



Downtown Belton Street Party to kick off Belton 4th of July Celebration this Saturday

Special to the Journal

The Belton Area Chamber of Commerce is kicking off the 4th of July Celebration with a Downtown Belton Street Party on Saturday, June 27 featuring live music, food trucks, craft beer and wine, activities and games, and fun for all.

This non-ticketed family friendly event is open to the public at no charge with a goal of bringing people together to celebrate in the Downtown Belton area.

The event officially begins at 5 p.m. and live musical entertainment will be performing beginning



File Photo

See **PARTY**,
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The downtown street party returns Saturday night, the first of this year's July 4th activities for Belton.

Belton ISD student historians win national championship



Courtesy Photo

The Lake Belton Middle School documentary team of Emery Hobson, Sarah Jackson and Mya Kacal show off their medals after capturing first place in the Junior Group Documentary category, earning a National History Day national championship.

Special to the Journal

Two Belton ISD student documentary teams earned national recognition during the National History Day Contest, held June 14-18 at the University of Maryland, College Park, after being selected to showcase their work at the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, D.C.

The Lake Belton Middle School team of Emery Hobson, Sarah Jackson and Mya Kacal and the Lake Belton High School team of McKenna Brindley, Isabelle Howson, Swikriti Lamichhane, Brynlee Newberry and Emry Olivarez were chosen to

participate in the Documentary Showcase, a special exhibition highlighting outstanding student research projects during National History Day.

Held during contest week, the showcase featured 22 documentaries representing 19 National History Day affiliates, giving students the opportunity to present their yearlong research to museum visitors in one of the nation's premier cultural institutions.

The selection followed the teams' first-place finishes at Texas History Day on April 11, which earned them the opportunity

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Heart of Texas Juneteenth Scholarship Pageant crowns winners

By Michele Weisman
The Belton Journal

Three young ladies were crowned at the ninth annual Heart of Texas Juneteenth Scholarship Pageant at the Harris Community Center on Friday, June 19. The pageant theme was Living My Ancestors' Dream and was open to the public.

The event has crowned eight young women to receive scholarships, starting in 2018 with Synia Diggs. This year, the Tri-county Miss Juneteenth Scholarship

was renamed as the Heart of Texas Juneteenth Scholarship Pageant.

Mistress of Ceremony, Terris Goodwin of Temple, introduced the guests and events for the evening.

She invited Charels Clark up to open in prayer and to sing the Black National Anthem, "Lift Every Voice and Sing"

Emiah Fields, Tri-County Miss Juneteenth 2025, gave the welcome address.

She said, "I love helping people and inspiring others. I plan to enlist in the military

and become a therapist. These young ladies have practiced really hard for the pageant, and today is a very awesome celebration."

The Heart of Texas Miss Juneteenth 2026 Contestants were introduced: Zanyia Ball from Western Hills Elementary - Temple, Aaliana Durst from Kennedy-Powell Elementary - Temple, Nadia Ortiz from Western Hills Elementary - Temple, Natalia Lawrence from Bohman Middle School - Temple,

See **JUNETEENTH**,
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Courtesy Photo

2026 Heart of Texas Crowned winners of the Juneteenth Scholarship Pageant with Ms. Ramona A. Clark, director and coordinator.

City Council approves non-emergency ambulance transfer services

By David Stone
The Belton Journal

City Council approved ordinances Tuesday evening granting ambulance franchises to Acadian EMS and Baylor Scott & White EMS, allowing the companies to operate and maintain non-emergency transfer services on public streets and highways in Belton.

"Currently, there are two non-emergency ambulance services operating in our city with franchise agreements," said Amy M. Casey, city clerk. "Both have served Belton through a franchise agreement for the last seven years."

"Both companies desire a new non-emergency ambulance transfer franchise," Casey continued. "The franchise is for the period of five years with two automatic one-year re-

newals unless the franchise is rescinded by the City."

While Belton does not set rates for these non-emergency franchise services, Baylor Scott & White requested the addition of a condition in the franchise agreeing to the same rate cap established by the city of Temple.

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Marching 100 Alumni donate banner to Bell County Museum



Courtesy Photo

Above Left: A photo of the marching band, led by its banner, from the 1974 Tournament of Roses Parade. **Above Right:** The Marching 100 band in attendance with their band director. Seated L-R: Barbara Holland, James Whitis (1st Lt), Donna Cross, Belinda Carlisle, Mr. Richard Crain (Band Director), Dianah Dulany, Johnny Bohlin, Robert Atmar and David Rentschler Standing L-R: Calvin Tyner (Band Captain), David Allen, Edward Vaca, Debbie Whitmire, Jo Cabaniss, Teresa Albright, Peggy Jackson, Darlene Culp and Jennifer Bay (Drum Majorette/Twirler)

By Michele Weisman
The Belton Journal

On Saturday, June 13, the Belton Marching Band 100 Alumni gathered upstairs at the Bell County Museum to present their banner from 1974 Tournament of Roses Parade.

Richard Crain, the Head Band Director was in attendance.

In the Harris Auditorium, more than 50 guests, former band members and their families witnessed the handing over of the 1974 Belton High School Marching 100 banner and memorabilia to the care of the museum.

The current President of the Belton Marching 100 Alumni, Sarah Gilleland, began the event by formally dedicating the banner and memorabilia to the Bell County Museum’s Education Coordinator, Kayte Ricketts.

“The Bell County Museum’s mis-

sion is to educate the community on the historic heritage of Bell County. This is an amazing piece of pride for Belton. It’s wonderful being able to celebrate that history with everyone who was in it,” Ricketts said.

Gilleland then introduced former Head Band Director, Richard Crain. While videos of the marching band were played behind him on a screen, he shared a few memoirs and his gratitude for his former students.

The audience laughed when Crain explained how he came up with the drills.

“I wrote all this stuff out at the kitchen table. That’s where all those drills came from. Good or bad, they’re written at the kitchen table,” he said.

Crain also explained what was most important in his work.

“It was all about the kids. It was all about kids for me and their welfare,”

said Crain.

He shared some funny stories about the marching band, and one that left an impression on him.

“There’s a little-known fact that we were made aware of on that day, January 1, 1974. Of all the bands that marched in the Rose Parade, a whole slew of other bands, we marched over 200 people, and we were the only band that during that approximately nine miles of marching did not have anybody drop out,” Crain noted.

Everyone was then invited to enjoy light refreshments and visit.

Edward Vaca, who played the cornet, shared about the day before and the day of the parade in Pasadena, California.

“The day before the parade, we were running around Disneyland all day long, and at midnight we were in a parade in Disneyland. We went back to the UCLA

dorms, got up early in the morning, and packed all of our things for the parade. It was cold that morning. A lot of people had a lot of clothing underneath their uniforms. Some of us just braved it. We were cold,” said Vaca.

Former student Susie Wallace, who played the clarinet, brought her yearbook for Crain to sign.

“Our class was unique because we didn’t go to the 1974 Tournament of Roses Parade. We were freshmen,” said Wallace.

David Allen played the trumpet in the 1974 Tournament of Roses Parade.

“We came back for a reunion in ’09 and we started the Marching 100 alumni,” said Allen.

To see the historic performance of the Marching 100 Alumni, go to the YouTube channel, “Belton Marching 100 Alumni Band.”

Belton ISD selects David Manley as Lake Belton High School Principal



David Manley

Special to the Journal

Belton ISD has selected veteran educational leader David Manley to serve as principal of Lake Belton High School, bringing nearly four decades of experience and a proven record of leadership at the campus, district and state levels.

Manley joins Lake Bel-

ton High School after serving as a Texas Strategic Leadership executive coach with Education Service Center Region 6, where he worked alongside superintendents and leadership teams to strengthen strategic planning and improve student outcomes.

Prior to that role, he served in multiple executive leadership positions in Killeen ISD, including assistant superintendent of human resources, assistant superintendent for learning services and assistant superintendent for instructional leadership.

“David Manley is a highly respected leader whose experience spans every level of public education,” said Ben Smith, executive director of

campus leadership for secondary campuses. “He has a proven track record of developing people, building strong school cultures and improving student outcomes. We are excited to welcome him to Lake Belton High School and are confident he will continue the tradition of excellence that students, staff and families have come to expect.”

Manley succeeds Steele Hantgin, who accepted a central office leadership role in another school district that allows her to be closer to family.

With 37 years of experience in public education, Manley has served as a teach-

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Historians - From Page A1

nity to represent Texas at the national competition alongside thousands of students from across the United States and around the world.

“To have both of our documentary teams selected for this prestigious showcase is an incredible honor,” said Kat Knox, K-12 social studies and languages other than English coordinator. “Their projects represent months of thoughtful research, collaboration and storytelling. More importantly, they demonstrate the curiosity, critical thinking and perseverance that prepare students to become informed leaders and engaged citizens.”

The showcase gave students the opportunity to share their research with museum visitors while experiencing firsthand how history can educate, inspire and spark meaningful conversations.

Presenting their work in a Smithsonian museum is a distinction few National History Day participants have the opportunity to experience.

The Lake Belton Middle School documentary team of Emery Hobson, Sarah Jackson and Mya Kacal captured first place in the Junior Group Documentary category, earning a National History Day national championship and bringing home the gold for Belton ISD.

Their achievement represents the highest honor awarded in the division and places their work among the finest student history projects in the nation.

The award-winning documentary “Brought To You By the Letter R” can be viewed at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KVBLIt57IK0>.

The national championship adds another milestone to an already historic year for Belton ISD’s National History Day program, which included multiple state champions, campus firsts, two documentary teams advancing to the national competition, a Smithsonian showcase and now a national title.

