

College Community Commemorates 9/11

By Jack Freedman
The Belton Journal

On Saturday, September 5, the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor Reserve Officers' Training Corps placed 2,977 American flags in front of Luther Memorial on UMHB campus. Each flag represents a victim of the September 11 terror attacks, and the flags will fly in front of the chapel for the next week.

"This is the twenty-fifth anniversary of 9/11, so it's gonna be a big one," Cadet Mikyla Bachert said. "I think the flags are a good way to honor something that had a big impact on our country."

The ROTC met at Luther Memorial at 9 a.m. Saturday and served coffee and donuts. A few staff and students arrived to help set up the flags, with the setup taking roughly two hours to complete.

"I feel like it's a really good way to bring the community together," Bachert said.



Courtesy Photo

Last year's 9/11 Memorial display on the UMHB campus.

The flag placing has been a yearly tradition at UMHB. In past years, it has been headed by the Young Conservatives of America. Since the YCA is currently inactive, the tradition has been taken over by the ROTC.

"When Yvette Shackelford, the old coordinator of this event, saw that the group was inactive, she couldn't let this stop due to the impor-

tance of it," Captain Casey Batley said. "So she passed it along to us and we're providing the manpower for this."

While the majority of the ROTC members were not alive when the attacks happened back in 2001, most of the officers were.

"I was very little when it happened," Sergeant First Class Jhonny Mancia said. "The only real thing that I

know is I was going to school. But when I joined the army, I was deployed in Operation Iraqi Freedom, which was obviously the result of the U.S. response to 9/11."

In the case of Batley, his family came close to losing a family member in the attacks.

"My [father-in-law] is from Connecticut, and he

See 9/11.
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Dash for Sight set for Oct. 3

By David Stone
The Belton Journal

Get ready to walk the plank, or at least 5 kilometers. The Lions on the Leon Dash for Sight 5K Run/Walk — a pirate-themed event hosted by the Belton Lions Club — will be Saturday, Oct. 3, at Heritage Park.

The event will be held rain or shine.

According to Karen Stagner, secretary of the local Lions Club, the event will begin at 8:30 a.m. at the Lions Pavilion. Runners and walkers will proceed down Park Avenue, follow the trail around the baseball fields and along the Leon River, then end back at the pavilion.

There will be four water stations on the route and snacks at the end, she said.

Awards will be given to the top overall male and female finishers, and the top three male and female finishers in each age group. Age groups include 11 and under, 12 to 15, 16 to 19, 20 to 24, 25 to 29, 30 to 34, 35 to 39, 40 to 44, 45 to 49, 50 to 54, 55 to 59, 60 to 64, 65 to 69 and 70 and older.

"We also will present four awards for the best pirate costumes," Stagner said.

Those participating and attending are encouraged to bring used eyeglasses for Texas Lions to recycle.

Event t-shirts are guaranteed for those who register prior to Sept. 17, and limited sizes and quantities may be available after that date. Registration is \$35 through Sept.

See SIGHT.
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Life Saving Award and new Youth Commission appointed at Council

By David Stone
The Belton Journal

City Council presented a Life Saving Award on Tuesday to a Belton man credited with saving the lives of a woman and her two children during a building fire last month.

Interim Fire Chief Rhea Cooper and Chief of Police Larry Berg were at this week's Council meeting to present the award to Carlos Rodriguez for his efforts in saving the woman and her two kids from a second-floor window at Belton Village during an Aug. 27 blaze.

Council recognized senior accountant Christina Sparks for receiving her certified Government Finance Officer designation. The program is sponsored by the Government Finance Officers Association of Texas and was established to set a threshold of knowledge for government financial officers.

To obtain this certification, the applicant must meet a 375-point requirement through a combination of academic credentials, profes-



Courtesy Photo

Newly appointed members of the Youth Advisory Commission.

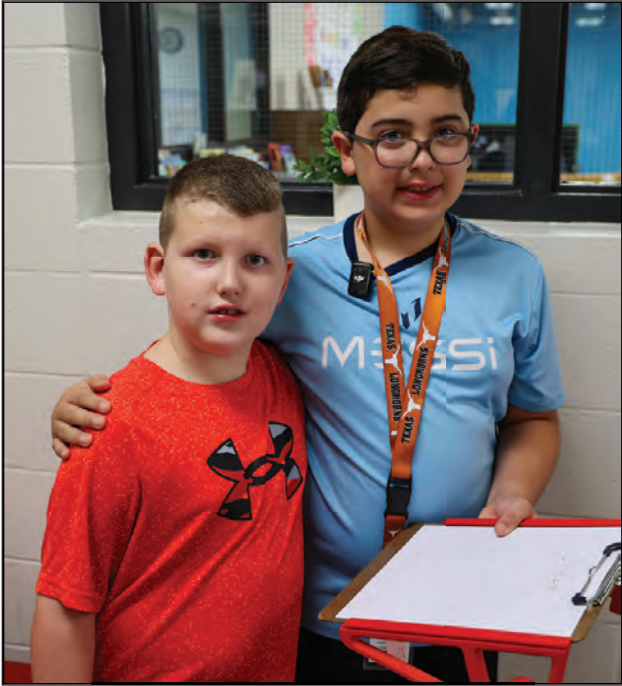
sional experience, and exam scores. Applicants are tested over a broad array of government finance topics including accounting and financial reporting, budgeting and capital planning, cash management, debt administration, and public finance.

Of the 400 people with

this certification in Texas, three are employed by the City of Belton.

Also Tuesday, City Council approved newly appointed members to the Belton Youth Advisory Commission.

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Courtesy Photo

Jade Ruiz stands with Brett York and the custom raised clipboard Ruiz made.

Student Once Helped by Sparta Teacher Returns the Favor

Special to the Journal

Years before, Belton Middle School sixth-grader Jude Ruiz used his creativity and 3D printing skills to help a younger student; Jenn Hoelscher helped him find his voice.

Hoelscher, a special education and inclusion teacher at Sparta Elementary School, taught Jude in first, third, and fourth grades, becoming an important part of his journey and helping him grow in confidence and independence.

Years later, the student she once helped is now helping another student in her classroom.

Hoelscher recently turned to Jude for help supporting Brett York, a third grader who needed a raised writing surface that would better meet his needs. After several options weren't quite the right fit, Hoelscher wondered if her former student could create something different.

Jude got to work. Using his 3D printing skills and a talent he has spent years developing, Jude designed and created a custom raised clipboard for Brett. When he returned to Sparta to deliver it, Jude and Brett met for the first time.

Jude's interest in 3D printing began in third grade, when he received a small 3D printer from his nana for Christmas. He initially used it for UIL projects before putting it away for nearly two years.

In fifth grade, he returned to 3D printing and began creating items for classmates. What started with exchanging his creations for candy eventually grew into selling them with some encouragement from his dad.

Jude also began finding

ways to use his creativity to help others.

As a member of Sparta's Leadership Team, Jude and his classmates were asked to brainstorm ideas for a calm-down or cool-off space for athletes participating in a Special Olympics track meet. Jude suggested creating 3D-printed fidgets for the athletes. The creations became a favorite at the station.

