



David Shelburne

Belton High grad receives National Merit Scholarship

By Lynette Sowell
The Belton Journal

David Patrick Shelburne, member of the Belton High School class of 2025, has been named as one of more than 2,000 winners of National Merit Scholarships financed by U.S. colleges and universities. Officials of each sponsor college selected their scholarship winners from among the Finalists in the 2025 National Merit Scholarship Program who

plan to attend their institution. These awards provide between \$500 and \$2,000 annually for up to four years of undergraduate study at the institution financing the scholarship. An additional group of Scholars will be announced in July, bringing the total number of college-sponsored Merit Scholarship recipients in the 2025 competition to more than 3,600. Shelburne has received his scholarship

See MERIT,
Page A4

City of Belton and EDC give update on Imagine Belton Plan

By Michelle Rodriguez
The Belton Journal

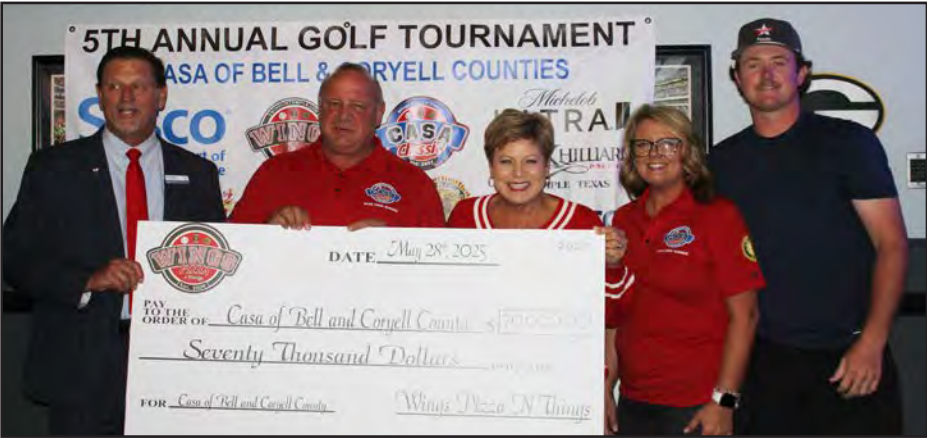
On May 29, the Belton Economic Development Corporation and the City of Belton, along with the sponsors Extraco Banks and First Texas Banks hosted a reception and gave a presentation and update on the Imagine Belton plan and implementation. The event also featured networking, beer, wine, and hors d'oeuvres and was held at Cathedral Oaks Event Center. Cynthia Hernandez, Executive Director of the EDC facilitated a Q and A session with Brandon Bozon, President of EDC Board of Directors; Matt Bates, Assistant City Manager; Mayor David Leigh; and Sam Listi, City Manager. "When we started Imagine Belton in 2021, the vision focused on downtown Belton. The goal is to bring primary jobs and make the community more vibrant. It will make the city a good place to live," said Bozon. Imagine Belton is a plan to guide how part of the city grows and changes over time. "The relationships between schools, Bell County, and TX DOT purposely changed Belton from a rural to an urban county. We didn't wait for it to come along and happen. People want to be able to live in downtown where they work. The Imagine Belton plan allows more flexible land use by landowners by right instead of dealing with the city," said Mayor Leigh. Zoning laws control how land can be used, like where homes, shops, and offices can be built. "The EDC drafted the standards. The process was extensive with property owners in mind. A website and a committee were created. It was a challenge to re-zone the boundaries. We went from sixteen to five zones that will be implemented by the end of the calendar year. We are excited about the possibilities," said Listi. The zones are central downtown, uptown, Main Street, transition, and neighborhood zones. "We've heard the vision. There is a slow trickling of questions. If you have property, what do you do with it? First, know what zone you are in. We are seeing projects coming forward from developers and seeing full value," said Bates. Go to the city website to look up an address to see what zone it is in. "Zoning is established with flexible design stan-



BELTON JOURNAL/MICHELLE RODRIGUEZ
Cynthia Hernandez, Executive Director of the Belton EDC leads a discussion about Imagine Belton plan. dards. Property tax abatement, facade improvement grants are available. City council increased grant funding. There is a 300,000 building life safety grant which allows for sprinklers and ADA. There's opportunity for a strong relationship with the city. There's an opportunity zone to promote private investment with the tax credit program," said Listi. There's also a Historic Tax Credit Program where there is tax credit for a percentage of cost through EDC. Travis Crow with Covey Landscape Architects helped develop the Imagine Belton plan. He also developed similar plans with Temple and Georgetown. He also worked on planning for Heritage Park. "What does it look like? What can we expect," said Hernandez.

See IMAGINE,
Page A8

CASA receives \$70,000 donation from Wings, Pizza N Things



By Daniel Moctezuma
The Belton Journal

On Thursday, May 29, a \$70,000 donation was presented to CASA of Bell and Coryell Counties by Mike and Sara Dent, owners of Wings, Pizza N Things, marking the largest single gift in the nonprofit's 10-year history. The donation was raised through the fifth annual CASA Classic Golf Tournament held earlier this month at Sammons Golf Course in Temple. Each year since the tournament's inception, the Dent family has increased their contribution by \$10,000, starting with \$30,000 in its first year.

Mike Dent, who grew up in the foster care system, said the mission of CASA holds personal meaning for him. "I came up as a child in the foster care system, but I did not have a CASA advocate working on my behalf," he said. "I see the work these volunteers do, and it just makes me want to raise more money each year to help provide more support for so many kids who don't have a voice." The check was presented at Wings, Pizza N Things in Temple to CASA Executive Director Kevin Kyle, along with staff and board members. Also present were the Dents' daughter, Jessica Dent, and Mason

See CASA,
Page A2

BELTON JOURNAL/DANIEL MOCTEZUMA
CASA Executive Director Kevin Kyle, Mike and Sara Dent, Jessica Dent, and Mason Gerrard pose with a \$70,000 donation check at Wings, Pizza N Things in Temple on May 29.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Obituaries-----A3, A4

Editorial -----A5, A7

Lifestyles-----A6

Service Directory----A7

Sports-----B1

Classifieds-----B4

B-Town Bulletin-----B6

Church Directory----B7

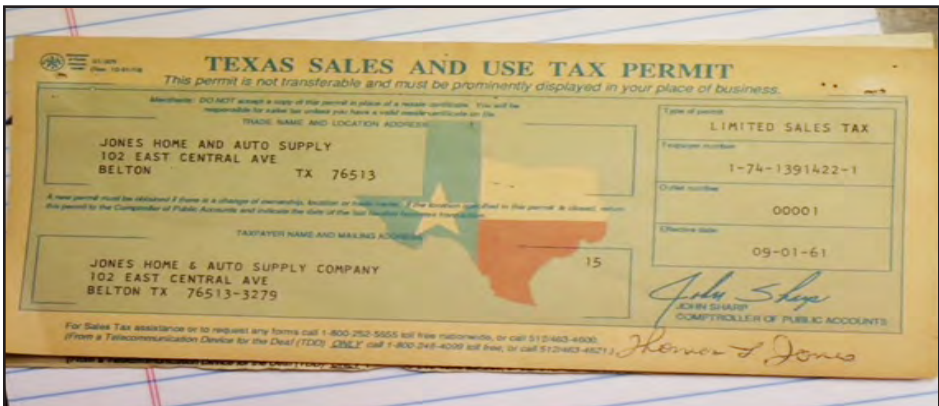
Jones Home & Auto celebrates 75 years

By David Tuma
The Belton Journal

Jones Home & Auto in downtown Belton is celebrating its 75th year in business. A lot has changed over the years. B.K. Blair is the current owner. B.K. has spent most of his life in what is today an auto repair company. His father started at Jones after retiring from the military.

They are a Firestone dealership, which opened in Belton in 1950 and was purchased by the Jones family in 1951. In fact, B.K. still has the original operations manual for running a Firestone dealership. Jones Home & Auto is technically an Affiliated Retailer. This gives them the ability to sell all

See JONES,
Page A2



BELTON JOURNAL/DAVID TUMA
Jones Home & Auto in downtown Belton is celebrating its 75th year in business.

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Jones - From Page A1

Bridgestone and Firestone products and likewise gives them access to financing through Bridgestone Firestone.

“Being an Affiliated Retailer gives up more options. Bridgestone and Firestone are very good about who they partner with. If they partner with a company, it is a no-brainer,” said Blair.

B.K. worked with and for Tom and Dottie Jones. Bob Jones also worked in the business, doing the books.

Jones Home & Auto was more than just a tire store. They started carrying bicycles, toys, and some appliances. As they expanded, they purchased a few adjacent buildings. Then, as the years passed, they started selling TVs, small appliances, rifles, and knives.

Expansion continued as they added recliners, mattresses, washing machines, dryers, Toro and Snapper lawn mowers, and equipment. They even had a TV repair shop at one point.

“When I was in high school, I was working for them, installing those giant TV satellites, those huge 12-foot monster, when I was a sophomore at Belton High School,” said B.K. who started working at Jones in 1985.

“We used to rent laser discs and we even had some Winchester saddle rifles.”

B.K. purchased the business in 2003 and the Jones family financed the deal.

Roy Hutto, who is a minority owner in the business, is still around, working on autos and trucks.

“I had to have somebody I could trust with a vested interest in the business. I think back to the time I started here,” said B.K. “There were some colorful characters through the years. You learn a lot about life from those folks. From Bob and Tom, we learned a lot about how to treat people in business while partnering with Bridgestone Firestone. We aren’t the smartest people on the planet, but we work hard. Roy’s father had a wrecking yard, and he took auto repair classes. That is where he developed his auto repair roots.”

In the old days, the Firestone representative would come in and work at the front office when Tom took time off.

“Years ago, you maintained a vehicle and a tuneup was needed every 20,000-30,000 miles. Today, some of those oil changes can last up to 6,000 miles and a tune-up at 100,000 miles,” said B.K. “Equipment upgrades and training are a constant process today. It provides a starting point and grants access to live vehicle data.

“When we first started to use computers, it was tough. Today, we scan the vehicle, and it gives us a code. You will keep 95 percent of your customers if you are fair and honest. One bad thing can break that trust.”

B.K. can be found working on vehicles in the bays almost every day. From the looks of the number of vehicles filling the work bays and the parking lot, B.K. and his employees have carried on with the Jones tradition of taking care of whoever walks in the door.

MPR City Council holds special meeting

By Michelle Rodriguez
The Belton Journal

The City of Morgan’s Point Resort City Council had a special session last Tuesday evening.

The first public hearing of the special session was for an amendment of the fiscal year 2024 budget and carryforward items. There was also a public hearing amending the fiscal year 2025 budget amendment for revenue and expenditures.

“This was for recognizing the insurance proceeds that were received in fiscal year 2024 and recognizing the revenue and then also moving that revenue to pay for expenses that occurred in fiscal year 2025,” said city Finance Director Mary Tolman. “It’s also moving over the budget for the vehicle that was budgeted for \$76,000, rolling that over to 2025, but the vehicle expense was \$80,900.”

City council accepted the ordinance, and it was unanimously passed.

“Also, it paid for a wood chipper, mulcher machine that we need as we go through the pickups, so that BJ and his crew can take care of things on the spot. It’s a heavy duty one that should help tremendously,” Tolman added.