Together, these accomplishments reflect Belton ISD’s commitment to creating authentic learning experiences that challenge students to think critically, research deeply and confidently share their stories on a national stage.

Party - From Page A1

around 5:30 p.m.

The stage will be located in front of the Historic Bell County Courthouse on Central Avenue. The Jerry Haisler Trio will open the event with their always entertaining performance. Next up will feature an encore performance by the award-winning Tejano band, Grupo Pession. Closing the evening will be the Leon River Band, all under the direction of Stage Manager Seth Vance with Texas Tour Gear.

A special added event this year is the return of the Little Miss & Little Mister Belton 4th of July contest, open to children ages 3-7 and 8-10. The contest will be held during the break between bands around 8 p.m.

Pre-registration is required to be entered in the contest, with a link available on the beltonchamber.com website. Prizes include the opportunity to be featured in the 4th of July Parade.

“We are excited about bringing this event back to our community for the 4th of July Celebration,” stated Randy Pittenger, Belton Area Chamber President/CEO. “We are especially thankful for our event sponsors and partners who are making this available to our community and visitors at no charge.”

Sponsors for the Belton Downtown Street Party include CGI, H-E-B, KWTX News 10, Extraco Banks, Moore Air, Summer Fun, Superior HealthPlan, West Temple Orthodontics, First Community Title, ASCO Equipment, Hole in the Wall, Redbox+ of Central

Texas, and Schoepf’s BBQ.

Several family friendly activities will be available throughout the event. West Temple Orthodontics is sponsoring the Photo Booth, First Community Title is sponsoring AyrBalloons, Temple Children’s Museum will have a kids activity area, Extraco Banks will have corn hole and other games set up on the courthouse lawn, and other activities will be available. A variety of food trucks and craft brew will also be on site.

The week of the July 4th will be full of festivities, including the 102nd annual PRCA/WPRA Rodeo at the Huntington Bank Expo (formerly known as the Cadence Bank Center, and commonly known as Bell County Expo). On Saturday, July 4, the day will include the Patriotic Program, Parade, Festival on Nolan Creek in Liberty Park featuring the Rev, White & Blue Car Show, High5 Hot Dog Eating Contest and live musical entertainment by Westbound.

The holiday will then close out with the Backyard Party at Schoepf’s Concert and Fireworks, featuring the popular band with roots in Belton, Sprung, along with Jared Johnson, returning for an encore performance prior to the fireworks show. This is a non-ticketed event, open to the public, although reserved tables are available.

For more information about these events, visit the website at www.beltonchamber.com, call 254-939-3551, or email info@beltonchamber.com.

The Belton Journal (ISSN 1053-9131) is published every Thursday, 210 N. Penelope, Belton, TX 76513. Second Class periodical postage paid at Belton, TX. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: The Belton Journal P.O. Box 180 Belton, TX 76513

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Council OKs new parks Master Plan

By David Stone
The Belton Journal

A new Belton Parks, Recreation, Trails and Open Spaces Master Plan for 2026 through 2036 was adopted Tuesday by City Council.

The Master Plan replaces a similar parks plan adopted in 2016 and updated in 2021, according to James Grant, director of Belton Parks & Recreation.

“City Council approved a contract with MHS Planning & Design on July 8, 2025, to develop the City’s 2026-2036 Master Plan,” Grant said. “At the same meeting, Council also requested and approved MHS to conduct a feasibility study for an Indoor Recreation Center, including the costs associated with constructing and operating a facility suited for the Belton community.”

The Indoor Recreation Center, however, is not part of the plan adopted by Council on Tuesday evening.

“MHS began working on this plan in October 2025 and spent eight months and countless hours getting to know our community,” Grant added. “They met with city staff and the Parks Board to develop a very successful survey that was conducted over a 10-week period, receiving nearly 900 responses from Belton residents.”

MHS also held three productive focus group meetings where they heard from civic groups, local schools and universities, business owners from around town, and other community organizations, including the Chamber of Commerce and the Belton Senior Center.

“During this time, MHS visited our parks, took photographs, and spoke with members of our community to learn what they liked about our parks and identify opportunities for improvement,” Grant said. “They conducted workshops with the Parks Board and held a town hall meeting on March 31 where they shared the results of the survey and the direction the

plan was taking.”

The process included a Joint Workshop with City Council and the Parks Board on May 12. The completed plan was then presented to the Parks Board on June 15, where they unanimously recommended forwarding it to City Council for consideration and adoption.

The Master Plan includes adding more playgrounds, trails, pavilions and shade structures, sports and practice fields, indoor recreation, and site furnishings such as benches, picnic tables and grilling stations.

Also, the plan will improve park signage, splash pads, community pools and river access.

“The plan will propose improvements over the next 10 years to best satisfy or fulfill the recreational needs of Belton,” Grant said. “It will provide the city with guidance for decision-making and budgeting when it comes to park projects.”

Council to allow food truck on North Pearl

By David Stone
The Belton Journal

Belton City Council on Tuesday authorized a street-use license agreement with Dominica Garza that allows a food truck to park at 108 N Pearl Street on an intermittent basis.

Garza owns the property that is currently leased to Atrium Coffee and Topanga Boutique, and she hopes the temporary food truck draws more people to the two businesses.

“The food truck would operate one or two Saturdays per month,” said Tina Moore, assistant director of Belton’s developmental services. “This section of North Pearl is a one-way street with relatively low weekend traffic volumes. The one-way configuration allows controlled pass-through traffic and reduces conflicts with opposing vehicles.”

According to Garza, the proposed setup would not block intersections, drive aisles, fire lanes, or pedestrian pathways, and access to sidewalks and storefronts would remain unobstructed.

According to city standards for food trucks, the vendor’s serving windows must face the business side of the street so ordering and occurs away from passing traffic.

Traffic cones must be placed approximately 5 to 10 feet from the mobile unit to provide a warning of a parked object in the roadway.

Typically, a city permit is not required for itinerant vendors; however, a permit is required when a vendor operates from a fixed site under a lease or other arrangement on a defined schedule with specified days and hours of operation.

Because this proposal involves a fixed site, Garza will need to provide

staff with a monthly list of participating vendors. City staff will confirm that each vendor holds the appropriate state permits required for mobile food-vendor operations.

Also Tuesday evening, Council held a public hearing, then approved a zoning change from Agricultural to Planned Development (Light Industrial) on 4.34 acres located at 8632 Amity Road. The goal of the change is to enhance quality of life through park development and recreation programming and partnerships.

The applicants for the zoning change — Joe and Barbara Washburn — are in the process of subdividing the property to see the eastern portion to Wolff Construction Co., which owns adjacent properties north of the site. Wolff plans to expand its construction business and build a new office building on the site.

Belton Library to host mini parade for children on July 2

Special to the Journal

Belton’s youngest patriots are invited to celebrate Independence Day with their own Mini Parade around the Belton Public Library on Thursday, July 2.

The Library’s Mini Parade will feature wagons, scooters and bicycles as parade “floats.” Check-in will start at 10 a.m. and the parade will begin at 11 a.m.

Belton Mayor David K. Leigh will lead the parade. The route will be a short distance of about 500 feet from North Penelope Street to East 1st Avenue.

Community members may sign up to enter a float at

<https://tinyurl.com/MiniParade>. The last day to register an entry is Tuesday, June 30.

The pint-sized procession precedes Belton’s historic 4th of July Parade down Main Street and Central Avenue on July 4. The more than 100-year tradition draws thousands of people to Downtown Belton each year.

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Council - From Page A1

This has been added.

According to the agreements, Acadian and Baylor Scott & White must maintain sufficient vehicles, trained personnel, and equipment on hand to allow it to respond within one hour to any request for non-emergency service.

If a franchise holder is unable to maintain a one-hour response for a given period of time, the franchise holder must notify the Bell County Communications Center that it is out

of service, and also notify persons requesting the services of the period for which it will be unable to perform ambulance services.

Also Tuesday, Council awarded a contract to RM Quality Construction to build one house as part of the Texas Department of Housing & Community Affairs’ HOME program grant.

According to Jo-Ell Guzman, Belton’s Grants & Special Projects coordinator, the city was awarded a grant for the reconstruction of a house located at 808 S Pearl Street.

RM Quality Construction submitted the lowest base bid of \$141,000 for a three-bedroom, two-bath home that includes noise mitigation, a handicapped-assessable bathroom, a carport and rain gutters. These items increased the cost to \$206,000.

State funds for the project are \$205,000, and the City of Belton’s match is \$30,126.24 in cash contributions and waived permit fees.

Principal - From Page A2

er, coach, assistant principal, principal, executive director and assistant superintendent.

His leadership experience includes serving as principal of both Harker Heights High School and Rancier Middle School, where he developed a reputation for building strong teams, fostering student success and strengthening school-community relationships.

Throughout his career, Manley has been recognized for his ability to develop leaders, strengthen instructional systems and create environments where students and educators can thrive. His experience includes overseeing campus operations, curriculum and instruction, accountability systems, special programs and strategic planning initiatives designed to improve student achievement.

As Lake Belton High School continues to grow, Belton ISD sought a leader with the experience, vision and relationship-building skills necessary to guide the campus forward. District leaders found that leader in Manley.

Lake Belton High School serves students in grades 9-12 and is known for its strong academic programs, competitive extracurricular opportunities and commitment to preparing students for success beyond graduation. Under Manley’s leadership, the campus will continue building on its tradition of excellence while creating opportunities for each and every student to thrive.

