and well-regarded wine regions, such as Napa Valley, Sonoma County or Willamette Valley in the western United States. An even more epic adventure can be a trip to key regions in Europe like Bordeaux, France, Tuscany, Italy, or Rioja, Spain.

- **Historic sites:** Moms who are history buffs can travel to areas of the country that are known for their historical significance. Boston, with its hop-on-hop-off trolley

tours, provides an up-close look at sites that shaped the American Revolution. Williamsburg, Virginia, and nearby Jamestown also offer a historical touch. Colonial Williamsburg is a living-history museum where actors in period costume depict daily Colonial life. At Jamestown, walk in the steps of Captain John Smith and Pocahontas and explore a unique locale in American history.

- **Peace in nature:** Some mothers find that nature is their happy place. A garden tour or a visit to the nearest botanical garden is a great choice. Many beautiful flowers peak in early May, including late tulips, lilacs and azaleas. Roses also may start budding around this time. Butchart Gardens in Canada is a 55-acre National Historic Site known for its Sunken Garden, and can be a lovely spot to tour. Another option is the Longwood Gardens in Pennsylvania, which boasts formal gardens, meadows and large indoor conservatories.

- **Coastal escape:** When treating Mom to some "vitamin sea," a day trip to the coast cannot be beat. A walk on the sand certainly can be a winning choice, but activities like a Mother's Day brunch cruise on a riverboat or ferry can elevate the excursion.

Letting mom experience different day trips can be a special way to set this Mother's Day apart.

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Belton ISD sending seven to State Track Meet

By Clay Whittington
The Belton Journal

Reaching the state meet is a difficult task, but seven local standouts accomplished the feat.

After months of training and weeks of competitions, athletes reached the season's penultimate meet Friday, descending on Arlington's Maverick Stadium for the two-day Region II-5A meet.

Only the top two finishers in each event earned the right to advance to the upcoming University Interscholastic League State Championships, where the potential to etch their name into Texas history awaits.

The Tigers and Broncos now possess the opportunities to take part in the prestigious meet after emerging from regionals with gold and silver medals.

Nobody, however, delivered a more impressive performance at regionals than Belton hurdler Graham Chambley.

The junior placed first in the 110-meter hurdles with a time of 14.04 seconds, and the mark establishes Chambley as the favorite among the state qualifiers.

Nacogdoches sophomore Braylon Horton follows with the next fastest time in the nine-person field, posting a 14.07 at regionals.

Chambley will be joined at state by senior teammate Christian Porter, who was second (47.61) in the 400. He enters state as the fifth seed in the event after placing eighth at last year's state meet.

Porter was also third (10.60) in 100 at the regional meet.

The Broncos' quartet of freshman K.J. Bridges, sophomore Prince Moore, junior Zion Harness and senior Kendrick Jones Jr. were crowned regional champions in the 1,600 relay, finishing in 3:16.88, but the time places them eighth among the state qualifiers.

Lake Belton also advanced triple jumper Ji'yson Sherman to state thanks to a second-place leap of 46 feet, 3¾ inches, which seeds him seventh at state.

The Class 5A state meet will be held May 15 at Austin's Mike A. Myers Stadium.

While Jones helped the Broncos advance in the 1,600 relay, he fell just shy of qualifying individually after placing third (47.90) in the 400.

Additionally, Lake Belton's 400 relay team was fourth (41.10), junior Allen Muchunu was fifth (45-4¾) in the triple jump and freshman Drew Houston was 12th (12-0) in the pole vault.

The freshman duo of Luke Roberts and J'areus Mitchell were seventh (13-0) and 11th (5-10) in the pole vault and high jump, respectively.

As a team, the Broncos were third in the final team standings, scoring 44 points to finish behind champion Frisco Heritage (65) and runner-up Red Oak (64). It was Lake Belton's best showing in school history at regionals.

In the girls division, Lady Tigers junior Kiara King delivered Belton ISD's top outing at regionals, clearing 5-2 in the high jump to place third. Belton sophomore Tara Stone was sixth (125-1) in the discus, and senior Laila Page was eighth (10-6) in the pole vault.

The Lady Broncos were fifth in the 800 relay (1:39.73) and 300 hurdles thanks to senior Moriah Rydberg, who finished in 45.27.

Also representing Lake Belton was senior Bella Garcia (7th, 100, 12.22) and freshman Keira Dzenowski (12th, 3,200, 12:18.07).

Tiger baseball eliminated in bi-district round

By Clay Whittington
The Belton Journal

In the final days of their season, the Tigers experienced it all.

After extending its lengthy streak of playoff appearances, Belton encountered Midlothian Heritage in the Class 5A, Division II first round, and the series delivered a swing of emotions.

The opener saw the squads exchange seven scoreless innings before the Tigers finally took control by posting five unanswered runs in the top of the eighth inning, propelling them to victory.

The advantage, however, would not hold.

Just days later, the series shifted to Lake Belton for the deciding contests, and Belton could not reclaim the momentum.

The Jaguars tied things up in Game 2 with a 9-0 win, and in Game 3, they dominated early, jumping

out to a 3-0 lead before winning 7-2.