Even after Jude moved on to middle school, his connection with Hoelscher continued.

When she needed clipboard holders, she asked Jude. He made them. When she needed more, he made those too. When she needed fidgets, Jude created those as well.

Then came Brett. Hoelscher had been looking for a better writing solution for Brett for more than a year. A slant board provided through occupational therapy worked but was larger than what she wanted for his desk. After seeing a smaller option online over the summer, she reached out to Jude's mother, Mae-gan Ruiz, to ask whether Jude might be interested in designing something similar. He was.

Jude worked through the design process and created the raised clipboard specifically for Brett. When Hoelscher offered to pay him for his work, Jude declined, choosing instead to donate it.

Jude now operates Print Kid 3D, creating fidgets, sharks and other items requested by fellow students. He isn't sure yet where his creativity or 3D-printing skills will take him, but when asked what motivates him to keep creating, his answer was simple: his parents.

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Newcomers Club invites those in a new season or location in life

By Michele Weisman
The Belton Journal

The Newcomers Club welcomed Jill Beam to their monthly meeting on Wednesday, Sept. 2, who encouraged, sang, and inspired its members. The parking lots were packed for their luncheon, board meeting, and to hear their guest speak to her slogan, “Never Too Old to Rock n’ Roll!”

She gave sage advice, most of it passed along from her mother, a speaker and entertainer too. The ladies were laughing and engaged with Beam’s ability to tell stories that inspired and delighted.

One story involved her mother telling her that their family does not retire but instead they “rewire.”

Beam shared stories about well-known people who also never retired, but

rewired. Beam addressed the facts that aging brings, but with humor and acceptance. Such as one of the songs she sang.

Beam said, “Julie Andrews is also known as a parody queen. She enjoyed writing parodies to the songs she sang, and she wrote a parody of one of her favorite songs in the South of Music. These are a few of my favorite things, and it’s a parody about getting older.”

Botox, bunions, and walkers were a few of the mentionables.

Marlene King, publicity for Newcomers, said, “If you have come into the area within the last three years, then this is for you. Two new members who joined at the expo last year wished to volunteer this year. But then we have situations where you may have lost your husband.



BELTON JOURNAL/Michele Weisman
Vice President Shirley White, guest speaker Jill Beam, and President Mary Pringle at the Sept. Newcomers Club, Inc. meeting.

Or you’ve been a working person for years and you’ve now retired, and now you’ve got time on your hands and you don’t know what to do. So those types of people are

eligible to apply.”

Other Newcomers’ activities include regular gatherings outside of the monthly meet up. These range from book groups, walking groups, a couple’s group, a wine group, and more.

Newcomers Club will be at the 16th Annual Bell County Senior Expo on Sept. 22, to inform seniors about

membership.

Beam closed her talk with her philosophy on life, “Life at home is not always easy. Matthew 6:34 tells us to live each day for itself. Life has no remote control. You have to give up and change it.”

Newcomers Club, Inc. meets monthly at Christ Episcopal Church Parish Hall at 300 N Main in Temple with a paid reservation. Mary Pringle is president, and Marlene King handles publicity. Applications for membership can be made through Sheri Clifton at (602)-432-7510, sherbear@bearhouse.us, or their website at bellcountynewcomers.com.

Find out more about Jill Beam, author, dancer, speaker, and fitness expert at www.jazzinjill.com. Jill Beam and her mother are writing a book together that will be out soon.

Council - From Page A1

Those appointed include: Lake Belton HS senior Shreya Muni, Lake Belton HS senior Alexandra Bui, Belton HS junior Matthew Bates, Belton HS junior Jada Gage, New Tech HS junior Maxwell Mitchell, Belton HS junior Shayam Ramani, Belton HS junior Anna Shrestha, Belton HS junior Kyra Shah, and home-schooled junior Charles Hong.

“Staff is recommending Shreya Muni as this year’s Youth Advisory Commission chair,” said James Grant, director of Belton Parks & Recreation. “Shreya is entering her third year with YAC. She spent last year working with the seniors to develop her leadership skills with the hope of becoming chair this year.”

“Shreya was a very active member last year, and her dedication to her fellow classmates and to her community is why we are recommending Shreya as chair of the 2026-2027 Youth Advisory Commission,” Grant said.

City Clerk Amy Casey conducted the swearing-in of the 2026-2027 Youth Advisory Commission members.

The commission was originally formed in September 2007, and the group is responsible for developing recommendations to City Council that focus on Belton’s quality of life, community and service enhancements, and other issues of importance to young people. YAC members make recommendations to City Council concerning solutions to specific youth issues in the community.

“Youth Advisory Commission members encourage the initiation of programs of interest to youth,” Grant added.

Council also approved appointments to the Historic Preservation Commission and the Civil Service Commission.

The Historic Preservation Committee terms of TC Lipe, Ann West and Eric Urben all ended Sept. 10, and Mayor David Leigh recommended all for reappointment. Also, the Civil Service Commission term of Larry Thompson ends Sept. 24, and Leigh recommended him for reappointment.

Mike Rodgers, Belton’s director of finance, presented Council with the Interim Financial Report for the quarter that ended June 30.

“To increase transparency of city finances, the quarterly financial and investment reports will now be presented to City Council at regularly scheduled meetings throughout the fiscal year,” Rodgers said.

Highlights for the quarter include:

General Fund expenditures surpassed revenues during the quarter by \$2,643,071 with 96 percent of property taxes collected to date. On a year-to-date basis, the General Fund reports net income of \$1,949,587 through June 30. Permitting fees are under budget because of the issuance of fewer permits. Maintenance expenditures are over budget due to repairs to the multipurpose fields at Heritage Park.

The **Water & Sewer Fund** reports net income of \$373,797 through June 30. At 61 percent of the annual budget, revenues totaling \$9,034,306 are 1.1 percent lower than last year and \$719,003 under budget. Total expenses of \$8,660,509 are 60 percent of budget as debt payments and capital purchases will occur later in the year.

Revenues in the **Drainage Fund** surpass expenditures by \$31,079 with cost savings in personnel, supplies, and maintenance. Capital outlay includes upgrades to the flood monitoring system.

The **Hotel Occupancy Tax Fund** reports a net loss of \$85,626 at the end of quarter 3 because of costs for events and tourism marketing services. Revenues are only 48 percent of budget because the occupancy taxes collected by hoteliers through June 30 are not due to the City of Belton until the end of July.

With 95 percent of property taxes collected, revenues far exceed expenditures in the **Debt Service Fund** to date. Debt service payments occur in January and July of each year. City contributions into the **TIRZ Fund** push revenue above expenditures by \$2,436,300 through June 30. Seventy-five percent of the budgeted transfers into the TIRZ Capital Project Fund have occurred to date.

The **Information Technology Fund** reports a net loss of \$17,350 through the third quarter as the purchase of computers and software subscriptions occurred early in the year. **Building Maintenance Fund** revenues and expenditures are generally in line with budget with the exception of maintenance costs.

Belton Economic Development Corporation Fund revenues surpassed expenditures during the quarter by \$677,662, increasing YTD net income to \$2,067,782. Like the General Fund, sales tax revenues for Q3 2026 are higher than Q3 2025 but slightly below budget for FY 2026. Capital and other expenditures will occur later in the year.