“We also have \$10,000 on fire truck upgrades which includes some tires for the fire truck to make sure it’s safe for our firemen. Then of course, we have the fire and mitigation position. There’s a copy of the memo from our chief of the fire department

and the original draft. I do want to call some attention to this particular hand-out. It has the breakdown of the cost for a brand-new employee to meet this program’s needs as well as an experienced one if they were selected so that’s why it’s in the budget amount,” said Tolman.

Residents have voiced concerns of the hazard of excess debris due to tornadoes. Wildfire mitigation cleans up the city. Private property owners will be notified. There will be a curbside collection. A motion was made to approve ordinance and amendments and was passed unanimously with a correction to be made.

There was a resolution for electing councilmember Roxanne Stryker as Mayor Pro-Tem for the 2025 though 2026 terms. The resolution was adopted with a minor change for it to be part of the special session.

Another resolution discussed and considered was authorizing the city manager, Dennis Baldwin, to execute a contract with Brooks and Watson, and Company to audit the city’s financial statements for fiscal year ending 2024 and 2025. It was accepted and approved.

Another resolution discussed and considered was to amend authorized representatives for TexPool, an investment service for public funds.

Meetings are available for viewing at www.morganspointresorttx.com/youtube. Agendas are available online on the city’s website.

CASA - From Page A1

Gerrard.

According to CASA Outreach Coordinator Corinne Donnelly, the donation will allow the organization to hire another full-time staff member, which in turn will make it possible to assign advocates to more than 35 additional children in the foster care system.

“There are over a thousand children in foster care in our area right now,” Donnelly said. “So this helps chip away at that and give them a one-on-one connection.”

Donnelly added that the funds will also support outreach efforts, travel reimbursement for volunteers, and further expansion of CASA’s services in both counties.

CASA volunteer and Director of Volunteer Engagement Maddy Ramos said the community’s support plays a big role in what the organization can do.

“As a volunteer, it helps us to provide a bigger class. We provide meals and supplies for our advocates when they go out and volunteer,” Ramos said. “Travel reimbursement is a big thing, too, especially for placements outside our city limits.”

Ramos said donations like this one help cover those needs and make volunteering more accessible.

“I wish more people knew that anybody can do it,” she said. “You don’t need a specific degree or background. We train everyone from the beginning.”

Kyle said the money will also help pay off CASA’s new permanent building, which will include a child-friendly CPS visitation space. He added that the tournament’s growing visibility has helped attract more volunteers and supporters.

“Our CASA office is growing and impacting more children each year,” said CASA Board President Ashley Clapper Bennett. “To continue our growth requires funding for recruiting new volunteers, training, and new staff to support the added volunteers.”

Dent said his goal for next year’s tournament is to raise \$80,000.

“If anybody reads this and wants to get ahead of the curve and get involved, let’s start planning,” he said.

To learn more about CASA or becoming a volunteer, visit www.casabellcoryell.org or call (254) 774-1881.

Former coach arrested for sexual assault of a child

Special to the Journal

A former coach at UT Charter School associated with Cedar Crest Hospital in Belton was arrested on a felony charge of sexual assault of a child on Thursday, following a lengthy investigation by the Belton Police Department.

David Paul Jones, 58, of Temple, was in the Bell County Jail on a \$250,000 bond on Friday.

The charge came following an outcry of sexual assault by a 15-year-old student in September 2024. A Cedar Crest staff member reported the assault to Belton police.

Belton police obtained a felony arrest warrant for Jones from the Bell County District Attorney’s Office on May 19. Temple Police Department officers served the warrant Thursday afternoon.

Jones worked as a

contracted PE coach at the psychiatric facility and residential treatment center from November 2023 to September 2024.



David Jones



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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.

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OBITUARIES



Cabaniss
Lois Smith Cabaniss
June 2, 1934 – June 1, 2025

Lois Smith Cabaniss, 90, of Salado, Texas, passed away June 1, 2025, just one day shy of her 91st birthday. Born in Bonnieville, Kentucky on June 2, 1934, Lois was number seven of the nine children born to Leslie Smith and Maggie Richardson Smith. Lois enjoyed cheerleading and spending time with friends and family while in high school. She graduated from Vine Grove High School in 1952 at the age of 17 and promptly went to work in civil service at Fort Knox, KY for 38 years. While working there, Lois met and married the love of her life, Tempe Cabaniss of Salado, TX. They were married June 23, 1961, in Radcliff, Kentucky, and were seldom apart for the next 62 years. Upon retirement, Lois and Tempe sold their home in Kentucky and began their adventure as full-time RVers. They spent a decade traveling the country, heading north in the summer and south in the winter, before settling in Salado and building a home near their daughter Lisa. Lois and Tempe were members of the 15th Street Church of Christ in Temple, Texas. Lois was known for her devotion to her husband and family, her fantastic cooking and baking skills, and her gentle teasing manner. She enjoyed gardening, crocheting and being with family. She was a loving wife and mother, and a proud grandmother. Lois was preceded in death by her parents, Leslie and Maggie Smith; husband Tempe Cabaniss; sisters Geneva, Ilene, Mildred, Martha, Hazel, and Sue; and brothers, Junior and Jimmy. Lois is survived by daughter Kari Hinds and husband Glenn of Rineyville, KY, and daughter Lisa Clement and husband Benny of Salado; two grandsons, Dale Clement and Sean Clement; grandchildren by marriage, Tyler Hinds, Megan Hinds-Wade, Mollie Hinds-Wade; one greatgrandchild by marriage, Maddie Hinds-Wade; and many nieces, nephews, brothers and sisters-in-laws, and friends. Visitation will be held at Dossman Funeral Home in Belton, TX, on Friday, June 6, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Funeral services will be held at Dossman on Saturday, June 7, at 10:00 a.m. Burial will follow at Bell Plains Cemetery in Salado. In lieu of flowers, please consider donations to the Salvation Army at <https://give.salvationarmyusa.org> › Online-Donation › Donate-Money

Shuffield
Beverly Cullins Shuffield
November 30, 1951 – May 29, 2025

Beverly Gayle Cullins Shuffield of Temple, Texas passed away on May 29th, 2025 at the age of 73. Gayle was born on November 30th, 1951, in Houston, Texas to Gene Fowler Cullins and Jewel Aletha Ellington Cullins. She graduated from Katy High School in 1970, where she was actively involved in FHA and Cheerleading, and graduated with her associate’s degree in dental hygiene from Wharton County Junior College in 1973. She then moved to Temple, Tx where she met Wilburn Van Shuffield.

She and Van were married on July 20th, 1974, in Katy, Texas. She was a retired dental hygienist who served patients in Temple and Ft. Worth for 39 years, and an active member of the Texas Dental Hygienist’s Association where she served on the board. She was a long-time supporter of the Katy Tigers and the Katy Police Officer’s Association. She loved to knit when she could, was an avid reader, especially of her bible, but her favorite thing was spending time with family. Gayle is survived by her husband Wilburn Van, daughters Kalyn & husband Randall Hernandez, Kari & husband Steven Christensen, little best friend and granddaughter Mazdyn Piper Hernandez, her mother Jewel Cullins, sister Sherri Lynn & husband Jerry Murrow, brother-in-law Harvie Lindeman, several nieces, nephews and grand nieces and nephews, and 5 grand dogs. She is preceded in death by her father Gene Cullins, father-in-law Wilburn Elma Shuffield, mother-in-law Minnie Alvina Shuffield, brothers Larry Gene Cullins, Everett Ray Patterson, brother-in-law Garlen Lynn Shuffield, brother-in-law Jay Harvey, sister Janis Kaye Lindeman, sister-in-law Ada Odesa Bryant. Visitation will be from 6 till 8pm on Friday, June 6th, 2025, at Dossman Funeral Home, 2525 N Main St, Belton, TX 76513. Followed by funeral service at 2pm, on Saturday, June 7th, 2025, at Dossman Funeral Home. Gayle will be laid to rest at a later time at Little Flock Cemetery, Temple, Tx. Flower arrangements have been provided by Woods Flowers of Temple, Tx. Flowers are welcome; however, if you prefer, donations can be made to a scholarship fund in Gayle’s name to: the Beverly Gayle Memorial Fund [https://cash.app/\\$BeverlyGayleMemorial](https://cash.app/$BeverlyGayleMemorial) and <https://venmo.com/u/Beverly-Gayle-Memorial> or to the Janis K. Lindeman memorial fund

Parker
Saray Heard Parker
May 31, 1950 – May 25, 2025

Sarah Macon Heard Parker, or Sally as most knew her, passed away on Sunday, May 25, 2025 at her home in Belton after a long-fought battle with cancer. A visitation for Sally was held on Friday, May 30, 2025 from 5:30 to 7:30 PM at Dossman Funeral Home in Belton. A funeral service was held on Saturday, May 31, 2025 at 10:30 AM at Dossman Funeral Home in Belton with Pastor Matt Thrasher officiating. Burial will be private. Sally was born on May 31, 1950 in Temple, Texas to the late L.P. “Bud” Heard, Jr. and Priscilla (Shumaker) Heard. She attended schools in Belton and was a proud member of the BHS class of 1968. Born with the gift of perfect pitch, Sally was a gifted musician and began playing piano at the age of 2. She was a proud member of the Marching 100 where she was a twirler and played oboe, saxophone, and most things with a reed. Sally was chosen for All State Band in 1967 and 1968, as well as for numerous other awards. After graduation Sally attended Southwestern University in Georgetown, Texas until 1970 when she took a pause and married the love of her life and longtime boyfriend, Michael Roy Parker. They were married on May 30, 1970 at the First United Methodist Church in Belton and would have celebrated 55 years of marriage this year. Sally and Mike started a family and she became a stay-at-home mom for a number of years, before going back to Southwestern University and completing her Bachelor’s Degree in 1987. She then began a 10-year career with Texas Instruments (later Acer) as a computer programmer within the laptop division. She thoroughly enjoyed her time at TI and the many friends she made while working there. In 1997, she chose to retire and focus on her family and on her new hobby, quilting. Sally became well known for her intricate quilt patterns and her desire to give them away. She made countless quilts, curtains, throws, cushions, and just about anything else made of fabric for family, friends and sometimes strangers. Sally even started teaching classes, turning her new quilting room into a classroom with

multiple machines available to her students. She met and made many friends within the quilting community and it brought her so much joy and happiness. She enjoyed her weekly meals with her classmates, a group she affectionately referred to as the lunch bunch. Sally and Mike were strong supporters of the Belton Band Boosters, working the concession stands at football games and traveling to competitions all over the State of Texas. In 1994, they were recognized by the Marching 100 for their years of outstanding service and dedication. The only thing that Sally loved more than quilting was her family. She is survived by her beloved husband, Mike. Her children, Chris Parker & wife Jannell; Benjamin Parker & wife Melanie; and Rachel Parker; Eric O’Braden & wife Cheri. Her family was her pride and joy and in 2000 she became a grandma for the first time. Sally was the proud grandma to Emily (O’Braden) Hohertz & husband, Hagen; Taylor (Parker) Keaton & husband, Joseph; Michael Parker, Gavin Humphries, Logan Parker, Parker Humphries, and Matthew Parker. She became a great-grandma last year to Kodi Ann Keaton, and she has two step-grandchildren, Riley and Logan Lawhon. She is also survived by her sisters, Mary Foote and husband, Bruce and Rachel Raley and husband, Lynn and her brother, Tom Heard. The family would like to thank everyone who called, visited, helped out, and loved our mom. She was a brilliant, kind, special person who left her mark on so many places and so many people.