The defeats eliminated the Tigers from the playoffs with an overall record of 21-12 and concluded the high school career of pitcher Mayson Chartier — the team's lone senior — while Heritage (17-15) advanced to face Dallas Wilson in the area round.

Additionally, the outcome ended the inaugural season for Belton head coach Nick Kozole, who inherited the role from longtime leader Mark Krueger, who ended a 30-year career with Belton ISD with his announcement to retire following last season.

In the final game, the Jaguars scored three runs in the first inning to create a cushion before adding another run in the top of the third inning. Then, the Tigers attempted to rally,

See **BELTON**,
Page B2

Lake Belton advances to Area round of Baseball playoffs

By Clay Whittington
The Belton Journal

Weather rearranged the schedule, but nothing could prevent the Broncos from advancing.

Last week's series of thunderstorms wreaked havoc on Lake Belton's opening-round series against Midlothian, forcing dates to be rearranged in order to squeeze in games between downpours.

Despite the obstacles, however, the Broncos overcame, claiming the Class 5A, Division I bi-district championship in three games.

The outcome sends Lake Belton into the area round, where it will clash with Dallas White beginning tonight.

Game 1 of the series is set to start at 7 p.m. with Game 2 following on Saturday at 1 p.m. If necessary, a deciding Game 3 will be played 30 minutes after the conclusion of Game 2.

Glen Rose will host all contests.

The Longhorns enter with a

16-19 overall record after defeating North Mesquite in three games.

While advancing will be difficult, the Broncos proved more than capable with its performance against Midlothian.

Behind a standout hitting showing from Travis Moore, Lake Belton beat the Panthers 5-2 in the opener, constructing a 4-0 lead by the conclusion of the third inning.

After reaching base on a triple, D.J. Lavallee recorded the first run moments later, and it was followed by a three-run third inning highlighted by Moore's two-RBI double. Moore was 2-3.

Midlothian responded with a pair of runs in the fourth inning, but it was not enough.

The Broncos finished with 10 hits as R.J. Hunt (2-4), Logan Winkler (RBI, double) and Colby Anthony (2 RBIs, run scored)

complemented Moore.

On the mound, Gavin Carpenter struck out seven runners before Braxtan Cope closed the contest.

The Jaguars bounced back with a 3-1 victory in Game 2 despite a seven-strikeout performance from Maverik Maddux and Anthony's 2-3 showing at the plate.

Anthony produced again in the final game, striking out four batters in a 8-0 series-clinching victory. Furthermore, he had a pair of RBI offensively.

Lavallee was 2-2 with an RBI and a run scored, while Easton Robertson (2 RBIs, double), Cope (double, run scored), Zavian Rodriguez and Landon Willey each had a hit.

Lake Belton (22-8-3) led 1-0 following the second inning before taking complete control with a five-run third inning.

With a victory against White, the Broncos would advance to face Melissa or Highland Park in the regional semifinals.



Lake Belton posts back to back shutouts in sweep

By Aries Ramos
The Belton Journal

Behind suffocating pitching, relentless speed on the basepaths, and balanced contributions up and down the lineup, Lake Belton posted back to back shutout victories to sweep their way into the Regional Semifinals. The Broncos outscored their opponent 17-0 across the two game series, a statement performance heading into one of the program's biggest tests of the season.

In the opener, Natalie Hosch was virtually unhittable through five innings, allowing just one hit while sending eight hitters back to the dugout via strikeout. When Kayleigh Jackson entered in relief, she matched that energy with two more strikeouts and a clean frame to close out the shutout. The offense backed them up in a big way, racking up 11 hits and getting on base at a

great pace with six walks. Briley Updyke was the engine in the heart of the order, going 2 for 3 with three RBIs, while Brysen Gott got on base three of four times at the plate. Alaysha Williams and Updyke both stretched their legs for triples, pacing the extra base attack. What stood out just as much as the bats, though, was the speed. Lake Belton swiped 13 bases as a team in Game 1 alone.

Game 2 brought more of the same. Liliana Herrera took the mound and never gave West Mesquite's hitters a reason to feel comfortable, going the full seven innings with nine strikeouts and zero runs allowed. The offense continued to roll with 13 hits and another five walks drawn, with Gott coming through with a sacrifice fly and Updyke delivering a double. Addison Sims, Madison Perkins, and Updyke all had multi hit afternoons.

Now the Broncos shift their attention to a stiffer test. Walnut Grove (22-13-1, 9-5 in district) enters the Regional Semifinals ranked No. 96 in the state on MaxPreps and riding momentum of their own, the Wranglers won their last series in a sweep, gutting out a 4-3 win in eight innings before following it up with a 10-7 victory. They're battle tested and capable of scoring in bunches.

The best of three Regional Semifinal series is set for Red Oak High School. Game 1 tips off Thursday at 6 p.m., Game 2 follows Friday at 6 p.m., and if a decisive third game is needed, it'll be played Saturday at 2 p.m.

The Broncos have shown they can win with pitching, with speed, and with the long ball. Now they'll find out if they can do it against a team with something to prove.

Lady Tigers headed to Regional Semifinals

By Aries Ramos
The Belton Journal

For the first time in six years, the Belton Tiger softball program is headed to the Regional Semifinals, and they earned every bit of it.