Belton Students Among Sam Houston State University Summer Graduates

Special to the Journal

The following Belton students achieved major academic milestones during the 2026 summer semester at Sam Houston State University. Allison Kondrat proudly earned her PhD in Criminal Justice, while Hannah Yi completed her Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice. Their dedication and hard work have made Belton proud.

The kitty condo at the Dead Fish Grill



BELTON JOURNAL/Michele Weisman

Two stray cats live an upgraded life at the Dead Fish Grill in the Kitty Condo.

By Michele Weisman
The Belton Journal

The Dead Fish Grill has been attractive to stray cats for years. In fact, some customers, upon exiting, are known to feed them. According to Harold Manning, the general manager, the two cats that hang around now disappear when it is busy, but dine with them in the evening, outside of course.

Manning said, “There’s been different cats coming in and out for the last seven or eight years.”

Wanting to help the cats, the restaurant provides food and water outside for them.

Manning explained, “We buy kibble and our maintenance lady in the morning would just keep them fed. Make sure they’re okay and keep them warm.”

The feeding station is a distance to the left of the entrance doors to the Dead Fish Grill.

“It started with some cats that hung around here, and customers would feed

them. So, we actually feed them every morning. We have a little space where they can stay. They don’t come into the restaurant or anything.”

Cats can multiply quickly, but there was an organization that helped to stem that issue.

Manning said, “The female that’s out there now, the gray one, we’ve even got her fixed because she kept having litters. There was a wonderful organization called Snip and Return. I think it was. They came and got her and took her and had her fixed, and then brought her back.”

About two years ago, someone anonymously brought the condo for the cats.

Manning said, “I actually think it was probably a guest that brought it out here because they got kind of fond of them.”

As busy as Dead Fish Grill gets, they see the cats as a responsibility too.

Manning said, “We like animals here.”

The restaurant overlooks Belton Lake and is located at 2207 Lake Rd, Belton. Their website is www.deadfishgrill-beltontx.com.

Sparta - From Page A1

For his mom, seeing Jude use those talents to help a student in the classroom where so much of his own story began made the moment even more meaningful. “Mrs. Hoelscher helped make this possible for Jude, and now she is doing the same thing for Brett,” said Maegan Ruiz, Jude’s mother. “She saw something in Jude, helped him find his voice and gave him opportunities to discover what he was capable of. Now she’s bringing these two kids together and giving Jude the opportunity to use his talents to help someone else.

People need to know this is what is happening in Belton ISD schools. Teachers are changing kids’ lives, and sometimes those kids come back and help change someone else’s.”

For Hoelscher, a relationship that began years ago with a student in her classroom has come full circle.

The student she once helped find his voice is now using his talents to help another student find his own path to success.



★★★ PATRIOT DAY ★★★

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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OBITUARIES

Walters

Matthew “Chewie” Cyrus Walters
August 2, 1978 – September 3, 2026

Matthew Cyrus Walters, lovingly known as “Chewie,” died on September 3, 2026, in Temple, Texas, after long time liver issues. He was born on August 2, 1978, in Temple, and remained deeply connected to the community that shaped his life and received so much of his heart in return.

Matthew graduated from Temple High School and continued his education at Temple College, pursuing an IT degree. Growing up in a news reporter home, he developed an early interest in what was happening around town and in local events, a curiosity that stayed with him throughout his life. During his junior year, he met Amanda Haas and knew he was going to spend the rest of his life with her. Together they married and were blessed with their twins.

He worked in the IT field and also expanded his efforts as a philanthropist, helping, working, and volunteering with various non-profits. His community was his passion. He especially loved bringing joy to children,

whether appearing as local Santa Claus or as Chewbacca at Bell County Comic Con. In every setting, Matthew brought enthusiasm, generosity, and a spirit of fun that made people feel welcome.

Matthew was known for having a larger-than-life personality and an equally large servant’s heart. He had an infectious laugh, a gift for dad jokes, and a reputation for happily taking over a microphone whenever the opportunity arose. He was fun, sweet, and caring, and to many he was the Comic Con dad, everyone’s best friend, and a brother in spirit as much as in family. He also enjoyed playing board games and electronic games, and he delighted in putting his wide and wonderfully random store of knowledge to use in trivia.

Above all, Matthew was devoted to his family. He is survived by his high school sweetheart and beloved wife, Amanda Walters, and by their children, Michael Walters and Ashleigh Walters. He is also survived by his sisters, Stephanie Post and Sarah Watson. The love he shared with his family was at the center of his life, and his memory will continue to live on in the stories, laughter, and warmth they carry forward.

He was preceded in death by his father, Stephen Walters, and his mother, Glynnis Walters.

In lieu of flowers please consider making memorial

donation to the Children’s Miracle Network CTXfoundation@BSWHealth.com or by mailing 2401 S. 31st Street, MS-20-S103, Temple, TX 76508

Visitation was held on Wednesday, September 9, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at Young’s Daughters Funeral Home & Bereavement Center, 4235 E. US Hwy 190, Temple, TX 76501. A funeral service followed from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the same location. In honor of Matt, attendees were asked to wear purple to the services. Burial will follow at Greathouse Cemetery, 2343 East FM 93 near State Hwy 95, Temple, TX 76502.

Matthew Cyrus Walters will be remembered for his laughter, his kindness, his service, and the joy he so freely gave to others. His life touched family, friends, and community in lasting ways, and his memory will be cherished always.

A special thank you to the Nurses at Baylor Scott and White especially Hannah Hafer and Kyle Bourque for their compassionate care and the support from the Convention family.

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

Belton ISD Students Earn 315 College Board AP Scholar Honors

Special to the Journal

Belton ISD students earned 315 College Board AP Scholar honors in 2026, a 27% increase from the previous year and a reflection of continued growth in advanced academic achievement across the district.

A total of 296 students from Belton High School, Lake Belton High School and Belton New Tech High School at Waskow received recognition for their performance on Advanced Placement exams, with several students earning more than one honor.

The 315 honors are up from 248 in 2025. Among the district’s most significant gains was AP Scholar with Distinction, which increased from 77 honors in 2025 to 109 this year, a 42% increase.

A 27% increase in total honors reflects great progress across our district, and the 42% leap in AP Scholars with Distinction proves our students are reaching exceptional heights,” Superintendent Dr. Malinda Golden said. “These results speak to the hard work of our learners and the targeted academic supports our educators have built to help them succeed.”

The 315 honors were earned across all three Belton ISD high schools, with 181 at Lake Belton High School, 116 at Belton High School and 18 at Belton New Tech High School at Waskow.

Across the district, students earned:

- 140 AP Scholar awards
- 47 AP Scholar with Honor awards

- 109 AP Scholar with Distinction awards
- 14 AP Capstone Diplomas
- 5 AP Seminar and Research Certificates

College Board’s AP Scholar Awards recognize students who demonstrate outstanding achievement on AP exams. AP Scholar recognition is granted to students who earn scores of 3 or higher on three or more AP exams. AP Scholar with Honor is awarded to students who earn an average score of at least 3.25 across all AP exams taken and scores of 3 or higher on four or more exams. Students earning AP Scholar with Distinction achieve an average score of at least 3.5 across all AP exams taken and scores of 3 or higher on five or more exams.