Leija
Pedro Resendez Leija
August 11, 1957 – May 6, 2025

Pedro Resendez Leija, affectionately known as Pete, peacefully departed this life on May 6, 2025, at his home in Temple, Texas. Born on August 11, 1957, in Grove, Texas, Anastacio and Corina Resendez Leija. Pete’s life was one marked by love, hard work, and a deep commitment to his family. Pete dedicated over three decades of his life to the workforce, initially serving at Texas Hydraulics before working for HEB until his retirement in 2019. His

See OBITs,
Page A4



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1 Mission Outdoors hosting archery summer shootout at BLORA

By Lynette Sowell
The Belton Journal

Archery enthusiasts are invited to come out to the Belton Lake Outdoor Recreation Area this weekend, June 6-8, for the first archery summer shootout held by 1 Mission Outdoors.

The entry fee is \$30 for the main event, with \$20 for extra rounds, and the fun begins on Friday, June 6 starting at 4 p.m., with archery lessons, training and games.

Then on Saturday, June 7 the shootout begins. There will be 30 targets with ISO scoring and prizes.

This is an International Bowhunting Organization traditional bow tournament (no compound bows). The event is open for all ages.

Registration and check-in will take place in Area at the Lakeview large enclosed pavilion, starting at 3 p.m. on Friday. Saturday registration starts at 8 a.m. and the competition range opens at 8 a.m.

The Saturday random draw team event starts at 5 p.m., sponsored by Keith and Edith Bain, with a \$300 cash prize. Sunday registration starts at 8 a.m. and cards must be turned in by noon. Awards will be announced as soon as cards are tabulated or around 12:30 p.m.

Classes include Self Bow, Bare Bow, Traditional Men (recurve or longbow - any arrow off the shelf), Traditional Women (recurve or longbow - any arrow off the shelf),



Longbow Men (wood arrow only), Longbow Women (wood arrow only), Senior Men, and Senior Women.

Funds raised will benefit 1Mission Outdoors Archery Range, which is a local a 501(c)(3) non-profit archery training facility, which offers bow rentals, a wide variety of classes, youth and adult education, hunting workshops, and events.

For more information, contact Levy Bryant at (850) 393-4078, Shana Sattler (409) 673-5797, or Allen Freeman at allen.imoarcheryrange@gmail.com.

Merit - From Page A1

from the University of Alabama.

This year, 146 higher education institutions are underwriting Merit Scholarship awards through the National Merit Scholarship Program.

Sponsor colleges and universities include 74 private and 72 public institutions located in 42 states and the District of Columbia.

College-sponsored Merit Scholarship winners announced are a part of the distinguished group of more than 6,930 high school seniors who will receive National Merit Scholarships for college undergraduate study worth nearly \$26 million.

Earlier this spring, NMSC announced winners of corporate-sponsored Merit Scholarship awards and National Merit \$2500 Scholarships.

High school juniors entered the 2025 National Merit Scholarship Program when they took the 2023 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT®), which served as an initial screen of program entrants. Last fall, more than 16,000 semifinalists were named on a state-representational basis in numbers proportional to each state’s percentage of the national total of graduating high school seniors. Semifinalists were the highest-scoring program entrants in each state and represented less than one

percent of the nation’s seniors.

To compete for Merit Scholarship awards, semifinalists first had to advance to the finalist level of the competition by fulfilling additional requirements. Each semifinalist was asked to submit a detailed scholarship application, which included writing an essay and providing information about extracurricular activities, awards, and leadership positions. Semifinalists also had to have an outstanding academic record, be endorsed and recommended by a high school official, and earn SAT® or ACT® scores that confirmed the qualifying test performance. From the semifinalist group, over 15,000 met requirements for finalist standing, and about half of the finalists will be Merit Scholarship winners in 2025.

NMSC, a not-for-profit organization that operates without government assistance, was established in 1955 to conduct the National Merit Scholarship Program. The majority of National Merit Scholarships provided each year are made possible by the support of approximately 280 independent corporate and college sponsors. These sponsors join NMSC in its efforts to enhance educational opportunities for America’s scholastically talented youth and to encourage the pursuit of academic excellence.

Texas Legislature wraps up 89th session

By Richard Lee
Special to the Journal

The Senate adjourned sine die on Monday, closing out a 140-day regular session that saw, for the first time, passage of legislation that would allow the use of state revenue for private school tuition.

While school choice was the marquee issue heading into the session, lawmakers tackled other key issues including the future of water in Texas, THC consumables, bail reform, and historic new funding into public education.

“This is the finest session any Texas Senate has ever had,” Lt. Governor Dan Patrick told members before bringing down the final gavel.

Governor Greg Abbott received bills relating to all five of his emergency priorities for the session: school choice, bail reform, teacher pay, water, and property tax cuts.

Public education led the headlines, with the legislature approving and Abbott signing a bill that would spend \$1 billion in state funds to create about 100,000 education savings ac-

counts, that parents can apply for and use to pay for private school costs.

This came with \$8.5 billion in new public education funding, most of which will go towards teacher compensation increases, including an across-the-board raise for teachers and other school employees.

Authored by Education Committee chair and Conroe Senator Brandon Creighton, these bills will change the landscape of public education in Texas permanently, he said.

“This is not just a funding bill, it’s a long-term commitment to the future of public education,” Creighton told members when they passed HB 2 on May 23rd.

Lawmakers also approved billions more in property tax relief. As in past sessions, the Senate approved another increase in the homestead exemption, raising the deduction from \$100,000 to \$140,000 for most homeowners and \$200,000 for disabled or senior homeowners.

That will translate, according to author

See **SESSION**,
Page A8

Obits - From Page A3

unwavering dedication to his profession exemplified his role as a provider, ensuring that the needs of his family were always met. He took great pride in being a family man, often working multiple jobs to support his loved ones.

He attended Moody High School, Pete embraced his passion for sports early on, particularly through playing football. A loyal Chicago Bears fan, he enjoyed sharing memories of the games and engaging in lively debates about his favorite teams. Beyond football, Pete had a fondness for wrestling on Monday nights and cherished the thrill of riding rides at theme parks, activities that

allowed him to bond with his family.

In March of 1977, Pete met the love of his life, Patty Aguallo. Their marriage stood as a testament to their shared commitment; together they created a loving home where their two sons, Marco A. Leija and his wife Sherri, and Juan Gabriel Aguallo, were raised with care and support. As a family, they found joy in attending bingo nights and watching movies, creating countless cherished memories along the way.

Pete was proud of his sons’ successes and delighted in being a devoted grandfather to his seven grandchildren. He never missed an opportunity to cheer them on,

attending events ranging from cheer competitions to baseball games. His grandchildren were his pride and joy, and he reveled in the simple pleasures of life, often sitting outside enjoying music.

Those who knew Pete recognized him as a man of strong opinions and vivid storytelling. He was always willing to share his thoughts and experiences with others, leaving a lasting impression on his family and friends. Throughout his life, he was known for his willingness to help those in need, a reflection of his generous spirit.

Pete is survived by his sons, Marco A. Leija and wife Sherri, Juan Gabriel Aguallo; three brothers, Thomas Lija and wife Yang, Andrew Leija, Eusavio Jr. Reyes and Margaret Reyes; two sisters, Santos and Lionel Aviles; Sr., Rachel Leija; and his beloved seven grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his cherished wife of 43 years, Patty Aguallo; four brothers, Savas Leija, Frank Leija, Jose Leija, Mike Leija; and two sisters, Anita Hejl and Theodora Quinteros.

Pedro Resendez Leija will be remembered for his profound love for his family and the joy he brought into their lives. His legacy is one of hard work, devotion, and a heart full of love, leaving a lasting impact on all who had the privilege to know him.

A funeral service will be held on Friday, June 6, 2025 at 1:00 p.m. in Young’s Daughters Funeral Home with a Burial at Hillcrest Cemetery following.

In lieu of flowers please consider making memorial donation to the funeral home website www.YoungsDaughters.com or call 254-401-1302 to help defray the cost of funeral expenses. Arrangements are under the direction of Sabrina Young at Young’s Daughters Funeral Home and Bereavement Center.



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EDITORIAL

Random Ramblings

Pleasant Ramblings • Mark Magnan

What would happen if the lead goose had a poor sense of direction during migration? Would another goose step in and correct the course, or would they just follow this goose ending up in some strange area? I am certain this has had to have happened at some point in the long history of birds migrating, instead of north and south the lead bird goes east or west.

Why is the inside of your mouth ticklish?

Actually, why is any part of our body ticklish? What purpose does that serve? I mean if you touch something hot and your body reacts by pulling away quickly. Someone tickles you and you laugh awkwardly and dance some wild unknown routine.

On the wrapping of a roll of toilet paper it said there were 500 sheets to a roll. Has anyone

fact-checked that claim? Should we count a roll every so often just to make sure we aren't getting ripped off? Do we really care as long as we don't run out without a good backup plan?

Have you seen those images of our galaxy from deep space, a little arrow pointing to where we are located and a circle showing what we believe to be the known space that we have studied? Who took that picture? If we haven't been more than a speck from where we are located under that giant red arrow, how do we even know what the rest of the galaxy looks like?

Pluto is a planet, stop arguing about it. It was a planet when I was in school and we were learning about our solar system, so that should be good enough. It looks like it might be a few generations before we even get close to landing on

Mars, no one is going to be on Pluto anytime soon, give the planet a little respect, leave it a planet.

I have one of those fancy automatic toothbrushes that is timed, you get four segments of time for each area of your mouth. I am usually fairly good about timing these out just right. You brush for a specified time, the motion stops briefly and you move to another area. I always brush my teeth right before bedtime. At times I am tired and not thinking as clearly, on that last pause my mind thinks I am done, so I get just enough of a pause to get the brush out of my mouth and boom it starts up again, spraying toothpaste goo all over, which I then have to clean up before retiring for the evening. (that was a classic example of a run-on sentence, which normally will drive a

good editor a bit nuts, but they overlook it at times because they feel the writer typically does a good job and deserves to stray occasionally, and honestly how do you tie all of those thoughts together with several separate small sentences and still make sense)

And why isn't it teethbrush instead of toothbrushes?

If you have been on any type of connected device within the past decade or so, you know that the advertisements are targeted based on what you search for or look at. If you search for "best toothbrush" you will get ads trying to sell you a toothbrush for a long time, probably until you search for "dentures". With the technology you think that some things would be more accurate. My device needs my face to unlock it, and I have a fair amount of facial hair, obvi-

ously a male. How come I get ads that are clearly for females?

When I was in the military each of us had a specific unique number that identified us. We wrote this down every time we did something, enter a building, wanted something to eat, showed up for a required duty. I was glad to be done with that when I got out, I thought I would never have to do that sort of thing again. However, it is back, now it is your birthday. Go to the doctor, enter your birthday, pick up a prescription you enter your birthday, buy an endangered animal you enter your birthday. I should just get it tattooed on my hand so they can scan it.