Tara Stone was the story of this series in every sense of the word. The workhorse right hander logged all 15 innings across both games, and her performance in the opener bordered on legendary. In a tense, low scoring battle against Mesquite Poteet on Tuesday, Stone spun eight complete innings, surrendering just a single run while striking out 15 batters. The offense couldn't quite crack through early, and the game crawled into extra innings knotted at one.

Then came the bottom of the eighth.

With two outs and the season hanging in the balance, Hanna Wheeler worked a gutsy seven pitch walk to put a runner on base. Lauren Vazquez came in to run for her. Jonna Hollingsworth then launched a drive to the warning track that caromed off the wall, and Vazquez came charging around to score in a bang bang play at the plate, a walk off win to send the Tigers through. Andalyn Logan paced the offense with two hits on the night, providing the most production at the plate in a game that ultimately came down to one swing.

Thursday's Game 2 looked completely different. The Tigers came out swinging and never really let Poteet breathe, rolling to an 8-6 victory behind an 11 hit offensive performance. Logan and Stone were both locked in, each going 3 for the game at the plate. Logan cleared the fence once. Stone did it twice. The same pitcher who had been dominating hitters from the circle all week was now doing damage with her bat, a two homer, three hit day that speaks to just how complete a player she is. Stone returned to the mound and gutted through all seven innings, giving up six runs but getting enough strikeouts, seven, to see it through.

This program hasn't been to the Regional Semifinals since 2019. That drought is over.


What comes next, however, is the program's toughest challenge yet. Hallsville rolls into this matchup as one of the premier teams in the state, ranked No. 50 on MaxPreps, finishing the regular season at 27-7-1 with a district record of 12-2, which was good enough for first place in their district. The Bobcats just dismantled Lone Star in two games, winning both by a 10-1 and 10-2 final. That's not a team limping into the next round.

Game 1 of the best of three series is set for Wednesday, May 7th at 7 p.m. If the series stays alive, Game 2 goes Thursday, May 8th at 7 p.m., with a potential Game 3 on Friday, May 9th at 1 p.m.



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Sports Briefs

By Clay Whittington
The Belton Journal

New Tech senior Samantha McKenzie — a Texas commit — capped off her high school career Tuesday on the biggest stage possible.

After becoming the first player in school history to qualify for the University Interscholastic League Class 3A State Tournament,

McKenzie tied for 44th in the 72-person field.

Playing at Austin's Jimmy Clay Golf Course, she recorded a 97 in the first round before shaving four strokes off the score the following day to finish with a combined 190, tying Sweetwater junior Cylan Patterson.

Callisburg freshman

Gracie Walker captured the championship with a 151, edging out Maypearl senior Ella Foner (2nd, 152) by a single stroke. Three players — Ingram Moore senior Tierce Zipp, Corpus Christi senior Ava Villegas and Columbus senior Thea Schobel — tied for third place with identical scores of 162.

Noah Childers signed with Our Lady of the Lake and Spurgeon (MO), respectively, football kicker Corin Ramesar signed with Schreiner and Lady Tigers sprinter Laila Page signed with Colorado at Colorado Springs (CO).

Lake Belton saw football players Caleb Chandler, Gavin Stewart and Braxton Cope sign with Mary Hardin-Baylor, while teammate Evan Lazott committed to Angelo State.

Wall of Honor induction ceremony will be held May 16. The event is set to begin at 10 a.m. inside the gymnasium foyer.

Former football star Kegan Sherwood is the lone inductee in this year's class. The utility player for the Tigers is now a safety at Ole Miss.

A reception will be held at 9 a.m.

For more information, visit BeltonTigers.com.

SUMMER CAMPS
Belton and Lake Belton will soon begin offering summer sports camps to area youth.

The camps will be available to boys and girls of all skill levels that are preparing to enter kindergarten through 12th grade, and they will be conducted at the respective campuses.

Led by team coaches, volleyball, basketball, softball, baseball, soccer and tennis camps will be available.

Dates and times will vary by sport.

Registration is open at events.hometownticketing.com/beltonisd.

For more information, BeltonTigers.com or LakeBeltonAthletics.com.

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.

WALL OF HONOR

The annual Belton High School Athletics

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.



SIGNINGS

Multiple athletes from Belton ISD made their collegiate commitments Wednesday, including four Belton standouts.

Boys basketball players Daniel Briscoe and



Scot Hrbacek, CFP® Financial Advisor

Four reasons a 529 plan might make sense for your family

Financial Advisor

Whether your child is going to college or has other plans, here are four reasons to consider a 529 education savings plan.

First are tax advantages. Earnings grow federally tax-free, and many states offer tax deductions on contributions.

Second is the flexibility beyond college. You can use 529 funds for vocational programs, apprenticeships and even K-12 school tuition up to \$20,000 yearly.

Third is the range of qualified expenses.

Beyond tuition, use 529 funds on books, computers, and eligible room and board. And now, with recent law changes, you can even cover certain testing fees, as well as some tutoring and education therapies.

Finally, you have options if your plans change. You can transfer the account to another family member, pay up to \$10,000 in student loans or roll funds into a Roth IRA (subject to certain limits and criteria).

Maybe it's time for your family to consider a 529 plan.