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

Juneteenth - From Page A1

Ujunwa Ogwudu from Belton New Tech High School, and Dalanna Paleafel from Copperas Cove High School.

They danced to the song When We Come Together by Andrew Dykes, choreographed by Stacey Wison.

The keynote speaker was Aya Furbara Eneli, the podcast host of Rethinking Freedom and co-host of Women and Resistance.

After she spoke, the six contestants performed their talents.

Special speaker was Erica Lee Carter, Harris County Administrator and daughter

of the late Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee.

Lee said, “Juneteenth, what I love about it is that it tells the story of doors opening because generations before us refused to accept that opportunity should be limited by circumstance.

“Juneteenth reminds us of freedom, resilience, and possibility, and it gives us a moment of reflection on how far we’ve come and how much work remains.”

For the formal wear portion, each young lady was asked a question.

The winners were: Miss

Juneteenth 2026, Ujunwa Ogwudu of Belton New Tech High School; Junior Miss Juneteenth 2026, Natalia Lawrence of Bohman Middle School - Temple; Lil Miss Juneteenth 2026, Aalianna Durst of Kennedy Powell Elementary - Temple.

Ogwudu will receive a \$500 scholarship for college.

Ramona A. Clark, founder, director, and coordinator of the pageant, thanked the sponsors of the event and the judges Margie Djomo Wandji, Barbara Maufas, and Candi Gadison.

In attendance, Stacey Johnson had three granddaughters in the pageant, ages 5, 8, and 12. Johnson said the girls worked very hard practicing their talent.

Their great-grandmother, Lois Broadus said she was glad to be able to attend and that her great-granddaughters love the scholarship pageant.

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First United Methodist Church hosts science camp



Courtesy Photo

Senior pastor of First United Methodist Church Reverend Patrick Hoffman performs an experiment demonstration for students in his Professor Proton costume.

By **Harvey Jackson Oss**
The Belton Journal

Belton First United Methodist Church held their second annual science camp this week, from June 22 to June 25. For several years the church has hosted Vacation Bible School programming for children during the summer. Reverend Jennifer Chickering set out to expand upon the summer activities by introducing the science camp.

“I was like, you know what? I can help with a science camp, because I don’t see that as an option for our elementary age students here,” explained Chickering. Cassandra Bindea, a science teacher, used her experience to arrange the experiments for last year’s camp. This year, the church is joined by three professional female scientists and engineers to instruct the children. In total, 75 students are participating, most of whom are not church members. Participation is free of charge,

and breakfast and lunch are provided. “Anybody who might benefit from a breakfast or luncheon during the summer are encouraged to join us,” noted Chickering. The science camp follows the STEAM educational model, an acronym for science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics. One lab science activity involves creating rock candy over the course of multiple days. Another art activity involves designing water filtration systems using sand art. Students also learned about chromatography, bubbles, and built and tested miniature boats. FUMC collaborated with the Texas Master Naturalists and the Native Plant Society of Texas to run their botany activities. The students worked on creating a pollinator garden for monarch butterflies. Students also designed, created, and launched paper and water bottle rockets. Reverend Patrick Hoffman helped facilitate activities as his ‘Professor Proton’ persona. Chickering described her husband and co-pastor Professor Proton’s involvement in keeping the children engaged. “He dressed up in a costume and introduced the kids to science. He did an experiment today where he put a jar over a candle that was sitting in water and the water came up into the jar, and the kids were just blown away by that scientific experiment.”

Adult volunteers spent countless hours setting up stations and preparing meals for the students. Church staff and adult volunteers are aided by fifteen youth volunteers working with the children. “If they have any questions or if there are any lulls or if they need a little bit of extra encouragement, our youth are really skilled at doing that,” noted Chickering. “The goal of the science camp is to make sure every student that comes knows that they are loved and accepted, that they find a safe place where they are welcome to be who they are, and to explore the creation that God has made.” “We, as United Methodists especially, believe we don’t check our brains at the doors of the church, that we have the ability to ask those questions and the gift of scientific observation and the scientific method,” added Hoffman. He emphasized that faith and science are compatible with one another.

Local dental office reports data breach after cyberattack

Special to the Journal

Cure Dental recently announced that a recent cyberattack may have compromised the Personally Identifiable Information (PII) of up to 878 current and former patients. According to the practice’s compliance staff, the unauthorized intrusion was detected on June 25, 2025. An initial investigation revealed that the practice’s cybersecurity platform detected and effectively stopped movement of malicious activity across the network. In response, the network was immediately locked down and any external connections were terminated. Also, all accounts with access to remote desktop web access were disabled and an office-wide password reset was forced. Through the investigation, it was determined that certain personal information of patients associated with the practice might have been accessed. The affected data may have included names, addresses, dates of birth, social security numbers, and driver’s license numbers. However, the incident did not affect any patient Protected Health

Information (PHI) such as treatment and payment information. Following this attack, the thief contacted the practice several times demanding that employees manually activate malware files he left on the practice IT system, however the office staff did not comply with his demands and the thief discontinued further efforts. There was also an isolated report from a patient that someone posing as an IT professional contacted her indicating that her personal information had been accessed, but the patient immediately hung up the phone and informed practice staff. Cure Dental is not aware of any additional suspicious activity since these incidents occurred. Nonetheless, they directed their IT support company to conduct security inspections and continue to diligently monitor the practice’s system platform to protect against further breaches. Cure Dental has also notified the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) of this incident. “We deeply regret this incident and sincerely apologize for any concern it may cause our community,” said Dr. Tejas Patel, Cure Dental practice owner. “In the aftermath of this incident, we worked diligently with our cybersecurity experts to prevent this from ever happening again.” The practice confirmed that affected patients were notified via email or mail with detailed instructions on how to enroll in free credit monitoring services to protect against identity theft. Additionally, the Cure Dental has established a dedicated toll-free helpline at 1-888-766-1488 for patients who have questions about this matter. Patients are also encouraged to visit the Texas Attorney General website below to find information regarding protection against identity theft: <https://www.texasattorney-general.gov/consumer-protection/identity-theft/help-prevent-identity-theft>.



NWS expert: Wet spring will give way to hot, dry summer

By **David Stone**
The Belton Journal

While the first six months of 2026 were the second wettest January-through-June in the past 10 years, National Weather Service meteorologists say this summer will be exceptionally hot and dry. So far this year, the Belton area has received about 19.5 inches of rain — in the last 10 years, only 2024 was wetter with 29.66 inches, according to meteorologist Alison Prater of the NWS’s Fort Worth office. “Belton-area rainfall is usually measured at the Temple airport,” Prater said. “But that observation site has been out since June 10 and is not representative since there is quite a bit of missing information. That being the case, I used an observation site at Fort Hood for the June 2026 numbers.” “More than 19 inches in the first six months of the year is rare, but it happens,” she said. “We get periods of spring and summer rain as storm systems move through Central and Southern plains.” Although 2026 has started with lots of rain, conditions will change as summer continues. “Our forecasts only go out seven days,” Prater explained. “The Climate Prediction Center has longer-range outlooks.”

“Currently, the one-month (July) and three-month outlooks (July-Sept.) are favoring above normal temperatures and below normal precipitation,” she said. “However, this does not mean that we won’t have periods of wetter and cooler weather conditions during the next three months.” “We’ll just need to keep an eye on how and where storm systems develop in the coming months.” While 2024 had the wettest January-through-June in the past 10 years, 2022 was by far the driest with a scant 8.45 inches of rain during the same time frame. Most years recorded 14 to 16 inches during that time. As a whole, the first half of 2026 has been quite wet, but the year did not start out that way. There were 242 wildfires in Bell County during January and February of this year because of a warm, dry winter.

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Pinky’s Bar and Grill celebrates grand re-opening

By Michele Weisman
The Belton Journal

Sandra Escalante recently celebrated a grand re-opening and ribbon cutting for Pinky’s Bar and Grill. Escalante said, “I am now 100% owner of Pinky’s, and we are taking it in a fun new direction. A direction that blends my culture and my life here in Texas. For brunch, we have French toast and a Mexican Benedict with Chorizo. It will be familiar things with fun little Mexican twists. It’s like a modern Mexican movement.”

Her other business, Haute Dog, is a mobile gourmet hot dog stand. She is adding elements of it to Pinky’s, and customers will see small hot dog decor inside Pinky’s.

Escalante said the people in Belton are welcoming and they like to embrace something fun and a little different, a little kooky. She has seen customers become regulars, and then they become friends. She also mentioned it is popular with people after church on Sundays.

A treasured moment for Escalante is when staff and customers were celebrating a Selena night. They were celebrating Selena’s birthday and there was a group of ladies there. They were painting, drinking, and dancing. It was one of the older ladies’ birthdays, and she was celebrating. The woman explained to Escalante that the music Pinky’s was playing was by Juan Gabriel, and she never thought she would hear that in Belton, Texas. Escalante said It was just fun.

The ribbon-cutting, hosted by the Belton Area Chamber of Commerce, occurred inside the establishment. The upstairs and downstairs were packed, and food and drinks were offered for people to enjoy. Prior to the actual cutting, Randy Pittenger, president and CEO of the chamber, and Escalante did an impromptu



Courtesy Photo

A pinky promise at Pinky’s between Randy Pittenger and Sandra Escalante. pinky promise pose for photos. When the ribbon was cut, everyone cheered, and two of her staff cheered with red pompoms. Mia Duran, who works at Pinky’s said, “Escalante is so creative. She’s truly down for anything.” Escalante wants male customers to know that the pink color outside and inside Pinky’s is a common

color in Central Mexico. She explained it is part of her culture and it’s not a way of saying boys are not allowed.