Those are a few of the thoughts bouncing around my head this week, and a couple of run-on sentences just for the fun of it.

Hearing “no”

My Front Porch • Lynette Sowell

For more than 20 years, I made my way through the fiction writing world. I've heard "yes" more than 20 times from publishers, editors and agents. But there have been plenty of times I've heard "no."

My first "no" came in 1999, a one-page typed letter from an acquisitions editor several weeks after she requested the whole 45,000-word manuscript after I'd mailed her a proposal in a big, fat United States Post Office envelope.

I sat down, pulled my "baby" out of the flat envelope, held it tenderly (ok, so I'm being dramatic) and bawled. She liked my writing. But it was too similar to what was al-

ready "out there." Please, send me another proposal in the future. I completely missed that part due to my shock and disbelief that she didn't send me a contract along with a big fat advance check.

I gritted my teeth and went to work again, this time submitting a historical fiction proposal set in Kansas. Again, months rolled by. Then came an email, same publisher. We'd progressed to electronic communications. "Good story," he said. "But you really need to edit the soup out of your work." He then proceeded to name, line after line in the first chapter, all the "errors" and suggested tweaks I should make. (He really was right!)

More commiserating with fellow writers. And chocolate. Chocolate always helps.

What was wrong with my writing? Worse, what was wrong with *them*, that they didn't see the beauty and charm of my story? Sure, I could be edited. I sucked it up, and kept writing.

More rejections. I entered contests, placed in some, won one. Again, more proposal "nos" came in. I finally got an agent.

Again, the "nos" came. It was hard to not take it personally. Again, editing staff changed and the new editor, one I'd met in person at a conference, seemed to take forever to respond.

I started to think the

woman just didn't like my writing. Or was it me?

Other friends started to hear "yes," and I was starting to doubt if this was worth it. My kids were still relatively young; I worked full time. My writing time was late at night, or a stolen hour on a Saturday.

Finally, in the spring of 2005, I decided to put in one more proposal, this time for an anthology co-written with a trio of author friends. They were all published, and I was the newbie.

Out of frustration, I decided if this didn't happen, then I was going to give it up. Clearly, I was wasting my time. Maybe I could use my writing skills and passion in an-

other way, but I didn't see how. This was long before my newspaper days. Time was marching along and so much was going on in the real world I didn't want to miss while sitting at a keyboard.

Then the first "yes" email arrived in May 2005, and in 2006, *Windswept Weddings* released, containing my novella Heart's Refuge.

I signed my name to a very real contract and put it in the mail. I remember seeing my book in Walmart the following summer. I still received some painful and frustrating "nos," but my approach changed over the years.

One thing I've learned is that "nos" are

often not personal. I was taking a business transaction and deeply personalizing it. How often do we do that? We hear a "no" from someone, and it upends our day. Many times - no, most of the time - I'm convinced that those "nos" we hear aren't personal slights, whether it's dealing with a company, a boss, or what have you. Someone's just doing their job, and it's not about us. The times that it *is* about us, there are other recourses.

But most of the time, the "no" we hear is just from someone doing their job. That doesn't make hearing "no" any easier, but it does help a little. That, and some chocolate. Always, chocolate.

Belton ISD offers free summer meals to all children

Special to the Journal

With summer break underway, Belton ISD is continuing its commitment to support students and families by offering free meals through the 2025 Summer Feeding Program.

Made possible through a partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the program ensures that children 18 and younger—and enrolled students with disabilities up to age 21—can access nutritious meals at no cost while school is out.

"Summer can be a challenging time for many families, especially when it comes to consistent access to meals," said Belton ISD Nutrition Services Director Chris Teager. "We're here to help bridge that gap and ensure no child goes without."

No registration or ID is required, and all meals must be consumed on-site. Meals are available at the following sites:

May 27–July 25 (Monday–Friday)
Lunch | 11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
Hubbard Branch Elementary – 1651 O.T. Tyler Dr., Belton
Belton Early Childhood School – 501 E. 4th Ave., Belton
Chisholm Trail Elementary – 1082 S. Wheat Rd., Belton
June 2–June 26 (Monday–Thursday)
Breakfast | 8:15–8:45 a.m.
Lunch | 12:15–12:45 p.m.
Southwest Elementary – 611 Saunders St., Belton
South Belton Middle School – 805 Sagebrush Dr., Belton
May 28–July 25 (Monday–Friday)
Breakfast | 7:30–8:00 a.m.
Lunch | 11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
Belton Christian Youth Center – 505 E. Avenue C, Belton
Closures:
In observance of holidays:
Belton ISD sites will be closed on

Thursday, June 19 and Monday, June 30 through Friday, July 4.
BCYC will be closed on Thursday, June 19 and Friday, July 4.
The Summer Feeding Program is part of a nationwide effort to address food in-

security during the summer months and is funded by the USDA. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.
For additional details, please call Belton ISD Nutrition Services at (254) 215–2186.



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LIFESTYLES

THE BELTON JOURNAL

Belton Lions Club pushes to grow Flag Program before July 4

By **DANIEL MOCTEZUMA**
The Belton Journal

The Belton Lions Club is encouraging residents to sign up for its year-round Flag Program before July 4, aiming to restore participation after a recent drop caused by community turnover.

The program provides homeowners with a mounted American flag for \$30 a year, including the flag, pole, and ground sleeve. The club maintains and replaces flags as needed.

“We currently have about 147 flags out,” said Karen Stagner, club secretary. “We’re hoping to add 50 more by July Fourth.”

The program originally involved volunteers placing and removing flags on specific holidays. In time, the club shifted to a “perpetual” model where flags stay up year-round, provided they’re lit at night in accordance

with flag code. Replacements are handled by the club upon request.

“Wouldn’t it be great to drive into your street and see it lined with flags?” said Stagner. “It shows pride and also supports everything we’re able to do in Belton.”

Participation has decreased by over 50 homes in the last few years, according to the club. To counter that, members are reaching out to local HOAs like Dawson Ranch and considering door-to-door block walking to reconnect with residents and grow the program.

“We’ve had a lot of people move in and out. When that happens, sometimes the flag just sits there or disappears,” Stagner said. “We want the new folks to know this program exists.”

While the Flag Program is the focus for the summer, it’s also one of



Courtesy Photo

The Belton Lions Club provides homeowners with a mounted American flag for \$30 a year, including the flag, pole, and ground sleeve. The club maintains and replaces flags as needed.

the club’s key fundrais- Club uses proceeds to ers. The Belton Lions support children with

disabilities, underserved families, and various community programs.

This includes collecting eyeglasses for the Texas Lions Eyeglass Recycling Center, sponsoring students with two annual scholarships, funding the Lions Pavilion and accessible playground at Heritage Park, and supporting the Texas Lions Camp, a free summer camp for children with physical, intellectual, and medical conditions.

The club also helps with Project Heartbeat’s Angel Tree program for Belton ISD students, holiday food baskets for families with special needs, and Back-to-School with God, an event on July 19 at Yettie Polk Park where kids receive haircuts, eye exams, and free hot dogs.

They also host Christmas with Santa, a sensory-friendly celebration for special needs

families that includes therapy dogs, gift bags, and support booths from local organizations.

Another major annual fundraiser is the “Captain D Dash for Sight” 5K on October 4 at Heritage Park. The fun run is followed by the Wacky Boat Race on Nolan Creek, where custom homemade boats compete for prizes.

The club also organizes community efforts in partnership with groups like the Temple-Belton Lady Lions. On May 22, 2024, they helped deliver food and drinks to recovery crews working across Morgan’s Point after the severe storm.

“That’s the reason we do fundraisers — without our supporters and sponsors, there’s a lot we wouldn’t be able to do,” Stagner said.

For more information, visit beltonlionclub.com.

The Belton Fire Department was dispatched to El Mexicano Bar & Grill on Saturday morning for a roof fire. The call was received around 5:49 a.m. As firefighters arrived on the scene, flames were visible from the roof of the building. The fire started in a kitchen exhaust fan before spreading to the roof, burning a 20-foot section before it was extinguished. No injuries were reported. Several nearby fire departments responded in a mutual aid capacity, including Temple, Salado, and Nolanville.

— **Courtesy Photo**



BHS tri-annual reunion set for June 14

Special to the Journal

The Belton High School Ex-students Association will host its Tri-annual Reunion Saturday, June 14, 2025, at the Bel-

ton High School Commons Area. This event combines fundraising for the Belton Education Foundation with an opportunity for former BHS classmates to reconnect.

The Belton Education Foundation (BEF) is an independent, community-based, non-profit organization that supports Belton ISD student achievement and success, through grant funding to teachers, scholarships to Belton ISD graduates, and assistance for district

projects.

Established in 1992, BEF has impacted students by awarding more than 2.9 million dollars to some 2,700 graduating seniors. Scholarships for students allow them to pursue further education after high school. More than 400 grants to

teachers, totaling over \$750,000, have allowed those teachers to implement innovative educational strategies.

The Tri-annual Reunion begins with registration starting at 8:30 a.m. Saturday, June 14. The program and business meeting begin at 10:30 a.m. The Ex-student Association will present, for approval, a roster of officers and a proposal to change to a bi-annual reunion beginning in two years.

Dr. Malinda Golden,

BISD superintendent, will speak at the event, sharing successes and challenges of the district.

Graduates of Belton High School from all classes are invited to participate. A bar-b-que lunch will be included, and attendees will have the opportunity to donate to BEF. Graduating classes of particular years have set up scholarships in their class’s name. Other classes are encouraged to also sponsor scholarships.

Registration is \$25.00 per person and should be mailed to Zonna Copeland Chenoweth. Deadline for reservations is Wednesday, June 4, 2025.

Contact Jack Davis, jrdsta@aol.com, Zonna Chenoweth, zkchenoweth@gmail.com for questions about the event and for registration forms.

NOTICE of Federal Program Planning for Belton ISD

The Belton Independent School District is currently in the planning process for the 2025-2026 ESSA Consolidated Federal Application for the following programs:

- Title I, Part A — Improving Basic Programs
- Title I, Part C — Education of Migratory Children
- Title II, Part A — Supporting Effective Instruction
- Title III, Part A — English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement Act
- Title IV, Part A — Student Support and Academic Enrichment

Private Nonprofit Schools and/or Homeschools with government nonprofit status that serve students living within Belton ISD boundaries and that are interested in receiving program information on participation and/or providing input into program planning for services, please contact Dawn Schiller at (254) 215-2032 or dawn.schiller@bisd.net by 12:00 pm on June 5, 2025.

Schools that choose to participate in programs and services must comply with all federal requirements. Campus eligibility for Title I is based on low-income data and enrollment.

Belton ISD does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs, activities, or hiring practices. Inquiries regarding the Title IX policies should be directed to Todd Schiller, 254-215-2015.

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EDITORIAL

Skunk in the Sky

Coffee Talk • Renae Brumbaugh Green

A few years ago, after my daddy died and my mother was living alone, she called my brother, Shelby. Her voice was frantic as she said, “Get over here. Now. There’s a skunk on top of the martin house.”

The martin house was a birdhouse my dad built before his passing. It perched on top of a sixteen-foot post. It was a work of art, a double decker with twelve tiny bird apartments for the martins to make nests—six on top and six on bottom. It was painted white, with real shingles on the roof.