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

Edward Jones

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Belton - From Page B1

but it was not enough.

Evan Echipare connected on a single before teammate Cason Morton's triple sent him across home plate, and moments later, Morton scored on an error.

A three-run fourth inning for Heritage ended any hopes of a comeback, though.

Now, Belton turns its attention toward the future. Without Chartier, several teammates will

be expected to help fill the void, including junior infielder Billy Young and sophomores Oakley Torres and Pecos Smith.

The Tigers were second in the district standings to Lake Belton, which claimed another league championship this season.

The Broncos will no longer be an issue, however, after being elevated to Class 6A for at least the next two seasons.



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LEGALS

THE STATE OF TEXAS CITATION BY PUBLICATION CASE NUMBER 26CPB00271

To: Unknown Heirs

JESSICA HELENE ROMERO, Applicant, on April 30, 2026, filed an application to determine heirship and for letters of independent administration in a proceeding styled: JOSEF FIDEL ROMERO, Deceased, and bearing the number 26CPB00271 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 May 07, 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 30, 2026.

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

By: Erika Decasas Deputy
05.07

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of ROBERT K NEWELL, JR., Deceased, were issued on April 23, 2026 in Cause No. 26CPB00203, pending in the County Court-At-Law No: 1, Bell County, Texas, to: BOBBIE J. NEWELL-WHITE.

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LEGALS

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: BOBBIE J. NEWELL-WHITE, 2615 East FM 436, Temple, Texas 76501
SIGNED on May 5, 2026

/s/James O. Cure, James O. Cure Attorney for BOBBIE J. NEWELL-WHITE, State Bar No.: 05252800, 2584 Blue Meadow Dr., Temple, TX 76502, Telephone: (254) 778-8934, Facsimile: (254) 773-2477, Email: jocure@cureandfrancis.net
05.07

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters of Administration for the Estate of MARTHA NAN WILSON SMITH, Deceased, were issued on March 31, 2026, in Cause No. 25CPB00767, pending in the County Court at Law No. 1 of Bell County, Texas, to: SONJA TWYNETTE TRAIL.

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: MARTHA NAN WILSON SMITH, SONJA TWYNETTE TRAIL, 712 Rolling Bridge, Lewisville, TX 75067

DATED the 27 day of APRIL., 2026.

J. ERIC STOEBNER, State Bar No.: 24049619 2106, Birdcreek Drive, Temple, TX 76502, Telephone: (254) 771-1855, Facsimile: (254) 771-2082, E-mail: Eric@templawoffice.com
05.07

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters of Administration for the Estate of SAMMY RAY SIKES, Deceased, were issued on April 16, 2026, in Cause No. 25CPB00686, pending in the County Court at Law No. 1 of Bell County, Texas, to: KIMBERLY SIKES
All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them to the undersigned within the time and in the manner prescribed by law. ESTATE OF SAMMY RAY SIKES, c/o: KIMBERLY SIKES, 3922 Dove Lane, Temple, Texas 76502

DATED April 27, 2026.

KAREN M. VILLANUEVA, State Bar No.: 24102608, Telephone: (254) 771-1855, Facsimile: (254) 771-2082, E-mail: karen@templawoffice.com
05.07

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of PAULA M. STEGALL, Deceased, were issued on April 23, 2026, in Cause No. 26CPB00109, pending in the County Court at Law No. 1 of Bell County, Texas, to: JEFFREY JOSEPH REID.

All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them to the undersigned within the time and in the manner prescribed by law. ESTATE OF PAULA M. STEGALL, c/o: JEFFREY JOSEPH REID, 870 Orchard Road, Willoughby, OH 44094-7249 DATED April 27, 2026.

KAREN M. VILLANUEVA, State Bar No.: 24102608, Telephone: (254) 771-1855, Facsimile: (254) 771-2082, E-mail: karen@templawoffice.com
05.07

THE STATE OF TEXAS CITATION BY PUBLICATION-PARENT AND CHILD

To: Brian Jones, 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 October 15, 2025, against Shawntana Sanders, Christopher Simmons, Bryan Haynes, and Brian Jones, Respondent(s), numbered 25DFAM356889, and entitled "In the Interest of CA'TORIAN SIMMONS, et al., minor children." The suit requests to terminate the parent-child relationships and/or to appoint a managing conservator of the children. The date and place of birth of the children who are the subject of the suit are: CATORIAN SIMMONS, DOB: December 5, 2010, Place of birth: Unknown, CA>ZAYA SIMMONS, DOB: July 19, 2012, Place of birth: Unknown, KING HAYNES, DOB: July 23, 2016, Place of birth: Unknown, BRII'A JONES, DOB: March 22, 2021, Place of birth: Unknown
The court has authority in this suit to render an order in the children'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 Macy Green, 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 27 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.
05.07

THE FOLLOWING VEHICLE IS BEING STORED AT TOW MASTERS TOWING

2002 Toyota Camry, No License Plate, VIN #JTDDBE32K120083290. The vehicle was brought in as a abandoned vehicle tow. This vehicle was picked up at Fort Cavazos, TX on July 22, 2025. Charges for this vehicle: Tow Fee \$175.00, Daily Storage \$22.85, Impound Fee \$22.85 , Loaded Miles 37.50, Fuel Surcharge Fee \$21.25, Notification Fee \$50.00. This vehicle is being stored at Tow Masters Towing 6000 S Fort Hood St, Killeen, TX 76542. TDLR # 0659157VSF. Please contact us at 254-432-4011 for further questions
05.07 & 05.28