For Director of PK-12 Career Readiness Denise Ayres, the year-over-year growth demonstrates that more students are successfully taking advantage of rigorous academic opportunities.

“A 27% increase in AP Scholar honors tells us that more of our students are not only accessing rigorous academic opportunities but also succeeding in them,” Ayres said. “These experiences help students develop the confidence, critical-thinking skills and academic foundation they will need to be successful in college, career and beyond.”

Students may also earn the AP Capstone Diploma by scoring 3 or higher in AP Seminar and AP Research and on four additional AP exams of their choosing.

The AP Seminar and Research Certificate recognizes students who earn scores of 3 or higher in both AP Seminar and AP Research.

At Belton New Tech High School at Waskow, 16 students combined to earn 18 honors.

“Our students are curious, driven learners who aren’t afraid to take on a challenge,” Belton New Tech High School at Waskow Principal Neill Plemons said. “These recognitions are a testament to the work they have put in and the high expectations they have set for themselves. We want our students to leave New Tech confident in their ability to think critically, solve problems and take on whatever challenge comes next.”

The College Board AP Program gives high school students the opportunity to take college-level courses and exams while still in high school. AP Scholar Awards are academic distinctions students can include among their credentials on college applications and résumés.

Panda Express celebrates Grand Opening

Special to the Journal

Panda Express®, the largest American Chinese dining concept in the U.S., celebrated the grand opening of its first ever Belton location on September 4, 2026 with an official community celebration, ribbon

cutting with the Chamber of Commerce, and a special \$1,000 donation to Helping Hands Ministry.

“Our entire Panda team is grateful to serve the Belton community by providing new jobs and supporting local organizations through various fundraising

opportunities,” said Daniela Sanchez, Panda Express Area Coach of Operations.

“We hope to be a lasting part of the community and welcome all guests into our doors to try our American Chinese favorites and discover their own.”



Courtesy Photo

The Belton Panda Express will serve Panda’s iconic dishes, including The Original Orange Chicken®, award-winning Honey Walnut Shrimp, and guest-favorite Broccoli Beef entrée.

9/11 - From Page A1

was supposed to be in the towers on that day,” Batley said. “The only reason he wasn’t was to take [his wife] to an appointment. It seemed like an inconvenience, but it probably saved his life. Since then, he and my family have really memorialized 9/11.”

While the majority of

UMHB’s student body was not alive when 9/11 happened, they still have reverence for the tragedy that changed America as we know it.

“After hearing all the patriots tell their stories, I see that it really represents the unification of our country,”

Bachert said.

The memory of the devastation of 9/11 lives in the hearts and minds of all Americans. Many still remember where they were in 2001, while young adults and older children understand the impact that it left on the America that they grew up knowing.

smart phones or iPads. Credit cards only will be accepted on race day, Stagner said. Roadblocks will be set up at 8:15 a.m. to protect the runners and walkers, and they will remain in place until the event ends.

“Plan to arrive early and please plan to stay until roadblocks are removed,” she said.

There will be an opening ceremony at 8:15 a.m., and the race will start promptly at 8:30. Strollers are welcome.

Sight - From Page A1

17 and \$40 after that date. Registrants 17 and under can receive a reduced price of \$20, but an event t-shirt will not be given at the discounted rate. However, shirts will be available for purchase.

Participants may pick up their packets at John Corsi State Farm Insurance, 100 Lake Road, from 5 to 8 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 1, and from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 2.

Race-day registration and packet pick-up will be 7 to 7:45 a.m. at the park via

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Listening room event with singer-songwriter Crystal Yates and Will Yates

By Michele Weisman
The Belton Journal

Singer-songwriter Crystal Yates and her husband Will Yates are returning for a live listening room singer-songwriter event on Friday, Sept. 25 at Grace Presbyterian. Married 28 years, they are worship leaders in McKinney, Texas. Writing songs since the age of 18, she is a Dove Award Nominated writer, and has had artists Selah, Jason Crabb, Micah Tyler, and Corey Voss record some of them.

Crystal Yates said about playing here before, “Both times were so special that we can’t wait to be together again. I encourage new people to come and see us. The show’s one of my favorites.”

They used to book 365 performances a year, but with a young family, they cut back to a couple of shows a month.

Will Yates said, “Our favorite thing is a room full of people who are music fans. It’s this organic or synergistic, flowing moment where everyone’s connected and locked in.”

Growing up in the Panhandle of Florida, they were influenced by the music they grew up with.

Crystal Yates said, “I grew up singing and influenced by gospel and old country. To me, Americana sounds like this fusion

between gospel with old country and a little bit of soul.”

Summer visits with her grandmother in South Florida included attending church.

Crystal Yates, who didn’t grow up in church, said, “I would visit a church with my granny, and it touched my heart, it marked my heart.” She explained she experienced God’s love when she was 18 after praying, which changed her life. She said, “My heart is to make people feel seen and valued when we do shows. I want them to laugh, to feel their feelings.”

Crystal Yates complimented the importance of Will Yates playing guitar at their engagements.

She said, “He plays guitar, and sometimes I play a box drum and sing. He’s really the actual person who makes us. He doesn’t need me. I need him.”

Seed of Faith is their newest single release with the single *Revelation Now*, produced by Will Yates, to release in August or September. The full live album from a performance at The Gar Hole in Anna, Texas will follow. Singer-songwriter David Tribble of Texas is part of the single. Labor Day weekend they opened at Gate City Music Festival in Raton, New Mexico for Exile.

To attend the old-fashioned date/social



Courtesy Photo

Crystal and Will Yates, husband and wife performing locally for an intimate music gathering.

night, a listening room format for young adults and older attendees, email Joni Lange joniklange@yahoo.com. The suggested donation is \$15 per person. In lieu of guests bringing in outside beverages, complimentary ice cream floats, sundaes, water, coffee, and tea will be offered. The location is the

Grace Presbyterian Fellowship Hall, 2401 S 57th St. in Temple with doors opening at 6:30 p.m. and the event runs 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Visit Crystal Yates Music on www.crystalatesmusic.com, or follow Facebook, Spotify, Instagram, TikTok, Spotify, Apple Music at Crystal Yates Music.

New FDA clearance gives PTSD patients more precise, effective treatment options

Special to the Journal

Approximately 17.5 veterans die by suicide every day in the United States, and 7% of veterans are diagnosed each year with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Against that backdrop, Texas A&M Health researchers are helping to advance a more personalized approach to treating the disorder.

New technology developed by Wave Neuroscience, a California-based company, in collaboration with the research team of Kenneth S. Ramos, MD, PhD, with the Texas A&M Health Institute of Biosciences and Technology, has recently received FDA clearance for a system that maps and treats the specific parts of the brain impacted by PTSD. While the results are being processed for public dissemination, the findings have demonstrated promising results to revolutionize PTSD treatment options.