It was fun to watch the martins—and other birds—make their nests there. But a skunk? Do skunks even climb? I don’t think so.

Shelby called me. “Start checking on nursing homes. I think Mom’s got dementia.” He told me about their conversation as he drove to her house. I don’t blame him. I thought the

same thing.

But when he got there, sure enough, a skunk was draped over the martin house, sixteen feet in the air. He wasn’t moving. He was either dead or frozen in fear. Shelby called me back and told me what he saw. At that point, I started checking on facilities for both of them. My brother is six years older than I am, and this wasn’t the first time I’d questioned his sanity. Or Mom’s. Fortunately, I take after Dad’s side of the family.

After exploring their options, Shelby then called the game warden, who I’m pretty sure thought he was being pranked. But he drove out to Mom’s house, way out in the country. When the warden arrived, he confirmed that yes, that was a skunk. On the birdhouse. Sixteen feet in the air.

And yes, the skunk was dead. (It could have been a she, but this just seems like a testoster-

one-driven shenanigan to me.)

The game warden offered a logical explanation. Sometimes, birds of prey will lose their grip on their victims and drop them. Or they may change their minds, as most animals don’t prefer the taste of skunk. For whatever reason, some bird probably killed this little guy, decided he didn’t like the smell, discarded little Pepé le Pew, and went in search of something more savory.

And that, my friends, is how my mother ended up with a skunk on her birdhouse. At least the poor fellow went out with a great story to tell. Too bad he didn’t get to tell it. I guess that’s my job.

I wonder who the bird was. Instead of focusing on her normal prey of mice and rabbits, she let something flashy catch her eye. She got excited by the blingy black-and-white number

and dove in. Then once she’d committed, she realized what a mistake she’d made, and she let go. At least she had the sense to do that.

Sometimes my stubbornness makes me hang onto things far too long, even when I know I’ve made a mistake. I’ll stand by my decision to my detriment, just so I don’t have to admit I was wrong. And I end up eating skunk. I need to learn to be like that owl (in my mind, it was an owl) and admit to my mistakes early. The sooner I let go and move on from my bad choices, the sooner I can feast on the good things God has for my future.

“A person who refuses to admit his mistakes can never be successful. But if that person confesses and forsakes those mistakes, another chance is given.”

Proverbs 28:13

Crowning Moments

Shop the Insanity • Darren Blair

For those who aren’t aware, there’s a type of dental prosthetic known as a “crown”. The long and short of it is that if a situation happens to where one of your teeth is so badly damaged that less invasive or intense techniques aren’t sufficient to repair everything, your tooth will be shaved down to serve as a mount for an artificial tooth that will cover what’s left of it. At various points during the procedure, the dental professional doing the work will take a series of molds and impressions of your mouth that will be used to make the crowns. You’ll be fitted with a set of “temporary” crowns right then and there, and these will keep everything protected until a proper set of highly-realistic “permanent” crowns can be custom-created for you from high-grade materials that with any luck will last your lifetime. It can be a frustrating process, especially since your

body has to adjust to the “permanent” crowns once they get adhered in place and you have to determine for yourself what foods you can comfortably eat.

As I type this, I just had four “permanent” crowns put into my mouth to join the three that are already there. I’m looking at the schedule of what will be published when, and I’ve noted that by the time this sees print I’ll likely have three more teeth fitted for “temporaries” ahead of their eventually having “permanents” as well. Yeah.

The long and short of it is that I have a deteriorative condition in my mouth, a condition that I appear to have inherited from my maternal grandmother. It started to rear its ugly head a few years ago, and it’s been catch as catch can on trying to slow the process; that I have chronic dry mouth related to a permanent issue with my sinuses isn’t helping any. Even though

I am regularly brushing and flossing, and I make every single dental appointment without fail, the damage slowly builds up. In this case, I bit down on a toffee bar without realizing that I had a cavity in one of my teeth, and the toffee bar (which actually wasn’t that good, to be honest) was hard enough to break that weakened tooth. That tooth and a few of its neighbors were already being monitored, and that toffee bar sped things along. Not long after the temporaries were in, a different tooth I’d been having issues with decided to call it quits, hence it and its neighbors needing to go now.

Let’s just say I’m getting very, very tired of oatmeal.

Note what I said above about how we’re working to slow the process. Regular brushing. Regular flossing. Regular dental appointments to include cleaning and fluoride treatments. These

are all helping to preserve what teeth I’ve still got.

Most of us likely grew up getting constant reminders – and even those little comic books – encouraging everyone to develop a proper and consistent oral hygiene routine that included regular dental examinations. Well folks, there’s a reason for that. You’re talking a few minutes of effort a day, plus two afternoons a year, in exchange for your continued health. Believe me when I say that dental surgery isn’t a particularly fun experience and that it can be quite frustrating to discover the hard way that some of your favorite foods are no longer on the menu because you can’t actually chew them anymore.

And yes folks, they do indeed make special formulations of toothpaste and mouthwash for kids. Ask your dentist for more information.

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Council holds work session on budget

Special to the Journal

The Belton City Council held its first work session on the proposed Fiscal Year 2026 budget on June 3, with discussions centered on the General Fund and Debt Service Fund.

This session marks the beginning of a series of meetings leading to the adoption of the city’s budget and tax rate later this year.

Finance Director Mike Rodgers presented preliminary figures, noting that the FY 2026 budget is designed to be lean, with no new General Fund positions and limited merit-based pay increases capped at 3 percent. The City has typically offered up to 5 percent merit raises.

While it is too early to calculate precisely, a modest increase to the property tax rate from the current 52.25 cents to

around 53 cents per \$100 of taxable value may be considered to maintain service levels and meet policy goals.

However, final rates will be determined in late July after the certified tax roll is received from the Tax Appraisal District of Bell County. Rodgers explained that while property valuations have grown 9 percent over the previous year, the City seeks to balance revenue growth against taxpayer impacts.

Sales tax revenue growth has slowed compared to pandemic-era highs, with projections for FY 2025 falling short of initial estimates. The FY 2026 budget anticipates modest 4 percent growth in sales tax collections, based on state economic forecasts and historical trends.

In terms of expenditures, personnel costs account for 58% of the General Fund budget. The proposed budget reflects a 2.5 percent increase in overall General Fund spending, primarily

due to inflation and IT infrastructure needs.

On the Debt Service Fund, expenditures will rise by about \$300,000 due to new debt issued for the recent purchase of a ladder truck for the Fire Department and the former Miller Heights Elementary School property for a public safety center. Debt payments are structured to maintain the City’s strong AA bond rating without significantly impacting reserves.

The Council will continue budget discussions on June 10, focusing on the Water & Sewer Fund and Drainage Fund. A proposed budget will be presented in July, with adoption targeted for September 9.

Residents are encouraged to stay engaged throughout the budget process. Public hearings and opportunities for input will be announced as the budget process progresses.

Council vote nixes truck stop

Special to the Journal

The Belton City Council voted 5–2 on June 3 to deny a zoning change that would have allowed a Love’s Travel Stop to be built on approximately 18 acres between Toll Bridge Road and the northbound I-35 Service Road.

The denial, approved with prejudice, prevents a similar zoning request for the site from being resubmitted for six months.

The proposal included an 11,863-square-foot travel center, separate fueling areas for cars and trucks, 88 overnight truck parking spaces, six RV parking spaces, and a dog

park.

While the City’s Future Land Use Map designates the area for commercial and retail use, City staff and the Planning and Zoning Commission recommended against the zoning change, citing concerns about the proposed intensity and compatibility with nearby residential development, including the planned River Farm subdivision and an elementary school site.

Several residents and representatives from Hunt Communities, developers of River Farm, spoke in opposition, citing concerns about traffic, environmental impact, proximity to future homes and a school, and poten-

tial effects on property values.

Love’s representatives highlighted the economic benefits, including increased property tax revenue and sales tax generation, and emphasized their efforts to mitigate impacts through site design and landscaping.

Despite these assurances, councilmem-

bers expressed concern about the scale of the truck parking, the overnight nature of the use, and its proximity to residential areas. They acknowledged the area’s designation for future commercial development but felt a large-scale truck stop was not appropriate at the proposed location.

Session - From Page A4

and Houston Senator Paul Bettencourt, into about \$500 in annual savings for the first group and nearly \$1,000 for the second. Businesses will also see about \$2,500 trimmed off their annual tax bill via a measure that increases the business personal property exemption to \$125,000.

The legislature also delivered on a plan to meet the water needs of Texans through the end of the century in the form of legislation written and shepherded through the process by Water, Agriculture, and Rural Affairs Committee chair and Lubbock Senator Charles Perry.

Those bills will ask voters to approve a permanent, \$1 billion annual infusion of general revenue into the state’s water fund, which looks to create new water supply and repair old leaky infrastructure.

After multiple sessions of trying, the Senate at last got a major bail reform bill to the governor’s desk. Because such bills require constitutional amendments, they require a supermajority vote in both chambers. Passed multiple times by the Senate in previous ses-

sions, these bills got close, but never past the 100-vote threshold in the House. This session, lawmakers finally found agreement on SJR 5, by Houston Senator Joan Huffman. That measure, if approved by voters in November, would require the denial of bail for those committed of the most serious crimes should the state be able to prove the person represents a significant flight risk or an on-going threat to public safety.

The last two sessions ended with special called sessions looming due to the failure of key bills in the final days: election security in 2021 and school choice in 2023. Though the governor hasn’t signaled one way or the other, there don’t appear to be any outstanding issues that could call the legislature back into Austin soon.

Unless an unforeseen issue arises in the intervening months, the House and Senate will stand adjourned sine die until the next regular session of the legislature convenes in January of 2027.

Imagine - From Page A1

“Five zones are implemented. There’s shared use parking for developer incentive. It’s community based,” said Crow.

There were exhibits on display for viewing.

“What does success look like one year from now?” said Hernandez.

“A one-year timeline is tough, long-term success is incremental. There will be individual wins,” said Bates.

“It’s like a start up. It never goes to plan; however, keeps moving in the same direction. One, public stakeholders stick with it. Two, there’s an ecosystem like music in Nashville. We hope to build the same ecosystem, for example, the Central Avenue ice cream store was renovated. Linemann did Level Three and is building a steakhouse. One county building turned into a bar. Investors look to be successful and this broadens it,” said Mayor Leigh.

“What are key things for guests to take away?” said Hernandez.

“One, more success. Downtown is a public space to private ownership. Bell County Engineer’s office relocated. The core of downtown is moving. Public space is converting to private,” said Listi.

The audience had a chance to ask questions.

“What about the I-35 expansion?” said Randy Pittenger with the Chamber of Commerce.

“Temple North bound two to three exits, exit 14 by 121 will create circulation with in Belton. TX DOT is working on it. The biggest change will be around Center. There will be a better crossway and roundabouts,” said Leigh.

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Belton volleyball players stand out at FCA Victory Bowl

By Tony Adams
The Belton Journal

The final competition on the FCA Victory Bowl docket was the Red-Blue game in Trojan Gymnasium on Saturday afternoon at University High School in Waco.

The 13th annual game featured a ton of excitement, as Blue team swept the Red team, despite the Reds having a game-point in the second game that Blue overcame with the final three points. The scores of the match were 25-17, 26-24, and 25-21.