THE FOLLOWING VEHICLE IS BEING STORED AT B & B RECOVERY

2020 Carry-On Trailer, No License Plate, VIN #4YMBU1219LV016694. The vehicle was brought in as a abandoned vehicle tow. This vehicle was picked up at 3407 Hereford Ln, Killeen TX on March 25, 2026. Charges for this vehicle: Tow Fee \$272.00, Daily Storage \$22.85, Impound Fee \$22.85 , Notification Fee \$50.00. This vehicle is being stored at B & B Recovery 4002 Bacon Ranch Rd, Killeen, TX 76542. TDLR # 0660455VSF. Please contact us at 254-245-8007 for further questions
05.07 & 05.28

23CPB00471

IN THE ESTA TE OF CHARLES EARL BIDDLE, DECEASED IN THE COUNTY COURT

AT LAW NO. 1 BELL COUNTY, TEXAS
NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters of Administration for the Estate of CHARLES

EARL BIDDLE, Deceased, were issued to BRANDON SCOTT BIDDLE, Independent Administrator, on April 22, 2026 by the County Court of Bell County, Texas in Cause# 23CPB00471.

Claims may be presented in care of the attorney for the Estate addressed as follows: ESTATE OF CHARLES EARL BIDDLE, Deceased, c/o STEPHEN E. BLYTHE, Attorney for Estate, P.O. Box 2088, Temple, Texas 76503
All persons having claims against this Estate

LEGALS

which is currently being administered are required to present them within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.
 Dated: May 4, 2026
 Estate of CHARLES EARL BIDDLE, Deceased
 By: Stephen E. Blythe, Attorney for the Estate of CHARLES EARL BIDDLE, Deceased
 PO Box 2088/ 319 N. 3rd Street, Temple, Texas, 76503, 254-773-2165, sblythelaw@yahoo.com 05.07

LEGALS

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
 Notice is hereby given that original Letters of Guardianship of HELEN RAE SCHULZE, an Incapacitated Person, were issued on May 4, 2026, in Cause No. 26CPB00122, pending in the County Court at Law No. 1 of Bell County, Texas, to: GINGER SUE SALONE.
 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

LEGALS

prescribed by law. ESTATE OF HELEN RAE SCHULZE, c/o: GINGER SUE SALONE, GUARDIAN, 231 Woodland Trail, San Marcos, TX 78666 DATED May 4, 2026.
 KAREN M. VILLANUEVA, State Bar No.: 24102608, 2106 Bird Creek Drive, Temple, TX 76502, Telephone: (254) 771-1855, Facsimile: (254) 771-2082, E-mail: karen@templelawoffice.com 05.07

CELEBRATING 4th of July FREEDOM YEARS

BE A PART OF ONE OF THE LONGEST-RUNNING AND LARGEST JULY 4TH CELEBRATIONS IN THE STATE. THIS ANNUAL MAGAZINE IS ACCESSIBLE TO OVER 50,000 PEOPLE WHO VISIT THE CITY FOR THE WEEK-LONG EVENTS. IT WILL ALSO BE FEATURED ON THE BELTON JOURNAL WEBSITE AND FACEBOOK PAGE AND HAVE YEAR-ROUND EXPOSURE FOR YOUR BUSINESS.

1/4 pg (3.375"x4.5") = \$165
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DEADLINE MAY 28TH

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David Tuma
 David@BeltonJournal.com
 CALL 254-939-5754

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

MAY 11

1713: After losing the Battle of Helsinki to the Russians, Swedish and Finnish troops burn the entire city.

1985: The Bradford city stadium fire takes place in England.

2009: The space shuttle "Atlantis" is launched on its final mission.

Pre-order breakfast & lunch for delivery
 (Donations appreciated)

Join the "Alzheimer's Angels" as we grill from sunup 'til sold out in an effort to symbolize the difficult daily journey of those living with Alzheimer's (and their caregivers).

We're raising awareness and funds in the fight against Alzheimer's.

GRILLING FROM SUNUP 'TIL SOLD OUT!

THE LONGEST DAY
 alzheimer's association

JUNE 18, 2026
6:26 a.m.
 1749 Scott Blvd.
 Parking lot of Hilton Garden Inn in Temple

DONATE HERE
 All donations will go directly to the Alzheimer's Association.

PRE-ORDER YOUR MEAL by June 16 at 5:00 p.m. AND HAVE IT DELIVERED!

Breakfast taco meals (taco, salsa, cheese, drink) will be served until approximately 10:00 a.m.

Burger meals (burger, condiments, homemade cookie, drink) will be served until sundown.

To pre-order, email TLDpreorder@gmail.com with:

- Name of person donating _____
- Delivery address (some restrictions apply) _____
- Phone number _____
- Number of breakfast tacos and/or burgers _____
- Preferred delivery time (within a 30-minute window)* _____

*If we are blessed with LOTS of orders, we appreciate your patience as our volunteers will be doing their best to prepare/deliver on-time.