Pinky’s Bar and Grill is located at 201 N East Street in Belton. They are open, Sundays, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Wednesday through Fridays they open at 4 p.m., and Saturdays they are open 10 a.m. to midnight.

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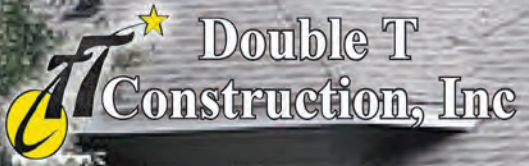
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LIFESTYLES

THE BELTON JOURNAL

Delta student hones skills with BISD tech department

Special to the Journal

Delta student Landon Bigby turned his passion for technology into a hands-on learning experience this spring through a partnership with the Belton ISD Technology Department.

As a Chromebook Repair Techspert, Landon worked alongside district technology staff, gaining real-world experience diagnosing and repairing student devices while learning the day-to-day operations of an information technology department.

His experience included time at the district technology office and Belton High School, giving him a behind-the-scenes look at the systems and support that keep classrooms connected and students learning.

“Providing students with authentic, hands-on experiences is one of the best ways to inspire future careers,” said Frank Mur-

ray, Chief Technology Officer. “Landon brought enthusiasm, curiosity, and a willingness to learn every day. Watching him develop new skills while contributing to our team has been incredibly rewarding. Opportunities like this help students discover career pathways while making a meaningful impact in our district.”

During his time with the technology team, Landon learned Chromebook repair techniques, troubleshooting strategies, and device management processes while strengthening valuable skills in problem-solving, collaboration, and customer service.

By working alongside the district technology team and campus technicians at Belton High School, he gained insight into the essential role technology plays in supporting teaching and learning. His work helped prepare and maintain devices that students rely on every day while



Courtesy Photo
BISD Delta student Landon Bigby works on a Chromebook in the BISD Technology Department, gaining real-world experience diagnosing and repairing student devices.

gaining practical experience in a field that aligns with his interests.

The Chromebook Repair Techspert experience reflects Belton ISD’s commitment to providing students with authentic learning opportunities that extend beyond the classroom. Made possible through the district’s partnership with ACER, the Techspert program connects students with district technology professionals for hands-on learning experiences that build technical skills, encourage career exploration, and prepare them for future success.

For Landon, what began as an interest in technology became an opportunity to develop new skills, build professional experience, experience hands-on and contribute to the work that supports thousands of students across the district, proving that learning can happen anywhere curiosity meets opportunity.

Alzheimer’s Angels deliver 1,600 meals



BELTON JOURNAL/Michele Weisman
Part of the 50-volunteer team captures a photo as breakfasts for delivery were underway.

By Michele Weisman
The Belton Journal

Team Alzheimer’s Angels and the community came together, Thursday June 18, to raise money for the Alzheimer’s Association.

It was also to bring awareness to their caretakers and those living with Alzheimer’s because of the longest day of the year, June 21.

The event was held at the Hilton Garden Inn in Temple parking lot, starting at 6:26 a.m.

Breakfasts of taco meals with a drink were delivered until 10 a.m. For lunch, they prepared and delivered burgers with a cookie and a drink until sundown or everything was sold out. Pre-orders were to be placed by June 16. All donations were given to the

Alzheimer’s Association.

Jamie Moseley, the marketing director of Visiting Angels and team captain of Alzheimer’s Angels, said they are a national sponsor of the Alzheimer’s Association.

With 1,600 pre-orders, over 80 sponsors for the event, and 50 volunteers, they were ready to fix, package, and deliver the orders. The furthest out was Lampasas.

Moseley said, “We are a company that provides personal care services in the home for the elderly and disabled.”

Local businesses were able to donate meals and have them delivered for free. Some businesses gifted meal deliveries to the local police and fire departments.

Hilton Garden staff member Trey said, “It’s a

great event run by great people. We’re proud to be a part of it. We’ve been working with Alzheimer’s Angels forever.”

The 80 sponsors took up two sides of a flyer team Alzheimer’s Angels had on hand. A few on the list were JNeely’s Burrito Bar, The Ridge at Owl Creek, Sulphur Creek Primary & Urgent Care, Vista Real Estate, Integrity Rehab and Home Health, By Design Graphic Design, Sam’s Club, and The Belton Journal.

Moseley said the event has a lot of support because everyone’s been affected.

The Alzheimer’s Angels team wants to spread awareness of what a caregiver goes through by themselves, especially on the longest day of the year, at home and for the person with Alzheimer’s.

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Courtesy Photo
First Juneteenth parade in Belton was held last Friday. It was a community service project by the Heart of Texas Miss Juneteenth and served as a kick-off to the events for the day in Yettie Polk Park.

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The Words Behind the Words



John C. Perry

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There are always two parts: the descriptive (your medical history and symptoms) and the prescriptive (the treatment that follows).

Lately I've been studying the New Testament, and I've realized that reading Scripture works the same way. To understand the Bible, you have to pay attention to both the descriptive and the prescriptive. The descriptive is the history, what was happening then. The prescriptive is the theology, the truth God intends for our lives today.

If you read the New Testament strictly as a theological document without its first-century context, it's like reading the minutes of

a highstakes board meeting without knowing what business the company is in. You might catch the general idea, but you'll miss the nuance, the tension, and the real problems being addressed.

History is the "Then and There." It anchors us. It tells us what happened, who was speaking, and why those particular words were chosen. The New Testament wasn't written in a vacuum; it was written under the shadow of the Roman Empire, in the middle of intense Jewish sectarian debates (Pharisees, Sadducees, Zealots), and inside a Greco-Roman cultural world.

When you understand

that history, Paul's letters stop sounding like abstract essays and start sounding like urgent pastoral rescue missions to messy, real churches facing real pressures.

Theology, on the other hand, is the "Here and Now." It's the timeless truth drawn from that history. It tells us what the text means, who God is, and how we ought to live today. Without the historical context, theology can be twisted or misunderstood because we accidentally read our own 21st-century assumptions back into the text.

But when you pair the two correctly, the history unlocks the original meaning so the prescriptive theology can

be applied faithfully today.

Take the phrase "Jesus is Lord." Today it sounds purely theological. But in the first-century Roman world, citizens were expected to declare Kaiser Kyrios, "Caesar is Lord." To say "Jesus is Lord" wasn't a quiet religious sentiment; it was a bold, politically charged act of allegiance that carried real personal risk. The history amplifies the theology.

So, here's my encouragement to you: as you read the Bible, look at both the history and the theology. When you do, Scripture stops feeling like a flat, confusing rulebook and becomes a vibrant, living Word where

God's voice is clearer and richer. It also helps answer those moments when you wonder, "Why did he say that?" Context is everything.

As you read our Holy Word, take a little time to explore the world in which it was written. You'll find the blessing of Scripture becomes even more extraordinary!

John C. Perry is the Lay Leader Emeritus with New Life Methodist Church. They meet every Sunday at 9 a.m. (Bible Study) and 10 a.m. (Worship Service) at 1245 Williams Road in Salado.

United Methodist Texas youth visit Belton to serve the community



Above Left & Center: UM youth sit atop their wheelchair build for a resident who is able to continue independent living. **Above Right:** The UM youth are not far from the watchful eye and instruction of the adults who assist with the builds.

By Michele Weisman
The Belton Journal

For the week of June 14 through the 20, youth and adult volunteers, called Action Reach-out Ministry by Youth (U.M. ARMY) came from five churches to serve the Belton and the Bell County area.

A total of 69 youth and 39 adults gave vacation time and paid time off to serve local community members.

Prior to their visit, Reverend Anna Shipley went out with church members who deliver Meals on Wheels.

The drivers had put the word out on their deliveries that the youth were going to come and help with projects.

Shipley did a walkthrough with each client to make a personal connection and set up the specs for the projects.

Also working with the Texas Ramp

Project (TRP), U.M. ARMY took a few clients from their list.

TRP and First United Methodist Church of Belton (UMCB) shared the cost 50/50 on these client projects.

The youth who are involved in U.M. ARMY are in 6th through 12th grades, and are learning skills with each project taught by the adult volunteers.

Shipley said the seventeen projects were in Belton, Harker Heights, Rogers, and Temple.

When not working, the UM youth days are on repeat, opening with worship, a devotional message, and at the end of the day they ate dinner together and had worship again. Youth provided the worship, the teaching, the meals, and cleaned up too. Each night they enjoyed an activity. There was a scavenger hunt in Belton, an Olympics night, a night eating out at local businesses, and they wrapped up the week at Summer Fun Water Park.

Two youth met and became friends through U.M. ARMY, Bailey Thornton from Austin, in her fourth year with U.M. ARMY, and Emerson Whiteneck from Corpus Christi, in her fifth year at U.M. ARMY. This was their first year to serve as the Youth Advisory Board, referred to as YAB.

They arrived a day before the other youth, Thornton explained.

“We help out where we’re needed,” she said.

Whiteneck added, “We’ve been visiting the sites and giving them snacks. Kind of being their cheerleaders this week. We see the youth paired as strangers at the beginning of the week, but by the end they have bonded.”

“U.M. ARMY is incredible for community building and strengthening your faith,” said Thornton.

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Broncos pitcher Maddux concludes high school career at all-star game

By Clay Whittington
The Belton Journal

It was an opportunity Maverik Maddux could not ignore.

After helping the Broncos earn consecutive District 16-5A championships and being named the league's pitcher of the year in each campaign, the senior standout was prepared to move on to the next chapter of his life.