Red had three Belton ISD players, with Macyen Dorskocil presenting Belton, and Hanna Ward and MyKenna Johnston representing Lake Belton.

There was a bevy of firepower on both sides of the net. Adley Sykora and Keegan Mayhue (West), Emma Peacock and Kaydee Boland (Blum), Blair Keith and Bre Featherston (Crawford), Chloe Tuiasosopo (Copperas Cove), and Michigan Fetsch (Axtell) represented the Red. Ava Lott (Academy), Emma Patterson and Logan Dyer (Bosqueville), McLaren Williamson and Kaydence Lopez (Lorena), Addison Lippe and Kaygen Marshall (Robinson), Jade Washington (Midway), Mikayla Gray (Chaparral), Kailyn Bragg (Blooming Grove), and Molly Waldrum (Evant) represented the Blue squad.

Dorskocil and Johnston had two early kills, and Ward added two digs in the first game for Red.

Dyer, who was named the FCA Victory Bowl Player of the Game, had four kills down the stretch for Blue to give them the first game.

Johnston had three kills, and Dorskocil added two in the middle of the second game, as Red built a four-point lead down the stretch of the game. However, Blue took a timeout, fought out of a game-point to take seven of the final eight points of the second stanza.

In game three, Blue built an early four-point lead to start and grew the margin to seven points, 19-12.

Red battled their way back to within two points, 23-21. However, Blue received back-to-back kills by Dyer to end the match,

“I thought it was very eye-opening to see everyone’s testimonies and people’s stories,” Dorskocil said. “I made me reflect on my own life, what I went through, and my connection to Christ.”

“I found this week very fulfilling,” Johnston said. “It opened my eyes to the new side of Christ that I did not know about. The testimonies that we heard made me understand that my relationship with Christ is not linear. Being consistent every day brings us closer to God that we all love and cherish.”

“This week helped my grow my faith in God,” Ward said. “Those who shared their testimonies with us were so special. We all will take those with us from the week.”

In all, the coaches and players that participated in this year’s Fellowship of Christian Athletes Victory Bowl week took away valuable life lessons, experiences, and were able to reflect to see their bright futures ahead.

Windrep represents Belton at FCA Victory Bowl basketball

By Tony Adams
The Belton Journal

From the time that the Fellowship of Christian Athletes teams were announced earlier in the spring, the anticipation of last week’s camps, testimonies, teambuilding, and FCA Victory Bowl games around Central Texas were built to an exciting crescendo.

The girls’ basketball fourth installment of the Victory Bowl was held in

Fairfield.

The Blue team withstood a late first-quarter rally to break the game open in the second quarter for a 58-31 win over the Red team.

Belton’s Tyler Waldrep scored a handful of points, pulled in four rebounds, and was in on several plays for the Red team. Other Red team members included on the squad were Laney Elmore (Crawford), Trin-

See FCA,
Page B2

Four BISD players big contributors in FCA Victory Bowl football

By Tony Adams
The Belton Journal

On Saturday, the final day of Fellowship of Christian Athletes Victory Bowl began with the 17th annual Red-Blue contest at Waco ISD Stadium.

Belton ISD’s four players played key roles in Red’s 17-0 lead at the half, as Lake Belton’s Zachary Dodd caught at 23-yard touchdown pass from Ellison Sidney Holland, Belton’s Kegan Sherwood had a key interception and a pair of pass breakups, Lake Belton’s kicking specialist Tommy Stephens booted a 19-yard field goal, several deep kickoffs, and nearly 50 yards per punt, and Lake Belton’s Tate Lisenbe shifted from tackle to tight end for the game, had a catch and sev-

eral key blocks.

The Blue team scored 17 unanswered points in the second half, which included a 10-yard touchdown run with 5:04 to play. Both teams had a shot to pull ahead but could not convert as the game ended in a 17-17 tie.

“It was neat to be able to get to know the guys on both teams, some I met for the first time this week,” Sherwood said. “It was neat to hear testimonies and beliefs of different people our age.”

“We were able to find out how others from different towns,” Lisenbe said. “Getting to know others on a different level was an interesting experience.”

“To compete with guys that you have battled against for four years was a cool experience,” Dodd said.

“Even though it was a tie on the scoreboard, it was a winning experience.”

“To experience this with friends on the field was amazing,” Stephens said. “For a lot of the guys, this is the end of their football experience. But this experience is a life one that we will all treasure.”

With a boatload of talent on each side of the field, the fans were treated to stunning catches, grinding runs, interesting one-on-one matchups, excellent defense, big-play offenses, and solid special teams action.

For many of the players on the gridiron, it was the last time they would don the pads in the late-spring Texas heat. But for all, it was an overall memory that will not soon be forgotten.



Five BISD players participate in the 2025 FCA Victory Bowl Baseball game

By Tony Adams
The Belton Journal

The 2025 Fellowship of Christian Athletes Victory Bowl continued on Friday, as the Red team and Blue team battled it out at Red Murff Field on the campus of the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor.

In the 11th installment of the Red-Blue series, the Blue team outlasted the Red team, 5-3.

Belton ISD had solid representation on the Red side, with Lake Belton’s Bryce Davis, Cameron Bartz, and Brandon Holley, and Belton’s Cole Heisler and Austin Wood. Reece Medrano (Temple), Joseph McMurtry and Troy Ketcham (Troy), Payton Hoelscher and Trent Hicker-

son (Riesel), Easton Vannatta (Crawford), Cooper Reaves and Jordan Wood (Harker Heights), Jeremiah Cunningham (Covington), Easton Rinewalt (West), Shaun Coleman (McGregor), and Brandon Klanika (Axtell) were also on the Red squad.

The Blue squad had plenty of local districts represented. David Little, Charley Steen and Garrett Wiethorn (Midway), Brady Smedshammer and Caleb Carrizales (Lorena), Cooper Massar, Tavion Aguillon and Riley Hoelscher (Rogers), Ian Gomez (Meridian), Andrew Omo (Live Oak), Christian Lazarine and Simon Jarrett (Texas Wind), and Ryder King (Bosqueville) all represented their teams during the week.

There was plenty of good-na-

tured chatter between the teams, with a ton of smiles and laughter.

“It was a long week, with having Bronco baseball camp and FCA, but it was worth it,” Lake Belton head coach Chris Peacock said, who was one of three coaches on the Red coaching staff. “The teams were able to share their testimonies with one another and serve the community was a blessing.”


“The baseball was fun. I have known several guys on both sides for years,” Davis said. “The entire week was fun and a blessing.”

“It was a very cool experience to play baseball with guys that have been friends for several years,” Heisler said. “We spend a lot of time with each other in the summer.



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McCasland, Barrett represent BISD on FCA Victory Bowl Basketball Red squad

By **Tony Adams**
The Belton Journal

The FCA Victory Bowl Boys’ Basketball game continues to grow by the year.

In the fourth installment of the boys’ basketball tilt in Fairfield, the Blue team broke away in the fourth quarter and clinched a 10-point win over the Red squad, 73-63.

Belton’s Easton Barrett was the lone BISD

player on the Red team. Tigers’ head coach Phil McCasland co-coached the Red team with Moody head coach Marty Garcia.

Red erased an early seven-point lead, and trailed Blue at the end of the opening eight minutes, 16-12.

Blue edged the advantage to five points by the end of the first half, 34-29.

The Red team took the lead on Gatesville forward West Allman’s fall-

away jumper that rounded the rim five times before dropping through the net for the 48-47 lead. Blue led at the end of the third, 49-48.

The Blue outscored the Red in the fourth quarter, 24-15 for the win.

Members of the Red team were Barrett, Allman, Kase Cox (Gatesville), Preston King-Holt (Killeen Shoemaker), Hudson Phillips (China Spring), Kade Smith (Crawford), Dominic Sanchez (Moody), and James Johnson (Moody).

The Blue squad included Tristan Evans (Bartlett), Gabe Iwuala (Midway), Wes Snowden (Live Oak), Dre Rutledge (University), Monta Hilliard (LaVega), Jamarion Haynes (Killeen), Zachary Mitchell (Iredell), Rider Seely and Luke Miller (Lorena).

“It was an amazing experience, being around guys our age, whether being familiar with them or meeting them for the first time,” Barrett said.



“Meeting the smaller town guys, you get to see and hear the way that they walk. The common thread is our beliefs.”

“What a great opportunity to meet new players, share testimony in Christ, and come together to play competitive baseball in this environment,” McCasland said.

Asked what his favorite part of the week

was, basketball was near the top, with building the new friendships made in the framework of the week instituted on the court.

“I thought I played well, and I love getting my teammates involved,” Barrett said. “Being able to pass the ball around and involve everyone was so much fun.”

With the excitement

of fellowship, service, and testimony, the week was a complete win on both sides of the court.

“To be able to experience this week was special,” Barrett said. “The host families were amazing, and I was able to get to know others and their experiences in Christ. It is an experience I will always remember.”



Steps to take following a job loss

Scot Hrbacek, CFP® Financial Advisor

A job loss can feel overwhelming. To help put yourself in the best financial position, here are a few steps to take.

File for unemployment. While it won’t fully replace your previous pay, it’s a help that may last up to 26 weeks. The process can take time, so do this quickly.

If you need to adjust your budget, get creative. Where can you cut living expenses or find cheaper alternatives? Would a part-time job help? Can you cash in on your savings, investments or the value of an insurance policy?

And if you have a

flexible savings account — or FSA — it likely needs to be used within 60 days after employment ends.

Then there’s health insurance. If you depended on your employer’s plan, you may need to explore COBRA options or private coverage using monies in a health savings account (HSA). Check out the Health Insurance Marketplace at healthcare.gov.

Considering options and making appropriate moves after a job loss may help you feel more confident financially and more prepared to take on your next chapter.

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

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FCA - From Page B1

ity Price (Ellison), Lillian Hodge and Sarah Vernon (Providence Prep), Kelli McKee (Hico), and Jamie Snider (Grandview).

The Blue squad members included Journee White (Academy), Ally Ihler (Salado), Avery Heard (Lorena), Tynia Minnitt (Waco Connally), Mycah Miller (Mexia), Jaci Abram and Jimilyah Nash (Fairfield), and Jayla Lee and Haylee Harper (Bosqueville).

“It was a neat experience getting to share our testimonies in Christ,” Waldrep said. “To experience other athlete’s mindsets was eye-opening. The host homes were so sweet, and we had an opportunity to see what life is like in other cities. It was an incredible experience.”

The game was the final of Waldrep’s career, as she will embark on a journey to pursue a civil engineering degree from Texas A&M University in the fall. She cited former Lady Tiger Basketball head coaches Brenda Gomez and Eric Regier, and current head coach Anne Marie Zuilhof as three mentors that were instrumental in her middle school and high school careers at Belton.



“I knew Coach Gomez in middle school, had Coach Regier at the beginning of high school, and finished my career with Coach Zuilhof,” Waldrep said. “All three had their styles and motivated all of us to be the best on the court and our community.”

Salado head coach Diane Konarik, a former girls’ basketball assistant coach at Belton, is extremely busy this time of year with camps through dif-

ferent organizations. She loves participating in FCA and to be able to coach basketball with players that share a common thread: the Christian faith.