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THE BELTON JOURNAL

EDITORIAL

Sandpaper people

My Front Porch • Lynette Sowell

This is a reboot of a prior writing of mine, and maybe it's self-reminder to me. Sandpaper People.

You know them, I'm sure. Those people you see at the grocery store, at church, in the office, or maybe in the hallway at school.

The Sandpaper People (not to be confused with the Star Wars Sand People, who are supposedly just as pesky).

They have nothing good to say, and more often than not, they always seem to have the exact opposite opinion from you. We don't have to seek out people like this, but they tend to pop up in the garden of our lives like weeds that keep coming back.

Sandpaper people are hard to like. Sometimes they know more about everything than anyone else in the room. They can sometimes be the ones in the middle of every committee, every venture, those who always have not just a mere piddly two cents to offer to the world of their opinion, but always a few dollars' worth.

They're like fingernails scraping a chalkboard, gnats nipping on your ankles, or accidentally adding salt to your sweet tea by mistake.

Sometimes I do like many of us do when encountering these people. I run the other way.

But, in a small town, it's often impossible to avoid them and they take special handling and care when dealing with them.

I like to give alleged Sandpaper People a few passes, especially if I've only just met them. Sometimes, first impressions lie to us. How many of us have had a hard day? Maybe Mrs. Rough Sandpaper with grit #40 has a parent in the hospital, is working overtime, has a sick child, and this is just her way of dealing with stress and controlling what aspect of her life she can—namely the current encounter.

Or maybe Mr. Scratchy (grit #120) always felt he wasn't the guy everyone wanted to be around, so he's developed a lousy, contrary self-sabotaging attitude to

prove himself right.

Maybe, sometimes, it's also better to pick and choose our battles.

I don't have to be right all the time about everything. That's one thing to keep in mind at that next PTA meeting or committee gathering or church potluck planning meeting. Why must we have our way, or have the last word? Maybe it's okay to step back and take a deep breath and let our blood pressure go down.

We can't change Sandpaper People, but maybe we can understand them a little better if we take a few moments to think before we scratch them right back.

Because, if you think about it, maybe there's someone in your world who thinks you're made of #40 grit paper yourself. Often, the things that scratch at us the worst from other people are the things we do ourselves. With that, I'll quit chiming in for now, trying not to sound like a know-it-all. Because those are definitely #40 grit—and really, really can get to me. Ouch.

Diversity of Experience

Shop the Insanity • Darren Blair

As I've noted before, I'm an "Army Brat". My dad was in the military, and so for the first several years of my life we moved based on where my dad was ordered to go. It was 1990 before I arrived where I currently live, and 1992 before we moved into the house where we finally managed to set down roots. You can imagine, then, how my experiences growing up differ from someone who was born in a given place, grew up there, and either didn't leave or only left when they turned 18 and set out into the world.

This bit – the differences between the lived experiences of two or more people – is referred to as "diversity of experience". Each of us is shaped, in whole or in part, by the experiences we've had, the education we've received, the people we've met, and so forth. As a consequence, we all have different perspectives on various

For example, once upon a time a lot of folks who were lower-income and middle-income and who lived in the suburbs or a rural area would, believe it or not, reach for the nearest water hose if they were outside and thirsty; you'd let the hose run for a few seconds and then drink from the stream. Well, based on conversations I've had with various people online, it would appear that this practice was not very common among folks who lived in dense urban areas or folks who were upper-income, and the practice seems to be all but unheard of among some of the younger generations. I myself am part of the cohort that had no qualms about going for a water hose (in fact, I still do if I'm in the middle of yard work), while other individuals have never done so and might even regard the

practice with disdain.

When multiple people from different backgrounds come together and share their different experiences & perspectives, the end result can well be a fuller, more nuanced understanding of a given subject. Whether it's neighbors comparing notes, corporations conducting focus groups to seek feedback about products in development, studios conducting test screenings of upcoming movies, or politicians hosting town hall events, people coming together like this, if done in a spirit of cooperation, understanding, and willingness to learn, can provide more insights from more angles than would otherwise be possible if just one person or a handful of people with similar perspectives and experiences were involved. I say "if" as, sadly, a lot of people are only interested in hearing things they already

agree with and are willing to hear.

Ladies and gents, this is a big part of why I have so often pushed for people to go out, meet new people, and have new experiences. Consider the event I so recently wrote about where folks from the United States and folks from Japan had long discussions on Twitter about different foods, which later turned into discussions about other elements of culture and tradition. Not only were new social bonds formed, people had a chance to understand a little more about the world around them and discuss their different points of view.

Yes, whatever bubble a person has going might be comfortable for them. But it's still a bubble, and if it's small enough they won't have room to grow. If humanity as a species is to make progress, we as individuals need to make our own progress as well.