PTSD is a mental health condition that can develop after exposure to an event beyond average stressors, like combat, accidents, natural disasters or other forms of violence. About 6% of people will develop PTSD symptoms in their lifetimes, with women and veterans experiencing much higher rates.

Since PTSD became an official diagnosis in 1980, the most common treatments have been talk therapy and serotonin reuptake inhibitor (SSRI) medications, such as sertraline and fluoxetine. But statistics show that those treatments don’t work for everyone.

A 2020 study reviewing medications for PTSD found that while some patients improved, many did not. Patients’ self-reported symptoms improved by 6.8 to 10.1 points, and only up to 10.9% achieved remission.

The Wave Neuroscience clinical trial revealed much more promising preliminary results, according to the company’s chief medical officer Erik Won, DO.

“In comparison to that study, our FDA trial reported a 52% reduction in symptoms, so more than a four-fold increase in efficacy,” Won said. “And more importantly, we saw 68% remission in our clinical trial. So, it’s really a quantum change, an inflection point in what we can offer to patients. From a clinical care perspective, that’s really meaningful.”

Making it personal

The treatment uses Magnetic e-Resonance Therapy (MeRT), a technology created by Wave Neuroscience that combines an electroencephalogram (EEG) with transcranial magnetic stimulation. The EEG records electrical activity of the brain, while TMS—which is already used to treat other mental health conditions—uses magnetic pulses through a coil placed on the scalp.

“Transcranial magnetic stimulation, or TMS, was previously FDA cleared for treatment-resistant depression,” Won said. “By adding an augmented AI derived multivariate algorithm, we were able to personalize protocols that received FDA clearance for post-traumatic stress disorder, which should open up market access to about 13 million people who may be struggling with PTSD.”

That personalization is at the heart of MeRT.

Ramos, a physician-scientist with decades of experience in precision medicine, focuses on treatment tailored to the specific person and ailment rather than a “one-size-fits-all” approach.

“Most clinical interventions for the treatment of PTSD do not work very well,” Ramos said. “So, this is a huge area where identifying interventions that could hopefully add quality of life to the people impacted by this disorder would be tremendously impactful.”

As a leading researcher in precision medicine, Ramos was the obvious choice for Wave Neuroscience to bring into their study, said Fred Walke, chief executive officer at the company.

TMS is typically done generically, Ramos



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY HEALTH

explained, but MeRT takes it one step further by customizing it to the person being treated.

Each of us is 99.9% the same, but the 0.1% difference among us dramatically changes the picture. By tailoring the treatment to the individual, the researchers were able to work with that person’s brain specifically and demonstrate significant decreases in severity of PTSD symptoms.

Ramos compared the two treatments to fixing a leaky roof: TMS, he said, is like putting a tarp over the leak to address the symptoms, while MeRT is more targeted, akin to replacing the broken shingles and addressing the problem at its source.

Breaking the mold

The path to FDA clearance began in 2024, when MeRT received the FDA breakthrough design designation, said Rick Silva, PhD, executive director of clinical trials at the Institute of Biosciences and Technology.

This designation provides an expedited pathway for FDA review. Strict scientific and medical guidelines still must be met, but the designation can reduce some of the administrative tasks that can delay getting treatments to patients.

Reaching the final stages of FDA clearance is a time-consuming and rigorous task, but for those involved, it’s all worth it.

This project, Silva said, was especially gratifying because it began during the COVID-19 pandemic and moved very quickly for an FDA clearance. While medical device clinical trials typically take around a decade to complete and gain FDA clearance, this was done in just over two years, he said.

The rigor it takes to succeed in this space reflects the expertise and talent of the Wave Neuroscience team, and it could not have been done without them, he added.

“I’ve been involved in probably close to 1,000 projects in academic medical centers over the years at varying degrees of depth and detail,” Silva said. “Patients are why I do what I do. It’s hard, and the failure rate is high, and it’s a lot of work. But when you get to a point where something is going to benefit patients, it’s very professionally gratifying and personally gratifying in many ways as well.”

For Israel Liberzon, MD, distinguished professor in psychiatry and behavioral sciences at the Texas A&M Naresh K. Vashisht College of Medicine, the clearance represents an important addition to the PTSD treatment landscape.

Liberzon served as the lead psychiatrist and PTSD expert for the study. He said once this treatment gets to patients, it will be the only non-medication treatment option for PTSD cleared by the FDA.

“Right now, the FDA has approved only two medications for PTSD,” Liberzon said. “It doesn’t mean that only two of them are used, but both are SSRIs. This is the first time that in addition to the medication, we have a non-medication option. There is psychotherapy that people use for PTSD, but psychotherapies require a lot of effort. People must participate actively, and many drop out because it’s too anxiety provoking. So now we have a unique alternative.”

The MeRT clinical trial involved five sessions

per week over five to six weeks. The beneficial effects appear to be long-lasting beyond the termination of treatment.

“People living with PTSD have been left with trial-and-error treatment, medications and their side effects, and limited outcomes—even when treated by the most dedicated and experienced physicians,” Won said. “Wave’s FDA clearance signals a fundamentally different future: one in which PTSD can be objectively evaluated, precisely treated and meaningfully healed.”

The technology could eventually have applications beyond PTSD, Won said, including depression, anxiety and other conditions.

Hope on the horizon

For Leslie S. Prichep, PhD, chief scientific officer of Wave Neuroscience, the clearance signals a new era for mental healthcare.

“The FDA clearance of the MeRT System reflects decades of scientific research using electrophysiological biomarkers in identifying abnormal brain activity profiles and guiding personalized intervention strategies,” Prichep said. “We believe this represents an important advancement toward a more objective, data-informed model of mental healthcare.”

Walke said this alternative provides hope to those struggling with PTSD and their loved ones. He also hopes the more individualized approach will help reduce the stigma around mental health, as treatment becomes like putting a cast on a broken bone.

“One of the goals of the company is to create a platform for mental healthcare that uses objective imagery to help patients understand why they’re experiencing life the way that they are,” Walke said. “That insight, compounded with proven technologies, promises incredibly high efficacy when personalized.”

Alongside Texas A&M Health, Wave Neuroscience is working with key stakeholders to broaden access to the treatment and ensure it is affordable for patients through insurance coverage.

“Our hope is that this research and technology can be a catalyst for more widespread development and innovation of more effective, personalized and precision-guided treatments,” Won said. “This is proof positive that population-scale personalized medicine is not just an aspirational goal but is an achievable reality today.”

The MeRT team brings together decades of expertise spanning disciplines and technology, all with the goal of reducing suffering for people living with PTSD. FDA clearance brings them one step closer to that goal.

“Texas A&M has a very rich history of military and veteran priorities,” Ramos said. “It’s a no-brainer that Texas A&M faculty would be interested in and supportive of an initiative that hopefully would bring positive solutions to a big problem. And anything we could do to help alleviate that problem is going to go a long way towards making a difference in the individual’s life as well as the people who are close to them. I feel very fortunate that we at Texas A&M were meaningfully involved in this project.”

Council to vote on budget Sept. 15 more precise, effective treatment options

Property tax and utility rate increases are proposed. Included in the Fiscal Year 2027 Proposed Annual Budget is the FY 2027-2031 Capital Improvements Program (CIP). The CIP represents the City's plan for infrastructure development over the next five years. The estimated cost for the plan is \$104.47 million.