“I love coaching basketball, and I always appreciate the opportunity to coach an FCA event,” Konarik said. “To be able to gather different players from different schools and share the love of basketball from different walks of life is special.”

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Krueger retires as Belton baseball head coach

By Clay Whittington
The Belton Journal

Mark Krueger’s career is complete.

For more than three decades, he dedicated himself to Belton and all its students, serving in multiple capacities, including teacher, administrator and coach.

While Krueger assumed several roles during his career, little can rival his years overseeing the Tigers on the diamond, where his love for baseball was groomed by his father at an early age.

The passion never faded.

Following more than 30 years at Belton ISD, however, highlighted by a successful nine-season stint as Tigers head coach, Krueger has decided to depart into retirement, and while his accomplishments are extensive, he chooses to define his career by more than victories, play-off runs or trophies.

“I have been very blessed to have been an educator and coach for the last 33 years,” Krueger said. “I am very thankful for every coach I have worked with during this time, but more importantly, the players.

“Not only have they been suc-

cessful in their careers after baseball, but they have become great husbands and fathers.”

Despite taking extreme pride in his role to help groom and mold countless boys into men on the field, Krueger has plenty of post-game celebrations to reflect on as well.

After playing for his father at Taylor, Krueger was a member of Mary Hardin-Baylor’s 1992 team responsible for finishing second at the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics World Series.

Then, he embarked on a 22-year stint as Belton’s assistant coach, and along the way, he was involved in one of the school’s most memorable moments as the Tigers emerged from the 1994 season as the Class 4A state champion.

In 2017, Krueger was named the team’s head coach, and one year later, as a fourth seed, Belton rallied from a series-opening loss to upset district champion Cedar Hill in three games. The Tigers would be swept out of the playoffs by Flower Mound Marcus in the ensuing round, but it did not matter.

“Our team never looked at the seeding or records,” Krueger said. “They felt they could play

with anyone. After losing, a college coach sent me a text saying, ‘I could tell that this loss was particularly difficult to swallow for this team, and with this generation of entitlement, I have to tell you, it’s refreshing to see. Your team played with class, unlike many other teams I have seen this year, and your team played the game the way it was meant to be played.’

“That text basically summed it up about our team.”

Following nine consecutive postseason appearances, though, Krueger’s career is complete with Nick Kozole recently being named as his successor as head coach.

Now, a new era begins at Belton with Krueger watching from the bleachers for the first time in recent history, and while it will be an unfamiliar viewpoint for the longtime coach, he already knows what he will see.

“The future of baseball in Belton continues to be promising with both high schools continuing to have successful seasons,” Krueger said. “I am excited to be able to sit back and watch the continued development and success of baseball in the area.”



FISHING REPORT

Belton Lake

FAIR. Water stained; 77 degrees; 2.31 feet below pool. Big changes were brought on this past week with unseasonably hot days and nights bringing the water temperature up quickly and nudging us toward summer patterns. The water is warming rapidly and the fishing is getting tricky. There is a definite transition underway in which the white bass are making use of the bottom less and less and are beginning to suspend routinely. There are two drivers for this: stratification of the water by temperature which will eventually lead to the creation of the thermocline by mid-June, and the increasing presence of young-of-the-year shad making their way into open water. When fish are suspended, I rely heavily on my 2-D sonar, traditional sonar or colored sonar, as the three-dimensional cone it makes use of extends the echo signature of the fish into long arches which are larger and much more easily seen on a screen than the shorter rice grain signatures seen on side-imaging and down-imaging. The MAL Heavy with silver blade and chartreuse tail has been a consistent lure for the past three weeks. It shows up remarkably well on forward-facing sonar and 2-D sonar. Drop below the suspended fish and crank it up at a steady cadence at least two cranks above the fish showing highest in the water column. Report by Bob Maindelle, Holding the Line Guide Service. Catfish are good. Anglers can find blue catfish around points and sand flats in 10-20 feet of water. Larger fresh cut baits have been effective for trophy size fish. Eater fish under 10 pounds are active and slow drifting with small cut shad along sand flats will produce. Channel catfish are good and can be caught on punch bait in 10-25 feet of water. Flatheads are excellent on live bait in shallow water around river mouths. Report by Brian Worley, B&S Catfishing. As we enjoy a weekend of fishing we salute and honor our Nation’s heroes this Memorial Day.

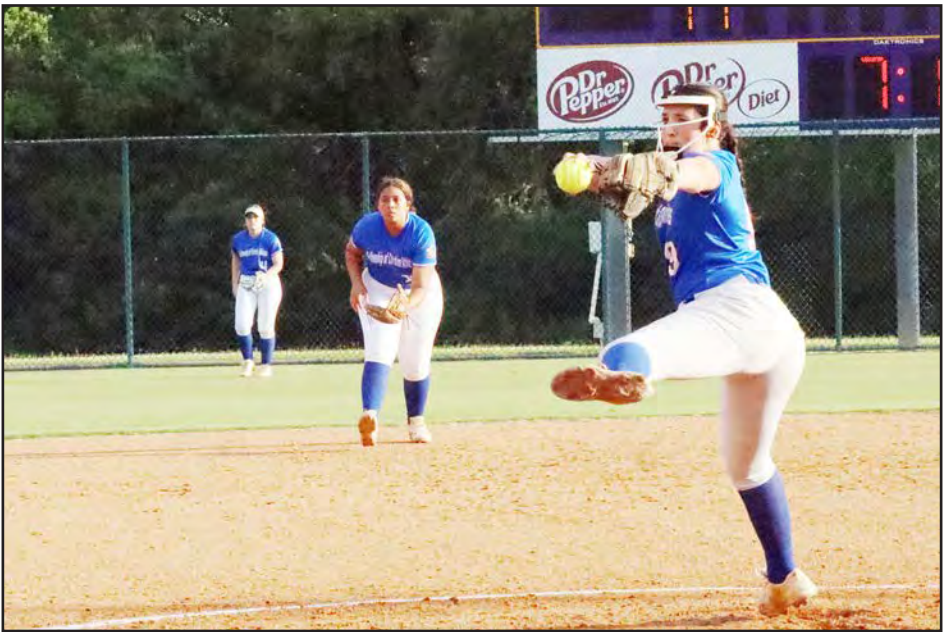
Stillhouse

GOOD. Water stained; 77 degrees; 3.42 feet below pool. Big changes were brought on this past week with unseasonably hot days and nights bringing the water temperature up quickly and nudging us toward summer patterns. The water is warming rapidly and the fishing is getting tricky. There is a definite transition underway in which the white bass are making use of the bottom less and less and are beginning to suspend routinely. There are two drivers for this: stratification of the water by temperature which will eventually lead to the creation of the thermocline by mid-June, and the increasing presence of young-of-the-year shad making their way into open water. When fish are suspended, I rely heavily on my 2-D sonar, traditional sonar or colored sonar, as the three-dimensional cone it makes use of extends the echo signature of the fish into long arches which are larger and much more easily seen on a screen than the shorter rice grain signatures seen on side-imaging and down-imaging. The MAL Heavy with silver blade and chartreuse tail has been a consistent lure for the past three weeks. It shows up remarkably well on forward-facing sonar and 2-D sonar. Drop below the suspended fish and crank it up at a steady cadence at least two cranks above the fish showing highest in the water column. Report by Bob Maindelle, Holding the Line Guide Service. As we enjoy a weekend of fishing we salute and honor our Nation’s heroes this Memorial Day. Anticipate increased recreational boater traffic this weekend.



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LEGALS

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The City of Morgan’s Point Resort Planning and Zoning Commission will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, June 24, 2025, at 6:00 PM, and the City Council will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, July 8, 2025, at 6:00 PM. Both meetings will take place at the Morgan’s Point Resort Event Center, 60 Morgan’s Point Blvd, Morgan’s Point Resort, Texas 76513. The purpose of the public hearings is to consider a request by Tanya Brown and Dragan Ristic for a Specific Use Permit (SUP) to allow the operation of a Short-Term Vacation Rental at the property located at: 29 Vista Drive, Morgan’s Point Resort, Texas 76513 Legal Description: MORGANS POINT RESORT SECTION 8B, BLOCK 005, LOT 0011 Bell Cad Parcel ID: 1795 All interested persons are encouraged to

LEGALS

attend and participate. Written comments may be submitted to the City Secretary’s Office at 8 Morgan’s Point Blvd, Morgan’s Point Resort, TX 76513, prior to the public hearings. For questions or additional information, contact Camille Bowser, City Secretary, at (254) 742-3206 or Camille.bowser@mprt.tx.us 06.05,06.19

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The City of Morgan’s Point Resort Planning and Zoning Commission will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, June 24, 2025, at 6:00 PM, and the City Council will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, July 8, 2025, at 6:00 PM. Both meetings will take place at the Morgan’s Point Resort Event Center, 60 Morgan’s Point Blvd, Morgan’s Point Resort, Texas 76513. The purpose of the public hearings is to consider a request by Lori Pagel for a variance to extend her driveway and carport 18 feet out which will pass her property line and make a carport 160 Lake Forest Dr, Morgan’s Point Resort, Texas 76513 Legal Description: MORGANS POINT RESORT SECTION 17, BLOCK 008, LOT PT 1, 2, (1, LESS NE TRI (61.38’ X 9.97’ X 60.17’) & SW TRI OF 2) Bell Cad Parcel ID: 332645 All interested persons are encouraged to attend and participate. Written comments may be submitted to the City Secretary’s Office at 8 Morgan’s Point Blvd, Morgan’s Point Resort, TX 76513, prior to the public hearings. For questions or additional information, contact Camille Bowser, City Secretary, at (254) 742-3206 or camille.bowser@mprt.tx.us. 06.05,06.19

LEGALS

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 Jennine Cintron, 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 29th day of May 20 25 Joanna Staton, District Clerk of Bell County, Texas, 1201 Huey Road, P.O. Box 909, Belton, TX 76513 BY C. Rodriguez, Deputy 06.05

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of KEITH LOUIS MARINNIE, SR., Deceased, were issued on May 21, 2025, in Cause No. 24CPB00589, pending in the County Court at Law No. 1 of Bell County, Texas, to: ROBERT MARINNIE. 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: ESTATE OF KEITH LOUIS MARINNIE, SR., ROBERT MARINNIE, 8413 Mineral Springs Dr., Manassas, VA 20112 DATED the 28th day of May, 2025 KAREN M VILLANUEV BY W. RANDY HARRELL, KAREN M. VILLANUEVA, State Bar No.: 24102608, Telephone: (254) 771-1855, Facsimile: (254) 771-2082, E-mail: karen@templelowoffice.com 06.05

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of JAMES LEE CRIPE, Deceased, were issued on May 15, 2025, in Cause No. 25CPB00252, pending in the County Court-At-Law No: 1, Bell County, Texas, to: ALLAN ROSS CRIPE. 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: DEVON S. LINZY Attorney at Law, PO Box 428, TEMPLE, TX 76503 DATED the 28th day of May, 2025. DEVON S. LINZY Attorney for ALLAN ROSS CRIPE, State Bar No.: 24086218, PO Box 428, TEMPLE, TX 76503, Telephone: (254) 773-1663, Facsimile: (254) 773-2574, Email: devon@linzythigpen.com 06.05