Random Thinks

Pleasant Ramblings • Mark Magnan

Do you ever think about professional athletes and how they start out just trying to impress their parents? The next step is, they are then trying to impress their coach and still, of course, their parents. Now, there is obviously a bit of personal drive in there as well as they enjoy what they are doing. Each step they are essentially working to impress someone to keep their job and enjoy their paycheck. Of course, there are personal records and accomplishments. However, if you do not give the fans and the coaches what they are ultimately after, they will find themselves looking for something else. A good example is a football quarterback that achieves great league records, but never comes home with the trophy. Their name is lost somewhere in the statistics, eclipsed by the quarterback that did bring the trophy back to their city.

I recently compared horses and zebras. They look fairly similar, if you get past the stripes. I know that zebras can be mean, however horses are not that much better. They are not a unicorn without the horn. I have ridden a few horses, probably enough to know there are good, great and bad horses. A horse is essentially a cat that you can ride. When it wants attention it will tolerate you. Their reward is being fed and a good brushing. However, if a horse doesn't want you on its back then it will get you off. There is nothing you can do to stay on, nothing. That

is the reason that cowboys were quite attached to their horses. If they had a good horse it was the best thing on the planet and worth fighting over.

Why do they put up a sign about a "damaged guardrail" ahead? What does the highway department want you to do, not have a wreck there, not run off the road, not rub up against the guardrail for the next little bit, or perhaps just take a look and see what a great job "said" guardrail did at keeping the last vehicle out of the creek below?

Do people that like their eggs over easy, eat hard boiled eggs?

When I am in the store shopping for cheese I see it labeled as "fancy." I am not sure I need "fancy" cheese. If I am making a sauce with cheese and it is just going to melt, perhaps I am paying too much for my cheese. I am certain that I could get by with less fancy cheese, or maybe just basic "plain" cheese.

Does anyone use the word "fancy" anymore? When was the last time you heard someone use the word "groovy"?

Have you ever watched a person that was walking and it looked like they were just falling forward? Perhaps if they stopped suddenly they would fall on their face, but as long as they keep moving they are fine.

Walking is a bit of an art. There is not a lot of margin

for error, which is why walking on uneven ground is so hard. It is more work that it appears, but there is a place in your brain that does all of the thinking and you never notice.

Why did we have a race where people were walking fast? I mean if you wanted to demonstrate your ability to walk well, how about walking really slow. Otherwise you might as well just run.

At some point in American history we were at the west coast and someone realized that we had not named a state after our first President. It looks like we were just about out of room and states to name when we finally named a place Washington.

Did you ever get some item that was from China that had instructions for use or assembly and you just couldn't read the words? I mean they were in English, but it looked like a chimp was just throwing Scrabble tiles together to create the instructions. You would think that the company that sells the product here in the states would invest in a person to go through the manual to make sure it was at least something that resembled a proper sentence, and didn't use words that have been out of style for decades. It is not like the proofreader would have to read every set of instructions, just one for each item.

Extra garbage

Coffee Talk • Renae Brumbaugh Green

What if I forgot to turn the oven off?

After about a hundred years, the man returned to my window. "Mrs. Green, how are we going to fix this problem?"

I didn't miss a beat. "You'll give me a warning, and I'll get my car inspected first thing tomorrow."

The officer laughed. I liked this guy. I think.

"Yes, ma'am. That's what I'll do. But next time, you'll get a ticket."

I definitely liked this guy.

The next day, I did as promised, drove right down and got my car inspected. After all, I want to be a good citizen, and good citizens always try very hard not to get tickets.

So you can imagine my dismay when, two days later, I got a real ticket. This one wasn't issued by the police department. It was issued by the sanitation department.

It was trash day, and when I went to fetch my empty trashcan from the side of the road, there it was. A little yellow-green ticket, flapping in the wind.

Apparently, my trashcan was too full. They charged me an extra \$4.50.

Technically, it wasn't a ticket. More of a notice. But it sure felt like a ticket.

I mean, what am I supposed to do with my extra gar-

bage? Put it down my garbage disposal? Then I'd probably get a ticket from the water department.

From now on, I will try to contain my trash so the lid closes completely. If you drive by my house and see me jumping up and down in my trashcan, just wave. You'll know I'm simply trying to be a good citizen.

I'm sure glad God doesn't have a limit on what we can bring to Him. Can you imagine if He said, *Whoa, there! Your pile of heartache and worry is getting a little too high. I'll take care of this much, but you'll have to handle the rest on your own.*

I'd be in a heap o' trouble.

But God is gracious. His love and mercy are limitless. Any time I have a problem or a need, I can bring it to Him. He doesn't even keep track. He just says, *I see you're having some trouble. Let me take that for you.*

He doesn't make me jump up and down on my problems to make them look smaller. He takes them just as they are. He doesn't issue a ticket or charge extra. He even replaces my garbage with His peace.

Don't we have a great God?

"Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you," 1 Peter 5:7.

Once, I got two tickets in one week.

That's not exactly true. I almost got two tickets.

The first was when I was on my way to WalMart. I didn't think I was speeding. I honestly had no idea why I was being pulled over.

The officer approached my window, and I handed him my license. "What did I do wrong?" I asked.

"There's no inspection sticker on your car."

I decided to blame Rick, who was nowhere around. "Oh, officer, I'm so sorry! My husband usually takes care of that for me." I gave him my best doe-eyed, clueless blonde look. It worked better when I was 20.

"May I see your proof of insurance?"