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LIFESTYLES

THE BELTON JOURNAL

Independent living experiences made possible with HOCTILC

By Michele Weisman
The Belton Journal

Heart of Central Texas Independent Living (HOCTILC) is coming to the 16th Annual Bell County Senior Expo on Sept. 22, with an interactive experience for daily life. Carma Franco, their assistive technology person, will man the interactive experiences.

Melissa Ingriola, executive director for HOCTILC said, “We serve individuals of all ages with disabilities, and that includes chronic illness. The goal is to stay out of institutional care, and to stay independent in your home and community. And from that, kind of branches off to all of our different services.”

HOCTILC will have two tables set up at the Senior Expo event. One to learn about their services, and the other with assistive technology.

Ingriola explained, if someone comes with a hearing issue, they have amplification devices that you can wear.

They’re Bluetooth, and so you don’t necessarily have to have a hearing aid. You wear it like earphones or like earbuds, and it will pick up on noises that maybe you couldn’t hear before.”

She said vision issues can be helped too.

“There are a lot of magnifying devices now, bigger monitor type things, or they can be tinier magnifiers. There are devices that could help with macular degeneration. We’re helping someone right now, she just wanted to be able to go to the store and know what she was shopping for.”

HOCTILC helps their consumers find what they need at no cost to the consumer.

Ingriola said, “We don’t charge for any of our services. They’re all free of charge. And to start services with us, you don’t have to prove your disability. It’s all self-declared.”

HOCTILC makes available help in the language needed for their consumers,



Courtesy Photo

An adventure at Spare Time Texas, bowling with HOCTILC consumers.

ers, including sign language. Their summer intern and Franco speak Spanish.

To read more about what HOCTILC does, such as, advocacy, peer support, transition assistance, employment, training, and more, visit their website at

www.hoctilc.org.

Mark your calendars for The Rusty Awards, held in honor of Judy Morales’ son and supported by HOCTILC, to be held on Oct. 20, 2026. Read more at bc-cpdtx.org/rusty-awards/.

Local author makes top 10 list by helping small businesses

By Michele Weisman
The Belton Journal

Laura Cohn wrote Sales Without Being Pushy, a workbook that details her successful sales system. Helping over 15,000 business owners in 14 years and a top-performing closer, she still wants to help business owners and so published her book in July of this year.

Her workbook walks entrepreneurs through what she calls her structured, repeatable process.

Cohn said, “I really want to help people. I was talking to all these business owners selling internet marketing services. I was so impressed with them. I had so much respect for what they were doing. I really fell in love with people being a salesperson because I talked to so many different kinds of people, and I was just amazed at God.

These people are amazing, just so cool, and I wanted them to succeed.”

She wants to share the joy she felt selling that, in part, comes from the system she created.

Cohn said, “So my goal for the sales workbook is to help people have joy in their heart when they’re selling, and to feel good about showing up with people. They can help them and have them buy their services. If someone feels awkward because they feel like they have to be someone else when they’re selling, or they’ve got sales tactics that they learned, or they don’t really know how to approach solving a problem with their client or customer very well, they’re not having any fun.”

Less than a month after publication of Sales Without Being Pushy, Cohn was alerted to her book being listed on LinkedIn on Global Business Development Association’s list of top 10.

Cohn said, “They put out their top 10 business development books for the month, and I was on their list. They invited me to be on their podcast. I’m being interviewed on August 24. I’m so excited.”

Caring about small business owners and wanting them to be successful, Cohn said, “Make sure you have joy in your heart. Now you can love your business. It doesn’t mean you like everything you have to do, but if you love what you do, you’ll find a way to do things well.”

Cohn wrote in her book, “My success in sales didn’t



Courtesy Photo

Author of Sales Without Being Pushy, Laura Cohn

happen because I was focused on sales. My success came because I was focused on helping people and developed a reliable sales system to use.”

Find out more about Laura Cohn and her book at www.416sales.com www.facebook.com/416SalesTX/, www.linkedin.com/in/lauraanncohn/. Her book’s on Amazon and the new host of The Biz Wiz podcast.

BC Animal Shelter teams up with Mental Health Division for suicide prevention awareness challenge

By David Stone
The Belton Journal

The Bell County Animal Shelter is putting paws to pavement for an important purpose: In recognition of Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, the shelter is teaming up with the Bell County Mental Health Division to participate in the 1

Mile a Day Dog Walk Challenge, helping raise awareness for military and first responder suicide prevention throughout the month of September.

According to Tiffani O’Brien, community outreach coordinator for the Bell County Animal Shelter, the challenge encourages participants to walk at least one mile

each day during September as a way to promote mental health awareness, encourage meaningful conversations and show support for the military members and first responders who dedicate their lives to serving others.

“For Bell County Animal Shelter, there was a natural way to make those miles mean even more — bring along some four-legged walking partners,” O’Brien said. “Throughout the month, shelter staff will be getting outside, logging miles and walking alongside dogs currently waiting for their forever homes.”

“The partnership brings together two causes that are deeply important to Bell County — supporting the people who serve our communities and improving the lives of animals in our care,” she said.

“Walking and spending time outdoors can provide an opportunity to step away from the noise of the day, move the body, clear the mind and decompress,” O’Brien added. “Add a dog to the other end of the leash, and that walk becomes an opportunity for

companionship and connection as well.”

For the person holding the leash, spending time walking with a dog can provide a positive mental and physical outlet. The simple routine of moving, being outdoors and focusing on the dog beside you can encourage mindfulness, reduce feelings of stress and provide a moment to reset.

But the benefits travel both ways down the leash.

“For a shelter dog, a walk is much more than exercise. Life in a shelter can mean spending significant portions of the day surrounded by the same sights, sounds and smells,” she said. “Getting outside gives dogs an opportunity for a much-needed change of scenery and allows them to engage both their minds and bodies.”

“Every new smell along the trail, patch of grass to investigate and sound to explore provides mental stimulation and enrichment. Walking also gives dogs an outlet for physical energy and provides valuable one-on-one

See **SHELTER**,

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-THE- BELTONIAN

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WED - Aug 26 @ 7:30
THUR - Aug 27 @ 7:30

Nacho Libre
FRI - Aug 28 @ 7:30
SAT - Aug 29 @ 4:30
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SUN - Aug 30 @ 4:30
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A Minecraft Movie
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SUN - Sep 6 @ 11:00AM
SUN - Sep 6 @ 3:00
SUN - Sep 6 @ 7:00
MON - Sep 7 @ 11:00AM
MON - Sep 7 @ 3:00
MON - Sep 7 @ 7:00

Godzilla vs. Mechagodzilla
WED - Sep 9 @ 7:00
THUR - Sep 10 @ 7:00

My Neighbor Totoro
FRI - Sep 11 @ 7:00
SAT - Sep 12 @ 11:30AM
SAT - Sep 12 @ 2:00
SAT - Sep 12 @ 4:30
SAT - Sep 12 @ 7:30
SUN - Sep 13 @ 11:30AM
SUN - Sep 13 @ 2:00
SUN - Sep 13 @ 7:30

Titanic
WED - Sep 16 @ 6:30
THUR - Sep 17 @ 6:30
FRI - Sep 18 @ 6:30
SAT - Sep 19 @ 2:30
SUN - Sep 20 @ 3:30
SUN - Sep 20 @ 7:30

The Little Mermaid
SAT - Sep 19 @ 10:30AM
SAT - Sep 19 @ 12:30
SUN - Sep 20 @ 11:30AM
SUN - Sep 20 @ 1:30

Close Encounters of the Third Kind
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The Broken Soul, the Living Spirit



John C. Perry

Our church family, during the summer, holds a goouttoeat dinner at one of the area's restaurants. There is no set agenda, just a church family getting together and enjoying a meal.