Committed to play at TCU, Maddux was focused on finding success at the collegiate level, but then something brought him back to Lake Belton.

Maddux was recently selected to play in the annual Texas High School Baseball Coaches Associa-

tion All-Star Game, and he pounced on the chance to represent the Broncos.

"This is an honor," Maddux said. "It is a blessing to wear a Lake Belton jersey one last time. I've worked really hard for that program over the years.

"I have a lot of memories there."

The event took place at Round Rock's Dell Diamond.

Maddux served as one of four pitchers for the South roster, which was composed of University Interscholastic League Class 5A and Class 6A players from across the state.

While it is an honor to be invited to the contest, it is also simply a

culmination of his passion, because since he was a child, Maddux has found solace in the sport.

"I started playing at Heritage Park when I was a little kid," he



said. "I've just always had a lot of fun playing baseball. Anytime I'm stressed out about something or

there are things going on in my life, I'll just turn to baseball, and it all floats away.

"I also just love competing, and I believe baseball is one of the most competitive sports in the world."

Although Maddux has plenty of memories to cherish from his time with the Broncos, this will be his first all-star experience, and he is looking forward to the opportunity to share the field with some of Texas' top prospects.

Nineteen other players joined Maddux on the squad to face off against the 21-man North roster, and both teams are packed with playmakers, including multiple representatives on the all-state lists.

Regardless of how things unfolded on the field, the game served as a punctuation mark to Maddux's high school career, but his legacy will remain.

After years of dedication, success and individual accomplishments with the Broncos, he has established himself as a pillar of the program and will undoubtedly be admired by generations of players to come.

"I'm truly blessed with my abilities," Maddux said, "and I'm glad people look up to me, because I try really hard to be a great human and baseball player. So, it means a lot to me to know kids might look up to me as an example."

Lady Tigers use TABC Showcase as chance to grow

By Clay Whittington
The Belton Journal

The Lady Tigers are transitioning. After watching key components graduate off the roster head coach Anne Marie Stark rebuilt from a three-win program a mere four years ago, Belton is evolving.

Standout guards Ke'Ara Shanks and Emma Flory, who were integral in the Lady Tigers' playoff return last season, are gone, leaving behind a primarily young and inexperienced group to uphold the high expectations set by their predecessors.

Last weekend, Belton's new look squad took its initial steps toward creating an identity all its own.

The Lady Tigers traveled to Bryan-College Station for the annual Texas Association of Basketball Coach Girls Showcase, where hundreds of teams from across the state take part in a massive, multisite event that draws countless collegiate scouts hungry to recruit talent, and the trip was a success.

While they emerged from the prestigious event with a 1-2 record, Stark believes a lot was accomplished both on and

off the court.

"The focus of our weekend was to build some new chemistry after graduating a lot of leadership," she said. "The girls played awesome, and the Showcase has a meaning. It is really cool to see the girls making strides forward in their play during the middle of the summer and just coming back together as a team.

"New dynamics are starting to form, and it is fun to see my really young talent from a year ago becoming my upperclassman leadership."

Beginning Friday, Belton played three games at three venues during its two-day stay, opening its run with a six-point loss, 50-44, to Spring.

The following day, the Lady Tigers suffered a 50-35 defeat to Jersey Village in the morning before bouncing back to beat Hutto 42-40 during the afternoon to conclude pool play.

Although the team did not have the start it intended, Belton found its rhythm.

In its final contest versus the Lady Hippos, Stark admitted the players discovered cohesion, especially junior standouts Isabella Warner, a guard, and forward Emma Harvey.

Last year, Warner was a 16-5A All-District First Team selection after guiding the Lady Tigers to fourth place in the final standings, while Harvey landed on the second team, and against Hutto, the duo proved worthy of the accolades.

"Everyone was on their third game," Stark said, "and we had lost our last two games, so it was a real opportunity for the girls to come out flat, but we actually saw some of the best chemistry of the weekend in that game. Specifically with Warner and Harvey, who probably had half a dozen assists to each other, and it was going both ways.

"They had a really cool run that lasted about nine minutes, and nobody could stop them as a pair. The team just rallied around that and kept feeding them the ball until the other team was forced to adjust to it."

Having received a glimpse of what she can expect when the University Interscholastic League allows teams to begin practicing for the upcoming season Oct. 21, Stark can adjust accordingly as Belton attempts to take its next step toward a district championship.

Numerous obstacles will need to be overcome before celebrating such an ac-

complishment, but for now, Stark is confident her team will continue to transition.

"This is the only way to take steps forward," she said. "Every year, you have a new team, because some people graduate and others get added. Very rarely does nobody get removed or added.

"So, it is just up to the girls to pass on what we've learned over the past few years as a program that has sent us in the right direction. It's all about how we go about our business, how we show up to games, how we play and how we respond, and our older girls are doing an excellent job of showing the younger ones what to do."



Tigers new head coach weighs in on summer conditioning and building leaders



Josh Mann

By Aries Ramos
The Belton Journal

For the Belton Tigers, the road to fall Friday nights doesn't begin under the stadium lights. It begins in the weight room, on the practice field, and in the quiet daily choices athletes make through the long Texas summer. As the new season approaches, first year head coach Joshua Mann is making it clear that the work being done now will define how the Tigers perform when the games finally arrive.

The case for summer con-

ditioning, in Mann's view, is simple, players who show up are ready when it matters. "Players who attend a high percentage of our summer workouts come into camp more prepared and in better condition," Mann said. "That allows us to spend more time teaching and refining the game rather than using valuable practice time to build a conditioning base." Every conditioning session completed in June and July is practice time that doesn't have to be spent in August getting players into shape, time that can instead go toward installing the offense and defense.

That preparation creates a visible divide once camp opens. Mann sees a clear difference between the athletes who commit and those who don't. "The players who consistently attend are mentally and physically prepared to handle more of our football installation," he said. "They aren't just trying to sur-

vive practice, they're positioned to get ahead and maximize their development."

But ask Mann what he's really building during the summer, and the answer goes beyond speed and strength. "We're constantly working to develop mental toughness, discipline, and consistency," he said. "Summer workouts are about choices. Every day, athletes can choose to sleep in or choose to get better. Those daily decisions add up over time." Those qualities, he emphasized, are difficult to develop once the in season grind takes over.

The summer also gives the staff time to develop the whole athlete in a way the regular season rarely allows. Rather than focusing narrowly on conditioning, the program takes a broader approach. "We emphasize strength, speed, mobility, flexibility, and recovery to build a well rounded athlete

while reducing the risk of injury when the season begins," Mann said. Pairing physical gains with the durability needed to hold up over a long fall schedule.

While starting jobs aren't handed out in the offseason, summer attendance still shapes the team's internal hierarchy. "Depth charts and starting roles are earned on the field when the pads come on," Mann said. "However, summer attendance does influence who players view as leaders and who they elect as captains. We want to be a player led team with coaches serving as guides and mentors. Simply put, you have to be present to be a leader."

For athletes hoping to leap forward, Mann's blueprint comes down to two words: commitment and communication. "An ideal summer starts with commitment to the team. If you're in town, you're at workouts. It's that sim-

ple," he said. "If you're attending camps, working, or on vacation, communicate with your coaches and teammates. Commitment and communication matter."

As for the athletes who believe they can round into form once practices begin, Mann offered a frank assessment. "I wish them the best of luck. Can it be done? Sure. But until you catch up, practice becomes about you instead of the team," he said. "The best athletes arrive prepared so they can focus on improving their performance and helping their teammates succeed."

The message from Belton's new head coach is unmistakable. Long before the first kickoff, the Tigers are being built one summer morning at a time, and the players answering the call now are the ones positioning themselves to lead when the season arrives.



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Sports Briefs

By Clay Whittington
The Belton Journal

Belton and Lake Belton are set to take part in one of the state’s most prestigious events this weekend, when they travel for the annual Texas Association of Basketball Coaches Boys Showcase.

The Tigers’ trek through their four-team pool starts Friday.

Belton will play Cypress Falls at Duncanville Fieldhouse at 3:10 p.m. before facing Dallas Highland Park at 6:25 p.m. The following day, the Tigers encounter Waxahachie at 11:10 a.m. at Duncanville High School to conclude their stay.

The Broncos begin play Saturday with a single game, opening against Dallas White at 6:45 p.m. Mansfield Summit High School will host the contest.

They return to the site Sunday to play Brenham at 10:05 a.m. before traveling to Duncanville High School for a 2:25 p.m. tipoff against La Porte.

The event serves as an opportunity for collegiate scouts to recruit talent to their respective programs while also al-



lowing teams to begin galvanizing their skills for the upcoming season.

FOOTBALL

The football season is rapidly approaching, and the Tigers recently released their schedule of events leading up to the opening-night kickoff.

A mandatory parent meeting will

be held July 30 at 6 p.m. before the first practice is conducted Aug. 3. On Aug. 6, a group fundraiser will start, and an intrasquad scrimmage and youth football clinic is set for Aug. 8.

Tiger Moms Camp and media day follow on Aug. 15, and Dads/Guardians and Decals will take place Aug. 22.

The regular-season schedule opens

Aug. 28 with a home game against Pflugerville Hendrickson.

SUMMER CAMPS

Belton and Lake Belton are now offering summer sports camps to area youth.

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

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

Dates and times will vary by sport.

The next camps will be conducted by the Lady Broncos volleyball program.

The three-day events begin July 6 with third- and fourth-graders attending from noon to 2:30 p.m. each day, while fifth- and sixth-graders will follow from 2:30 p.m. to 5 p.m.