Oh, where is that insurance? Dear God, let it be current. There's nothing like a policeman standing at your car window to whip your prayer life into shape. I found the paper and it was current.

He took my license and insurance, returned to his car, and stayed for approximately eighty four point two hours while the craziest thoughts stormed my brain:

What if I match the description of one of America's Most Wanted?

What if my car matches the description of some other car that was involved in some... terrible crime?



Local Activities & Events

Newcomers Club Activities

May

- 05/06: Monthly Luncheon, Popcorn Bridge
- 05/11: Bookworms
- 05/12: Singing Bluebonnets
- 05/14: Mexican Train Dominoes, Couples Night Out
- 05/18: Snack Time Mah Jongg
- 05/19: Bunco
- 05/20: Popcorn Bridge
- 05/21: Meet & Greet, Nonfiction Book Club
- 05/22: Trailblazers Walking Group
- 05/25: Well Read Women, Monday Canasta
- 05/26: Singing Bluebonnets
- 05/24: Fun Lunch
- 05/28: Mexican Train Dominoes
- 05/30: Jimmy's Egg

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

Visit the website: www.bellcountynewcomers.com."

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

Central Texas Republican Women - May 11

Be sure to attend the Central Texas RW Networking Luncheon on May 11, 2026, featuring Debra Coffey. Debra Coffey has worked as a Volunteer in Texas Republican politics for over 30 years. Serving as a Precinct Chair in Tarrant County, Chairing precinct and senate conventions and served as a delegate to Republican County and State conventions and TFRW Conventions for 30 years. She will be sharing a timely and personal message that will move and inspire. Harris Community Center, 401 N. Alexander Street, Belton, TX. Doors open at 11:00 am, with the meeting called to order at 11:30 am. RSVP is due by May 8th. Email RSVP to rsvpctrw@gmail.com A ticket is required for each attendee, and no outside food is allowed. Conservative Republican Candidates and Objectives.

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 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@mcl1249tx.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 aspennhealthcare.net or call 512-856-5668 for more information.

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

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

The Bell County Genealogical Society meets the fourth Saturday of each month. The group offers free Genealogy Guidance. Members of the Bell County Genealogical Society will be present to help those with questions about researching their family trees. General meetings are held in Temple, Belton, Killeen, and Salado on a rotating basis. All meetings are open to the public. You do not have to be from Bell County or have ancestors from Bell County to participate. For locations and time of meetings visit our website at <https://txbcgs.org/home/events/>

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

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

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

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

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

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.

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. Read more about the program here: https://www.beltontexas.gov/news_detail_T11_R1166.php.



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

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

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

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

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

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

STAY CONNECTED: STAY INFORMED

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

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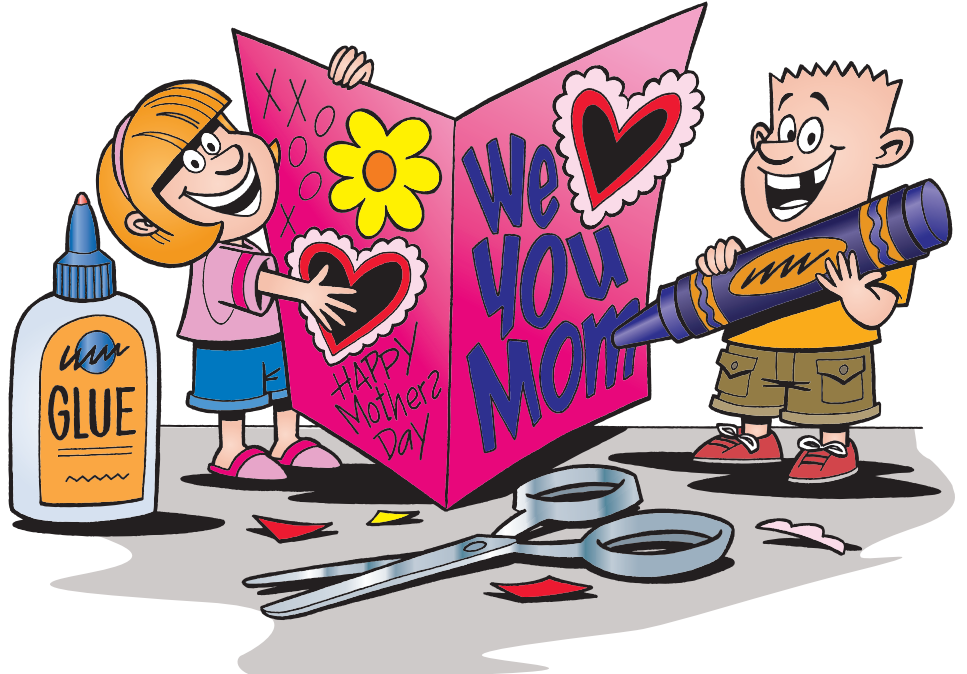
Tent Revival hosted by Gatesville Ministerial Association

MAY 17-20
6:30 P.M.
First Methodist Church Gatesville
2600 E Main St, Gatesville Tx

FEATURED GUESTS
Evangelist: Ryan Burnett
Music provided by local talent

254-865-2520 facebook.com/gatesvillefume

Including a story from local writer Michele Weisman



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