At our last dinner, we had a server who, although she had other tables to wait on, did an excel-

lent job serving our larger group. Of course, we thanked her for the job she did for us, and I explained we were a church group. I asked her if she had any prayer requests, something I like to do with people I meet.

The server, a young lady, opened up about several burdens weighing on her heart. Some were financial, and some were personal. We stopped everything right there and prayed with her. She was clearly moved by our concern. Not only did we leave a generous tip, but we also collectively gave her what cash we had on us as a love offering.

Before we departed, we asked if there was anything else we could do for her. She said, "I need a better Bible, one that I can

understand." I promised her we would get her one. Our church purchased a Women's Study Bible, and we delivered it along with some additional financial support.

We didn't help her to grow our church. She lives in another town and may never attend our services. We helped her because that's what Christ calls us to do: to share His love with a relatively new believer who needed encouragement.

As Christians, we are all called to show compassion, love, and concern to those we meet. I often fall short of that, but on that one evening, I think our group did exactly what we were supposed to do. It reminds me of what Paul wrote in Galatians, to serve one another in love.

In 1 John 3:17-18 we read: "If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth."

That passage reminds us that simple verbal expressions of care and good intentions are not enough. As believers, true Christian love mirrors Christ's sacrificial love, and it must be actively demonstrated through practical help and deeds.

So, when I see a homeless person on the road asking for money, what should I do? I am often torn. My heart says, "Help them out, John!" but my human side says, "It's a scam, drive on."

We can't meet every need, and we can't solve every problem, but when it comes to a homeless person, I let the Spirit guide me. I think our calling is simple: keep our hearts open, and when the Spirit whispers, our job is to answer, "Yes, Lord."

I've come to believe that God sprinkles these moments throughout our lives, small invitations to reflect His heart. Some are clear and some are complicated, but all of them remind us that love is a verb. And when we choose to act, even in simple ways, heaven touches earth!

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.

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Shelter -From Page A6

interaction with shelter staff.

Those experiences can help dogs decompress from the shelter environment while allowing their individual personalities to shine outside of their kennels.”

In many ways, the person and the dog are doing something good for one another with every mile.

Military members and first responders routinely serve others during some of life’s most difficult moments. Suicide Prevention Awareness Month provides an opportunity to recognize the importance of mental health, encourage open conversations and remind those who serve that support is available and seeking help should never carry a stigma, O’Brien said.

“The 1 Mile a Day Dog Walk Challenge turns that message into action, one step at a time,” she continued. “For Bell County Animal Shelter, each mile also represents an opportunity to give a shelter dog something special while they wait for a family of their own.”

According to O’ Brien: “A mile means fresh air. A mile means exercise and enrichment. A mile means time outside of a kennel. A mile means companionship. And, most importantly, a mile means there is a purpose behind every step.”

Throughout September, Bell County

Animal Shelter will share some of the dogs joining staff on their walks, giving the community a chance to follow their progress and meet adoptable animals along the way.

“Perhaps one of those shelter dogs will find a walking partner who decides that one mile together simply isn’t enough,” O’Brien said. “Bell County Animal Shelter is proud to walk alongside the Bell County Mental Health Division this September to help shine a light on military and first responder suicide prevention while giving shelter dogs the opportunity to stretch their legs, engage their minds and enjoy an adventure beyond their kennels.”

“The message behind the challenge is simple: small actions can carry meaningful messages,” she added.

“Walk a mile. Start a conversation. Check on someone. Spend time outside. Support those who serve. Give a shelter dog an adventure. Because whether there are two feet or four paws making the journey, every step forward matters.”

Lt. Jared Alton, director of the Animal Shelter for the Sheriff’s Office, said the challenge “brings together the two units under my command — Animal Control and Mental Health — and uses social media to bring awareness to suicide prevention and the healing power of pet ownership.”

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THE GATESVILLE MESSENGER

SINCE 1881

Lake Belton hosts Huntsville on Friday night



BELTON JOURNAL/Tony Adams

By **Tony Adams.**
The Belton Journal

The Lake Belton Broncos avenged a 34-28 road loss to the Round Rock McNeil Mavericks from 2025 with a 30-24 road win over the Mavericks on Friday night at Kelly Reeves Stadium.

With a pair of wins in the books for the Broncos, they will turn their sights back to Belton ISD Stadium on Friday as they will take on the Huntsville Hornets.

"Friday will be another tough test for us," Lake Belton head coach Kirk Rogers said.

Kickoff is slated for 7 pm, with Russell Maybin

and Jaye Thompson on the play-by-play call on Dave Campbell's Texas Sports' Texan Live.

The Broncos grabbed a 24-12 halftime lead and held off a final Maverick push in the fourth quarter to grab the six-point win.

Adrian Pippins logged three touchdowns in 23 carries for 120 yards.

Jessiah James went 11-of-21 passing for 148 yards and a passing touchdown, to go with 51 yards on six carries.

Luke Phillips had six catches for 106 yards, including a 33-yard touchdown reception.

The Broncos' defense had seven passes defended, four sacks, and an interception by Chris Harmon.

Lake's special teams came up huge with three field goal blocks.

Lake averages 238.5 passing yards and 280.5 rushing yards per game.

James (18-of-31, 446 passing yards, 5 TDs, 8-57 rushing yards) will get the call at quarterback. James Maiwo (20-289, 3 rushing TD) and Pippins (33-160, 4 rushing TD) are projected to get carries in the backfield, and Zion Harness (6-276, 4 receiving TDS) and Phillips (7-116, TD).

Lake has defense that attacks from every direction and has 17 tackles through the first two games.

Noah Stevens (12 tackles, 8 solo), Jamari Haye (8 tackles, 6 solo), and Tristan Aldridge (8 tackles, 7 solo) are the leading tackles for the Broncos. Aldridge and Josh Lighthall each have two sacks, and Harmon has both Lake Belton interceptions.

The Hornets have lost their first two games of the season, losing a road game at Brenham and a home loss to A&M Consolidated, by games by scores of 49-14.

Against the Tigers, the Hornets allowed 305 yards passing and 161 yards rushing for seven total touchdowns.

Huntsville averages 155.5 yards per game on the ground and 76 yards per game through the air. The Hornets are 4-of-4 on extra point tries and have not attempted a field goal in their first two games.