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

See **BRIEFS**,
Page B3

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Lady Broncos dominate TABC Showcase with undefeated run

By Aries Ramos
The Belton Journal

The Lake Belton Lady Broncos made a statement over the weekend, sweeping their way to a perfect 3-0 finish at the TABC Showcase held at Legends Event Center in Bryan.

The summer event is one of the premier evaluation stops on the Texas basketball calendar, drawing college coaches from across the state who arrive looking to identify the next wave of talent. For the Lady Broncos, the trip to Bryan became a chance to compete on a big stage against quality opponents, and they made the most of every opportunity.

Lake Belton wasted no time setting the tone. The Lady Broncos opened the showcase with a 62-29 victory over Poth, a lopsided result that showcased a team firing on all cylinders from the opening tip. The offense moved the ball with purpose, the defense stayed disciplined, and the early margin gave the entire roster a chance to contribute.

Lake Belton clamped down in a hard fought 43-33 win over Brock, grinding out a low scoring victory that reflects the toughness of the Lady Broncos as they pushed their record to 2-0. When the offense had to work for every possession, the defense made sure the team stayed in control.

To close out the weekend, Lake Belton found yet another gear in a 67-57 victory against Bridge City. The higher scoring affair proved the group could win in a variety of ways, whether by blowout, defensive stand, or shootout, and capped the unbeaten run with

one of the team’s most complete performances of the event.

Beyond the three wins, the showcase offered an early and encouraging glimpse of what the 2026-27 Lady Broncos might become. With college coaches lining the gym, players had the opportunity to test themselves against strong competition while putting their abilities in front of decision makers at the next level. The teamwork and competitive spirit on display in Bryan have long been hallmarks of Lake Belton basketball, and this group carried that tradition forward with confidence.

With the summer season now in full swing, the Lady Broncos appear to have plenty to build on heading into the months ahead. The potential of this team is clear, and the coaching staff and players alike are eager to keep sharpening their game as preparation for the 2026-27 campaign continues.



Scot Hrbacek, CFP® Financial Advisor

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First, automate your savings. Pay yourself before you spend. Even 1% to 5% adds up over time.

Second, watch the small stuff. Subscriptions and coffee can quietly drain your money if you’re not paying attention.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor.
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Briefs - From Page B2

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

WRESTLING

Lake Belton is currently holding summer skills sessions each week. The sessions run every Monday and Wednesday from 10:15 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.

STRENGTH & CONDITIONING

Belton’s summer

strength and conditioning program is underway and is open to all middle school and high school athletes.

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

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

For more information, visit BeltonTigers.com.

RUNNING

Registration for the Lions on the Leon Captain “D” Dash for Sight is open until race day Oct. 3.

Hosted by the Belton Lions Club, the five-kilometer race will be held at Heritage Park beginning at 8:30 a.m. An opening ceremony will start at 8:15 a.m.

The event will begin and end at the Lions Pavilion.

Awards will be given

to the top three finishers in each age group, and an award will be given to the best pirate costume.

The race proceeds help provide eye exams and glasses for those in need, and donations of used glasses will be accepted for recycling.

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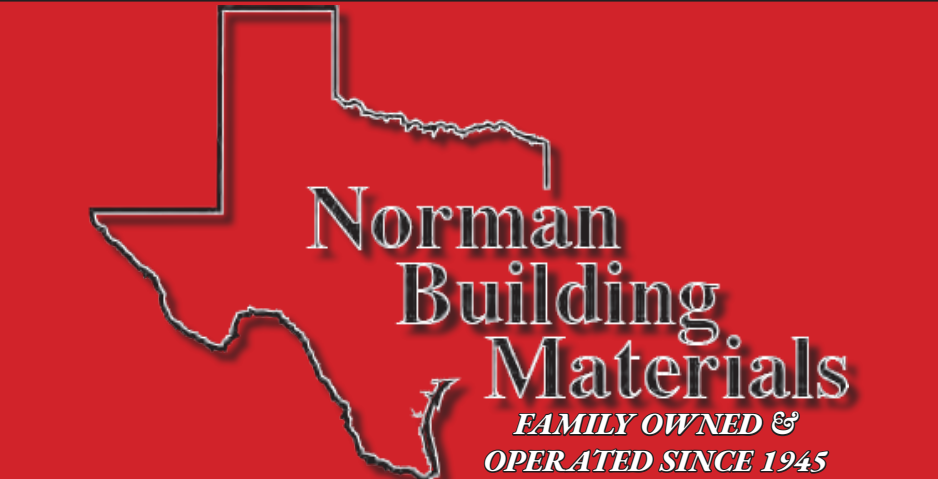
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that a recent cyberattack may have compromised the Personally Identifiable Information (PII) of up to 878 current and former patients. According to the practice’s compliance staff, the unauthorized intrusion was detected on June 25, 2025. An intial investigation revealed that the practice’s cybersecurity platform detected and effectively stopped movement of malicious activity across the network. In response, the network was immediately locked down and any external connections were terminated. Also, all accounts with access to remote desktop web access were disabled and an office-wide password reset was forced. Through the investigation, it was determined that certain personal information of patients associated with the practice might have been accessed. The affected data may have included names, addresses, dates of birth, social security numbers, and driver’s license numbers. However, the incident did not affect any patient Protected Health Information (PHI) such as treatment and payment information. “We deeply regret this incident and sincerely apologize for any concern it may cause our community,” said Dr. Tejas Patel, Cure Dental practice owner. “In the aftermath of this incident, we worked diligently with our cybersecurity experts to prevent this from ever happening again.” The practice confirmed that affected patients were notified via email or mail with detailed instructions on how to enroll in free credit monitoring services to protect against identity theft, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office for Civil Rights (OCR) was notified of the breach. Additionally, the practice has established a dedicated toll-free helpline at 1-888-766-1488 for patients who have questions about this matter. Patients are also encouraged to visit the Texas Attorney General website below to find information regarding protection against identity theft: <https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/consumer-protection/identity-theft/help-prevent-identity-theft> 06.25, 07.02PD

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Witness, Joanna Staton, District Clerk of Bell County, Texas.
Issued and given under my hand and the seal of said Court at office in Belton, Texas, on June 22, 2026.
Joanna Staton District Clerk Bell County, Texas, 1201 Huey Road ,P.O. Box 909, Belton, Texas 76513
By: M Cortez , Deputy Clerk 06.25

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NOTICE is hereby given that original Letters of Testamentary were issued on June 16, 2026, in a proceeding styled Estate of Kenneth Wayne Jennings, Deceased, in Cause Number 26CPB00308, pending in the County Court At Law #1 of Bell County, Texas. Claims may be presented in care of the attorney for the Independent Executor, addressed as follows:
Edward William Cavanaugh Independent Executor of the Estate of Kenneth Wayne Jennings, Deceased
c/o Burk Roberts, Roberts & Roberts, L.L.P., 2501 East Elms Rd., Ste. A, Killeen, Texas 76542-3023
All persons having claims against this estate, which is currently being administered, are required to present them within the time and in the manner prescribed by law. Signed on June 17, 2026.
Roberts & Roberts, L.L.P., Attorneys for

LEGALS

Edward William Cavanaugh
By: Burk Roberts
06.25

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Claims may be presented in care of the attorney for the Independent Executor, addressed as follows: Robert Lee Jackson Independent Executor of the Estate of Thomas Leland Jackson, Deceased
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All persons having claims against this estate, which is currently being administered, are required to present them within the time and in the manner prescribed by law. Signed on June 18, 2026.
Roberts & Roberts. L.L.P., Attorneys for Robert Lee Jackson
By: Burk Roberts
06.25

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of MACK ROBERT HICKMAN, Deceased, were issued on June 16, 2026, in Cause No. 26CPB00276, pending in the County Court-At-Law No: 1, Bell County, Texas, to: JANICE LYNN HICKMAN.
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SIGNED on June 22, 2026.
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If the vehicle is not claimed 30 days after the date this notice is published gives this vehicle storage facility the right to dispose of the vehicle. Additionally, failure to claim the vehicle is a waiver of all right, title, or interest in the vehicle and personal property and a consent to sell the vehicle at a public sale.
06.25

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters of Independent Administration for the Estate of JAMES HUDSON BRALLEY, Deceased, were issued to James D. Bralley on June 2, 2026, in Cause No. 26CPB00162, pending in the County Court at Law Number 1 of Bell County, Texas. Claims should be delivered to the Independent Executor’s attorney at the following address: c/o Max Tenney, Thaler Law, 40201 Industrial Park Cir., Georgetown, TX 78626. All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.
DATED June 18, 2026
Max Tenney Attorney for Independent Administrator THALER LAW Telephone: (512) 675-4770 Facsimile: (512) 532-0902
06.25

2026 H-E-B Challenge blood drive held through July 19

Special to the Journal

The 23rd Annual H-E-B Challenge blood drive takes place through July 19.

In partnership with Carter BloodCare, the multi-city event challenges H-E-B team members and the public to donate blood for local patients in need of transfusions.

Employees of participating H-E-B stores will compete to recruit donors, with trophies and bragging rights for teams with the most units collected.

This year’s blood drive occurs at H-E-B locations in Bellmead, Belton, Burleson, Cleburne, Copperas Cove, Corsicana, Crockett, Ennis, Frisco, Gatesville, Granbury, Harker Heights, Killeen, Mansfield, Marlin, McKinney, Melissa, Mexia, Plano, Stephenville, Temple, Waco, Waxahachie and Weatherford.