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of DONELL C. VITTETOE, Deceased, were issued on May 15, 2025, in Cause No. 25CPB00240, pending in the County Court-At-Law No: 1, Bell County, Texas, to: GENE C. VITTETOE. 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: DEVON S. LINZY Attorney at Law, PO Box 428, TEMPLE, TX 76503 DATED the 28th day of May, 2025. DEVON S. LINZY Attorney for GENE C. VITTETOE, State Bar No.: 24086218, PO Box 428 ,TEMPLE, TX 76503, Telephone: (254) 773-1663, Facsimile: (254) 773-2574, Email: devon@linzythigpen.com 06.05

APPLICATION HAS BEEN MADE WITH THE TEXAS ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE COMMISSION

for an original Mixed Beverage Permit (MB) for LIVING ON FAITH INVESTMENTS, LLC. dba HIGHLANDS LOUNGE at 122 N PENELOPE SUITE B, BELTON, BELL COUNTY, TEXAS, 76513. AMBER HILL (Manager) 06.05,06.12PD



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THE STATE OF TEXAS CITATION BY PUBLICATION-PARENT AND CHILD

To: Joshua Caldwell, Elianor Vivens, 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 Second Amended Petition of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Petitioner, was filed in the 146th Judicial District Court of Bell County, Texas, on February 5, 2025, against Briana Taylor, Joshua Caldwell, Elianor Vivens, Kenneth Parnell, Respondent(s), numbered 24DFAM348383, and entitled “In the Interest of BRIELLE TAYLOR, 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: BRIELLE TAYLOR, DOB: November 19, 2021, Place of birth: Texas LA’QUINCY TAYLOR, DOB: December 9, 2022, Place of birth: Texas, CHRISTINE TAYLOR, DOB: August 19, 2024, Place of birth: Texas The court has authority in this suit to render an order in the children’s interest that will be

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CRYPTO FUN

Determine the code to reveal the answer!

Solve the code to discover words related to Father's Day. Each number corresponds to a letter. (Hint: 15 = E)

A. 23 19 9 11 15 10

Clue: Male parent

B. 25 15 4 9 24 10

Clue: Provides guidance

C. 14 19 10 15 4 9

Clue: Guardian

D. 2 15 13 15 16 10 19 9 15

Clue: Throw a party

Answers: A. father B. mentor C. parent D. celebrate

Math Blocks

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

		2	31
	6	10	27
5	16		35
36	31	26	

14	16	5
10	9	11
2	9	20

Solution

SUDOKU

	8	3	6			4		
					2			1
		1						
7		5	2					
1					6		7	5
				9				4
			3		9			
4								
5		2	8			3		6

Level: Intermediate

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WORD SCRAMBLE

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06/09: Bookworms	06/20: Trailblazers Walking Group
06/12: 42 Dominoes	06/23: Well-read Women; Monday Canasta
06/13: TGIF	06/25: Crochet and Knit; Fun Lunch
06/14: Couples Night Out	06/26: 42 Dominoes
06/16: Snack time Mahjong	06/28: Jimmy's Egg
06/17: Bunco	
06/18: Popcorn Bridge	

**"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."**

CAC announces 2025 concert lineups

The Cultural Activities Center in Temple has announced lineups for its two premier music series, and visiting bands will include Los Lonely Boys, Asleep at the Wheel and the wildly popular Shinyribs. 2025 will usher in new music in both the Texas Music Series and the Central Texas Orchestral Society's Classical Music Series. Some old friends will be making return engagements in Temple, and many new performers also will be playing the CAC stage. For more information, please visit <https://www.cacarts.org/events>. Be on the lookout for the full 2025 Texas Music Series lineup in next weeks edition of the newspaper.

Here's a look at the 2025 Texas Music Series:

RUTHIE FOSTER JAZZ BAND — July 12

With five Grammy nominations to her name, Ruthie Foster stands as a testament to the power of authenticity and resilience in music. Her soulful melodies, heartfelt lyrics and an unwavering commitment to her art inspire audiences and fellow musicians as she continues to carve a path uniquely her own.

AN CLIBURN FINALIST CLAYTON STEPHENSON — Oct. 18

American pianist Clayton Stephenson's love for music is immediately apparent in his joyous charisma onstage, expressive power and natural ease at the instrument.

ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL — Nov. 8

Founded in 1970, Asleep at the Wheel has been part of the American roots music landscape for more than 50 years.

SHINYRIBS - Dec. 6

Shinyribs, a regular visitor to the CAC, defies genres as a melting pot of Texas blues, New Orleans funk, horn-driven Memphis soul, country twang, border music, big band swing and roots-rock. The 2025 CTOS Classic Music Series includes four big shows.

Wilhite Family Reunion - June 7

The descendants and families of George Albert Wilhite and Frances Jane Martin Wilhite will hold a family reunion from 11am to 4pm, Saturday, June 7, at the Belton Church of Christ, 3003 N. Main St. in Belton. Attendees are asked to bring a covered dish for lunch. For information call Cindy Bounds Gilleland at 254-939-6761.

Historic Escape Games - June 12

There has been a crime at the museum and it is up to you to find the culprit! You have 60 minutes to work together, solve the crime, and escape! There are two times available for the Zombie Apocalypse game. 6:00pm & 7:15pm. Tickets are \$12/person. Pre-registration is required. Games are private and limited to 8 players (ages 13 years and older) of the same group per game time. Players under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult player. Please submit one form per group as all games are private. Please be mindful of the age requirements. Payments can be made through the payment link on the registration form below. BE SURE TO SUBMIT THE FORM AFTER SUBMITTING PAYMENT.

Bell County Master Gardeners - June 13

The Bell County Master Gardeners and Troy Chamber of Commerce Lunch and Learn presents "Herbs 101" on Friday, June 13th from 12 to 1 P.M. at the Troy Community Center, 201 E. Main St., Troy. Certified Master Gardeners Glenn Melton and Barbara Ishikawa will be speaking about turf grasses and other ground covers specific to central Texas. Class Limit: 50. Please register at <https://bit.ly/3DRcaID>.

Belton's 4th of July Celebration and PRCA Rodeo - June 28 through July 5

Join us in celebrating patriotism, traditional family values, and small-town America at the Belton 4th of July Celebration! Music is an important part of our celebration with the Backyard Party at Schoepf's Concert and Fireworks show being an annual favorite. Kicking off our weeklong celebration is the Downtown Street Party and Concert on June 28th! The Downtown Street Party is open to the public as a free non-ticketed event. Reserved VIP areas are available for sponsors. With an estimated 30,000+ people lining the streets, and a live televised broadcast reaching around the world, the 100-year tradition of the Belton 4th of July Celebration will include a 1 1/2 mile parade route running south on Main Street (FM317) from the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor to the Bell County Courthouse, then east on Central Avenue, and north on Birdwell to the Belton Police Memorial. Following the parade, much of the crowd moves to the adjacent Liberty Park for the Festival on Nolan Creek with food and craft vendors, games, a petting zoo, static displays of military and first responder equipment, and live entertainment at the centrally located gazebo. Carnival rides and attractions fill Liberty Park located within a short walking distance on the Belton Hike and Bike Trail. The three-night PRCA Rodeo is held July 3-5 at the Cadence Bank Center, an indoor, air-conditioned facility with a capacity for 5,900 rodeo attendees. Cowboys from around the country descend on the only PRCA Rodeo in Texas during this holiday weekend making it a must-see event. For more information visit beltonchamber.com.

NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) will meet both on TUESDAY, June 10th and June 24th at 6:30pm at the Temple VA Hospital. Use the entrance on the Valet parking side of the hospital and take the elevator to the 5th floor -Conference Room 5G31. Both care-givers, supporters and those suffering from mental illness are welcome to join us for mutual support and sharing of information. For more information, call 254-771-3638.

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

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

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

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

Bell Fine Arts Visitors welcome Wednesday's from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 306 E 5th Ave in Belton. Ma-jong 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 betryreichert@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 BISD 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/takemehome. Read more about the program here: https://www.beltontexas.gov/news_detail_T11_R1166.php.

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

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

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

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

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

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



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	TEMPLE Christ Episcopal Church and School 300 N. Main St. ~ 254.773.1657 Christian Life Church 4343 West FM 93 ~ 254.939.2626 Covenant Lutheran Church 4202 Hickory Rd. ~ 254.733.7718 First Baptist Church Temple 8015 West Adams Ave. ~ 254.773.6866	SURROUNDING AREA Central Union Church of Christ Nolanville 100 W. Avenue G ~ 254-698-0313 Little River United Methodist Church 104 N Kings Tr. ~ 254.982.4767 Little Rivers Freedom Road Fellowship 1406 W. Church St. ~ 512.595.1886 Salado United Methodist Church 650 Royal St. ~ 254.947.5482

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Let Them Be: Finding Peace in Letting Go



John C. Perry

I recently came across an eye-opening article by Tod Perry (no relationship) on Upworthy about the “Let Them” theory, a psychological concept that challenges the instinct to control others. Instead, the approach encourages embracing detachment and focusing on personal peace.

A key voice behind this idea is Mel Robbins, a bestselling author, podcast host, and former lawyer. In a podcast last year, she broke down the theory with remarkable simplicity: “Let people do what they’re going to do and focus on your own well-being instead.”

That message resonated deeply with me. Looking back, I realize I had unknowingly adopted this mindset years ago. As I’ve gotten older, I’ve learned an invaluable truth: worrying about things you can’t control is a complete waste of time, energy, and emotion.

Take, for example, my younger self, I used to obsess over what people thought of me. But over time, I came to a different realization. These days, I tell people, “I

couldn’t care less what others think, I am who I am.” Is that entirely true? If I’m being honest, no I still care about what close friends and family think, but if I can’t change their perception, I let it go. Meanwhile, my lovely wife still wrestles with this issue. I try to remind her: “if you can’t fix it, release it.” But it’s a process, and I understand that.

Interestingly, the Bible echoes this idea. In Matthew 20:25-26, Jesus teaches that true leadership comes from humility and service, not control. The message is clear, rather than imposing our will on others, we should lead through love and respect, allowing influence to grow naturally.

At its core, the “Let Them” theory is about letting go of control,

embracing peace, and focusing on what truly matters, your own well-being. Imagine how much lighter life feels when you stop carrying the weight of others’ decisions and opinions.

How can this mindset help you? It can reduce stress and anxiety by eliminating the need to control others. It can strengthen relationships by fostering acceptance and autonomy, and it can enhance emotional resilience by prioritizing on personal growth rather than external validation.

And if you’re from my generation, you probably remember the Beatles’ 1970 timeless song, “Let It Be.” Paul McCartney wrote it during the band’s turbulent final years, inspired by a dream of his

late mother, Mary. Her comforting words, “let it be, “became a powerful anthem of peace and surrender.” By the way, the lyrics which say, “Mother Mary comes to me,” are not religious in nature, but rather he was referring to his biological mother, Mary.

From the Bible to the Beatles, the wisdom is clear: we must focus on being the best version of ourselves, rather than fixating on things beyond our control. We spend too much energy worrying about how others perceive us. Instead, we should live authentically, embrace what’s within our reach, do what is right, and simply, “let them be.”

Not a bad prescription for life, wouldn’t you say?

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