Carter BloodCare officials say there is a vital need for type O donors. Universal type O negative can support any patient and is the only blood



Carter BloodCare

type used to treat premature and unborn babies. The most common blood type – O positive – is

used in emergency situations such as traumatic bleeding. Healthy individuals

are eligible to donate at age 16 with parental consent; those 17 and older can donate on their own. Each donor must weigh at least 110 pounds and feel well on the day of donation.

It takes about one hour only to donate blood that can help at least three patients.

As a thank-you, Carter BloodCare donors also receive various appreciation items.

Participating in this year’s H-E-B Challenge helps children fighting cancer, people hurt in car

wrecks, new moms, burn patients, organ transplant recipients, older adults with age-related health issues, and many others.

For dates and locations, and to pick a convenient donation time, visit CarterBloodCare.org.



Crossword

1	2	3	4				5	6	7	8	9	10			
11							12						13	14	15
16							17				18				
19				20	21			22	23					24	
25							26						27		
28						29						30			
				31	32					33					
34	35	36	37						38						
39						40	41	42							
43					44						45	46	47	48	
49					50					51	52				
53				54					55						
56		57						58				59			
60					61	62						63			
			64									65			

CLUES ACROSS

1. Nocturnal S. American rodent

5. Requesting

11. Give temporarily

12. Excitedness

16. Armed Forces branch

17. Actor Harris

18. Middle Eastern capital

19. Air hostesses

24. Partner to “Pa”

25. Percussion instrument

26. Popular computers

27. Reduce light

28. Asian mountain range

29. Every one of two or more

30. Absence of difficulty

31. A public announcement of a proposed marriage

33. Whittles

34. Impact
38. Serviceman

39. A French river

40. Prehistoric people

43. Messenger ribonucleic acid

44. __ Clapton, musician

45. Ancient Greek sophist

49. Largest English dictionary (abbr.)

50. Singer Hansard

51. A way to disentangle

53. Atomic #93

54. Manifesting approval

56. Indigo bush

58. Former AL MVP Vaughn

59. Off-Broadway theater award

60. Fencers

63. Small Eurasian deer (pl.)

64. Relating to passerine birds

65. Arrange systematically

CLUES DOWN

1. Colorless fluid

2. Of a main artery

3. Photographer’s tool

4. Blues Traveler hit “But __”

5. Grew older

6. Not the leader

7. __ Lang (country singer)

8. A driver’s license is one

9. Nests of pheasants

10. Wildebeests

13. Equal to one quintillion bytes

14. Japanese three-stringed lute

15. Type of cat

20. It cools your home

21. The ancient Egyptian sun god

22. Pouches

23. German trigraph

27. Form of Persian

29. Measurement unit

30. Body part

31. Bridge building degree

32. Indicates position

33. Political action committee
34. Snack food

35. Front part of a quadruped

36. Locate

37. Pitching statistic

38. __, myself and I

40. City in Utah

41. They play in the trenches

42. “Can’t Touch This” rapper __ Hammer

44. Type of tree

45. Performers

46. Slang for mistake

47. More open

48. Most slick

50. Needles

51. University of Dayton

52. Atomic #11

54. Large fish of the mackerel family

55. Not any

57. __ and behold

61. Popular sports highlight show (abbr.)

62. “The Great Lakes State”

SUDOKU

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

Level: Intermediate

Here’s How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

What’s the Difference? for Kids

Find the four differences between the two pictures.

A



B



PUZZLE SOLUTION

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

- Answers:
- Extra firework burst on left
 - Missing building back right
 - Missing light on building at front right
 - Extra building on skyline



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ESTABLISHED IN 1866

THE BELTON JOURNAL



EDITORIAL

Tired of giving?

My Front Porch • Lynette Sowell

More and more, we hear about people needing a financial hand with something, for various reasons. Unemployment, cancer or other sickness, fire or flood, you name it. With the world ever-expanding via the digital world, you can find someone asking for a handout at every turn. TV, newspaper, radio, Internet, it’s all there, all the time.

Years ago, we took our kids to Washington, D.C. for a family trip, and we did quite a bit of walking throughout our nation’s capital. Just a few blocks means an entirely different thing than it does in Copperas Cove, or even Austin.

What surprised them was the number of panhandlers. In the Metro station, on street corners, along the sidewalks. They’d see us from where they sat, and if you made eye contact, they’d rattle their can. Sure, they had change in the cans to make a bit of noise and catch passersby’s attention, but I’m sure they preferred the dollars.

For me at least, it was hard to walk by and not give

each of them a little something, but I did it. There were so many, far more than I ever remembered from visiting D.C. when I was a kid, or even in college.

After a while, I managed to ignore the can rattling, even as my heart said, “That’s somebody’s father, or brother, or son, or daughter, or...If it was my kid...”

After a while, it does get a bit old, doesn’t it, with one cause after another of someone asking for something, especially money? We start ignoring the sound of the can rattling, so to speak. There’s something called compassion fatigue, but in this case, maybe our compassion gets a bit worn out. Another need, another call for money. Always another tragedy.

But, that’s life, isn’t it? We do live in a world where there are great needs. There are people who are sick, and their energy, along with their family’s energy, is focused on getting well again in the face of incredible medical costs, not all covered by insurance. Houses burn down.

Businesses fail.

Recent events remind us that most of us have it pretty comfortable. Our needs are met. We have a roof over our heads and we’re pretty sure we’re going to eat tonight, and the next morning, and the day after that. We know we have electricity and running water. We have transportation. Or, if we don’t have a vehicle, we have transportation to get us around for a \$2 a ride, door to door.

But we are also reminded, and should remind ourselves, of the great needs surrounding us. It does get tiring. Yet when we all shoulder a bit of the load together, we can carry it. Even if it’s small, little things add up.

This year, we ought to give when and where we can. Don’t give blindly because not every cause is necessarily a true cause, but everyone’s little bit can add up to a lot.

“Very few burdens are heavy if everyone lifts”
– an Amish proverb

USA 101: Cheese

Shop the Insanity • Darren Blair

Thanks to the modern magic we call the internet, I have been able to speak with a great many people from all over the world. As bizarre as it might seem, one of the things I’m most commonly asked about in regards to the United States is our cheese situation. No, I’m not joking.

So for those of you who hail from outside of the United States and happen to be reading this, allow me to explain.

To begin with, the canned “spray tube” – style cheese you might have seen is more novelty item than serious foodstuff. Even our own pop culture sometimes mocks it. Therefore, let’s set that aside for right now.

As far as American cheese goes, you can actually thank the UK for that, as by the 1790s American-made Cheddar-style cheeses were being imported to the UK. The cheese itself is a processed cheese that has been mixed with sodium citrate. The cheese and sodium citrate mixture is then melted together to ensure a single consistency, at which point it’s subjected to the Pasteurization process on top of this first heating process. This results in a cheese that easily melts, has a mild flavor, pairs well with just about everything, has no aftertaste under normal circumstances, and is readily affordable. It is, in essence, a very working-class cheese.

However, that’s not the only cheese to hail from the United States.

For starters, we have Colby, which hails from the city of Colby, Wisconsin. Colby is produced through a variation on the process used to create Cheddar-style cheeses, meaning that while it is still what would be considered a “hard” cheese it’s a bit softer and moister than a regular Cheddar. Colby is quite commonly sliced for use in sandwiches, but you’ll also see it shredded or cubed for use in salads and you might even see people just snack on it as-is. US law states that this is one of a handful of cheeses from which American cheese can be derived.

Or of course there’s Monterrey Jack, native of Monterrey, California. It’s a white cheese which owes its existence in large part to the influence of Franciscan monks, and somewhat hard but not so hard as Colby. It melts almost as well as American cheese, yet its mild flavor is unique compared to most other cheeses. Due to its composition, history, and origin, it’s commonly used with burritos, quesadillas, and other items that in the United States are seen as traditionally “Mexican” cuisine. Variations on Monterrey Jack include Pepper Jack, where dried bits of peppers have been added into the cheese for a bit of extra kick, and Colby Jack, where Monterrey Jack and Colby have been blended to have the former’s low melting point and latter’s flavor profile in the same product.

Then there’s cream cheese, an innovation on the Neufchatel cheese wherein cream is added. The end result is a cheese so soft that if made and stored properly it can be used as a spread. Typically, cream cheese is served atop the humble bagel, but one variation of the Philadelphia-style Cheese Steak sandwich uses a popular name-brand of cream cheese, and it’s also one of the key ingredients in cheesecake (yes, we make cake from cream cheese; you should try it).

There are a few other cheeses hailing from the United States, but I think this proves the point: even if the cheese legally known as American cheese isn’t your thing, you’ll still have some options to dine on while you’re here.

Randomness

Pleasant Ramblings • Mark Magnan

Ever wonder why a wet rag absorbs more water than a dry rag? Probably some sort of kitchen witchcraft. The same thing with other wet stuff, like wet pavement and you slide in your car, wet fingertips and you can’t grip slippery things.

Have you ever been some place and time stood still? Like being in an elevator with other people, the door opens and a young lady steps in. Someone asks her when her baby is due, and everyone else knows she isn’t pregnant.

Remember when air conditioning on a car was an option? Glad those days are in the past.

Ever notice how we spend our weekends fertilizing and weeding our yards, watering them during dry seasons, spending all that money so we can use a lawnmower to cut it off every Saturday?

Was the concept of “catch and release” fishing thought of by someone that wasn’t hungry?

What was the process of determining the best way to make it through a bear attack? Stand up and look big...oops, I guess that only works with mountain lions. Make lots of noise and yell? Nope, not that good either. Grab her cub and hold it hostage? Well, that was a really bad idea. Curl up in a ball and pass out? Yep, works like a charm.

Who thought, “We can get on a mad horse and get bucked off without killing ourselves, let’s try that with a bull!”?

Is it ironic that a Masonic Lodge is in a metal building? I mean, I don’t know a lot about them, but it seems like a metal building would be a bit out of their specialty.

Thinking of the puffer fish: it is poisonous, but not all of it, just one of the innards. How did they figure that out? How many of your friends do you make sick before you determine which little part you had to remove?

Who invented the banjo? And why? “Hey, I have a great idea, let’s take something like a guitar and make it harder to play and sound worse, we can sell a ton of them to hillbillies....” (I kinda like good banjo music... for the record...)

What about the first American who went to England and ordered a muffin? I am sure they were surprised at how an English muffin tasted compared to the much better version we have here: “Hey partner, this here ain’t no muffin, there ain’t no fruit or nuts or nothin’ in it at all...”

Can you imagine the ridicule the first person that shaved received? I mean, for thousands of years all men had beards, then someone invented a razor and used it to

shave his beard off. I am sure his friends were initially shocked, then laughed at him and called him all sorts of sissy names. Then they probably wanted to use his new razor to shave their beards...all the time not realizing they were going to have to shave every morning for the rest of their lives.

How long after the first car rolled off Ford’s assembly line did someone become a “used car salesman”? Did he invent the phrase: “It was owned by a little old lady that only drove it to church on Sundays...”?

How many iterations did the PBJ sandwich go through before landing on what we have now? “Peanut butter and cornmeal, nope. Peanut butter and gruel, yeech... Let’s try something sweet like jelly... and we have a winner!”

What a stroke of genius that someone took a regular sized cake and made it smaller and easier to eat, like a cupcake! And just in case that wasn’t good enough they often come packaged in pairs, because one may not be enough.

How come when I get a song stuck in my head it is never one I like, always a song I dislike greatly? I mean, I could sing along with a favorite song all day. Yes, it may annoy the people around me but I would be happy.

Free Time

Coffee Talk • Renae Brumbaugh Green

Today’s youth are smarter than I am. Well, maybe not smarter, but they sure know a lot more about computers than I do. They know more about technology of every kind.

Not only that, but they just seem to be growing up too fast, don’t you think? They know more about the hard things of life, a lot sooner than they should. They wear make-up sooner, date sooner, and do all sorts of things much sooner than I did. Sometimes, I worry that kids don’t even know how to be kids anymore. It seems all they know how to do is talk or text on their phones or sit on the couch and play videogames.

But this week, those worries were washed away.

The weather was gorgeous, and so after a long morning of standardized tests, I decided to take a couple of my classes outside. I told them it was a free day – but they didn’t know I had ulterior motives. Later on, I asked them to write about their free time.

We took a few games, some sidewalk chalk, and . . . that’s pretty much it. No cell phones. No i-pods.

I let them do whatever they wanted, within reason. I was curious about whether or not they’d find anything to do when they weren’t connected to the internet. So, without further ado, here is the list of things seventh graders do when given a half hour of free time:

Play hopscotch.

Play Mancala

Work puzzles.

Write stories.

Do sit-ups.

Race: boy vs. boy.

Race: girl vs. girl.

Race: girl vs. boy. (The girl won.)

Talk

Sit and think.

Sit and stare.

Just sit.

Write a new rap song.

Have a break-dancing competition.

Play Duck-duck-goose.

Take their shoes off so they can ruin their socks.

Play basketball.

Play cards.

Do the splits

Soak up some ‘rays. (Get a suntan.)

Do Michael Jackson impersonations.

Play air tambourine.

Play air guitar.

Sing, “If You’re Happy and You Know It”.

Play Patty-cake.

Laugh a lot.

Play Hangman.

Draw.

Show their teacher how to do “The Jerk”.

See who can put their feet behind their heads.

Do push-ups.

Do backwards push-ups.

Crab walk.

Call each other silly names.

Play checkers.

Fix each other’s hair.

Do flips.

Practice cheerleading.

And the list goes on and on. I was pleasantly surprised. After all the bad things I hear about the next generation, it was nice to see that all hope isn’t lost. Kids still know how to be kids. As much as things have changed, I guess things haven’t really changed that much, after all.

Tonight, I plan to set aside some free time of my own. No television, no computers or cell phones. Maybe I’ll read a book.

Or maybe I’ll practice that new dance move they taught me . . .

“What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun,” Ecclesiastes 1:9.



Local Activities & Events

Newcomers Club Activities
June

06/25: Mexican Train Dominoes 06/27: Jimmy’s Egg
06/26: Fun Lunch
"To join or for more information, please call:
Mary Pringle (760)265-5035 or
email at: pringlem@msn.com
Visit the website: www.bellcountynewcomers.com."

Bell County Master Gardener - June 25
Join us for our seminar at the SMART Museum on “Herbs” by Master Gardener Stephanie Preciado. Learn about the beauty and benefits of these plants and how to care for them. June 25th, Thursday, 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. Free to public, email bell-countymastergardeners@gmail.comto register.

Belton 4th of July Celebration - June 27 to July 4
Celebrate America’s 250th, starting with the Downtown Street Party on June 27, PRCA Rodeo July second through the fourth, the historic parade and fireworks on the Fourth of July. Visit beltonchamber.com for the full schedule.

1976 Class Reunion - June 27
Join your classmates on June 27, 2026, 6:30 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. at The singing Coyote Farm, 6841 West FM 436, Belton for an evening of Fun, Fellowship, and Fireworks.

Temple’s Health & Wellness Expo - June 27
Temple’s Health & Wellness Expo is bringing a fresh new approach to health, wellness, and community connection on Saturday, June 27, from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM at the Frank W. Mayborn Civic & Convention Center.

America’s 250th Birthdayay Party, MPR - July 3
Bring the family for a morning of patriotic fun as Morgan’s Point Resort celebrates America’s 250th birthday! The event begins with a 10:00 a.m. ceremony at the City Hall flagpole, Morgan’s Point Resort City Hall, 8 Morgan’s Point Blvd., Morgan’s Point Resort. Followed by outdoor games, birthday cake, and a Glow Room Party inside the Library. Additional activities may be added as the date approaches. All are welcome.

Bell County Master Gardeners- July 18
Join us for Propagation: Seed Collecting, Saving and Planting. Master Gardener Dave Slaughter will present sexual reproduction in the garden. He will help us develop the skills to properly harvest, handle, store and then test your seeds. Learn to plant using the correct temperature to maximize the seed starting process. July 18th, Thursday, 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m., at Bell County Extension Office- Learning Center, 1605 N. Main Street. No registration needed.

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

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

Marine Corp League will meet the third Tuesday of each mont at VFW 3859. Dinner is served at 6:30 p.m. and metting will begin at 7:00 p.m. 201 VFW Dr, Harker heights, Tx 76548. Email commandant@mcl1249tx.comfor more inforamtion.

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

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

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

The Bell County Genealogical Society meets the fourth Saturday of each month. The group offers free Genealogy Guidance. Members of the Bell County Genealogical Society will be present to help those with questions about researching their family

trees. General meetings are held in the Bell County Museum, 201 North Main St., Belton, TX. All meetings are open to the public. You do not have to be from Bell County or have ancestors from Bell County to participate. For additional information please visit our website at https://txbcgs.org/home/events/

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

Bell Fine Arts Visitors welcome Wednesday’s from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 306 E 5th Ave in Belton. If you have a desire to meet, learn, and work together with those of similiar interests or just curious, come visit with us and see what we are about. Mah 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 or just come by.

Local chapter of the Crochet Guild of America meets from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Wednesdays at the Lena Armstrong Public Library, 301 E. First St., in Belton. The group is open to anyone interested in crochet. All skill levels are welcome. For information email Betty Reichert at bettyreichert@yahoo.com or Kathy Bement at katshookand needle@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/take-mehome. 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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GOT A LOCAL EVENT, CHURCH GATHERING, OR MEETING?
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Rodney Morales
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Ashley Marshall
VP Commercial Lending



Matthew Calhoun
VP Commercial Lending



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4497 W. Hwy. 190 • Belton

Since 2006, Budget Wrench A Part has been serving the residents of Belton with a low cost alternative to buying car parts. Budget Wrench A Part is a business where you can come get your hands dirty and find your own car parts from the cars on hand.

"This is a cheap alternative from which lower income people can get inexpensive car parts," co-owner and general manager Travis Snyder said.

Each car goes through different steps in a process of reusing the materials of the car. Budget Wrench A Part pays for old cars and buys them from anyone who is looking to sell.

"First, we depollute them and then the rest of the vehicle goes to the yard," Snyder said.

After that, people can come and remove any part of the car that they might need a part for. After all the left over car parts are sold, the metal is melted down and used for highway building projects.

"Our main goal is environmental," Snyder said. "We want to get them off the streets. Everything in the vehicle will get recycled."

The biggest help that this business does is to let the consumer find a cheap way to get car parts. "There is no labor cost included since the customer is getting their own part and they get to choose what they want," Snyder said. "It's about a quarter of what you'd pay at another salvage yard."

Budget Wrench A Part has about 3,000 vehicles in the yard at any given point and fresh inventory is added daily. It is located at 4497 W. Hwy. 190 and is open seven days a week. They're proud to be a member of the Better Business Bureau.

For more information, please visit www.wrenchapart.com or call 254-939-6700. Wrench A Part is also on Facebook, where they post their latest inventory updates and information on upcoming events.

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