Kaeden Moebe (8-of-24, 76 yards, 2 INT) and Zarien Adolphe (5-of-9, 30 yards, INT) split snaps at quarterback, Jakhavien Birks (39-188, 2 TDs) is the leading rusher, and several receivers split grabs in the passing lanes.

The Hornets average three tackles for loss and two sacks per game.

Bryson Johnson (19 tackles, 13 assisted, 2 TFL), Jarmiah Peterson (14 tackles, TFL), and Dra Mason (13 tackles) are the leading defenders for the Hornets.

Belton, Lake Belton cross country bound for regional

By **Clay Whittington**
The Belton Journal

The cross country season is reaching its midpoint, but Belton and Lake Belton are preparing for the finish.

Following a handful of meets, the attention of area teams is beginning to transition, and Belton ISD's programs are no different.

Belton and Lake Belton will take part in regional preview meets this week in anticipation of returning to the site in early November.

The Tigers and Lady Tigers and the Broncos and Lady Broncos are all bound for Fort Worth's Rolling Hills Soccer Complex on Friday for the Region II preview meet.

The trip could prove valuable should any of the runners advance from the district competition. The top three teams and the top 10 individuals at district qualify for regionals.

The Region II-6A meet is Oct. 26, and the Region II-5A meet is Oct. 27.

The Lady Broncos certainly appeared poised for a run to regionals at last week's Midway Hewitt Kiwanis Invitational, where they emerged with the Class 5A-6A team title and individual championship.

Thanks in part to sophomore Keira Dzenowski, who completed the three-mile trek at Waco's Heart of Texas Soccer Complex with a first-place time of 19 minutes, 41.60 seconds, Lake Belton finished with just 53 points to

beat out Waco Midway (2nd, 60) and Leander Rouse (3rd, 69).

Her time was complemented by sophomore Demi Fisher (11th, 21:05.51), senior Sarah Gray (12th, 21:09.22), sophomore Sophia Garza (16th, 21:48.67) and senior Madelyn Rivas (17th, 21:52.70).

Freshman teammate Amara Bodeman was 21st (22:23.36), but her time did not count toward the team total.

The Broncos were third (69) in the boys division, placing behind champion Killeen Ellison (52) and runner-up Killeen Harker Heights (60), which each placed two runners among the field's top five.

Wyatt Potts, a senior, and senior Jack

McCullagh led the way for Lake Belton, placing seventh (17:09.35) and ninth (17:22.81), respectively. The Broncos' remaining points were generated by senior Josiah Briggs (12th, 17:39.83), sophomore Drew Houston (13th, 17:47.24) and junior Cooper Schels (30th, 18:44.54).

Also representing Lake Belton were senior Austin Adams (31st, 18:45.42), senior Adrian Rentas-Quiles (33rd, 18:46.87), junior Tyler Adkins-Beltran (37th, 19:32.18), junior Anthony Garza (41st, 19:44.70) and junior Kyan Whitmire (43rd, 19:52.59).

Copperas Cove junior Anthony Carter

See **CROSS COUNTRY,**
Page B3

Tigers seek 3-0 start Friday night against Bastrop



BELTON JOURNAL/Tony Adams

By **Aries Ramos**
The Belton Journal

Belton (2-0) will put its perfect start on the line Friday night when the Tigers travel to take on the Bastrop Bears (1-1) in a matchup that will pit two of the area's most explosive offenses against one another.

The Tigers head into the contest riding high after a 48-23 dismantling of Bryan, a performance that pushed Belton to 2-0 to open the season and its first year under new head coach Josh Mann. The result was more than just

a win, it was a statement that Belton's offense is capable of matching points with anybody on its schedule, a trait it will need in a hurry against a Bastrop team that can score in a hurry of its own.

Bastrop enters the week at 1-1 after knocking off Chaparral 28-18, and the Bears bring one of the most dangerous passing attacks in the region. Quarterback Weston Nielsen, a Division I talent already committed to Arizona State and sitting on 19 total offers, torched defenses a season ago to the tune of 44 touchdown

passes. He has no shortage of weapons to get the ball to, either. Wide receiver Dallas Crescenzo, a 247Sports three star recruit committed to Tulane, gives Nielsen a dependable target on the outside, while Zac Wilkinson provides another proven threat after hauling in 47 catches for 639 yards and 14 touchdowns last season. Any Belton defensive game plan will have to account for all three of those names on nearly every snap.

But Belton's staff won't be walking into Bastrop feeling outgunned. The Tigers

have their own answers on the other side of the ball, headlined by quarterback Will Shepard and wide receiver Gavin Ross, a connection that has given opposing defenses fits through the first two weeks of the season. Shepard has shown he's capable of pushing the ball down the field and taking advantage of a defense that sells out to stop the run, and Ross has established himself as the kind of vertical, play-making threat who can turn a short catch into six points or force safeties to respect him over the top on every snap.

If Belton's line of scrimmage can hold up and give Shepard time, the Tigers have shown they have the firepower to trade blows with just about anyone, Bastrop included.

That sets up what could be one of the more entertaining games on the schedule this week, a battle between an unbeaten Belton squad trying to prove its offense is for real against elite competition, and a Bastrop group with a blue chip arm and a pair of dangerous pass catchers looking to make a statement of its own on their home field.

Belton's defense will need to find a way to slow down Nielsen and company, but this game may ultimately come down to which offense blinks first. With Shepard and Ross leading the way for the Tigers and Nielsen, Crescenzo and Wilkinson doing the same for the Bears, defensive coordinators on both sidelines could be in for a long night.

Kickoff is set for Friday as Belton looks to move to 3-0 on the road against a Bastrop team eager to build momentum after its win over Chaparral.



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Sports Briefs

By Clay Whittington
The Belton Journal

The Lady Broncos narrowly suffered a four-set defeat in their District 12-6A opener Tuesday at home.

Following a 10-16 start to the season, Lake Belton turned its attention toward returning to the playoffs, but experienced an immediate setback as Killeen Harker Heights escaped with a 25-12, 24-26, 25-22, 25-23 victory.

The win improved the Lady Knights’ record to 24-7.

The Lady Broncos will look to snap their six-match losing skid Friday, when they travel to Killeen Chaparral. The Lady Bobcats (20-7, 0-0) were off Tuesday.

Next week, Lake Belton returns to the road, playing at Salado on Tuesday, when it has a bye from league competition, and at Copperas Cove on Sept. 18.

TENNIS

New Tech returns to action today, traveling to Marble Falls. The Dragons and Lady Dragons do not play again until Sept. 17 against visiting Lago Vista. The match will be played at Mary Hardin-Baylor.

Belton has two road matches upcoming with trips to Leander Glenn on Friday and Waco on Tuesday.

Lake Belton will play twice on Saturday with a morning match at Georgetown East View before an afternoon contest at Georgetown.

Tuesday, the Broncos and Lady Broncos travel to Bryan.

ATHLETICS PASS

Family athletic passes for the current school year are on sale and can be purchased at the Belton High School athletic complex or the BISD administration offices.

The pass admits the holder and immediate family into all home games conducted by BISD. It is accepted for all sports except football.

Cost is \$100.

Cash or credit card is accepted for purchases made at Belton High School, while cash is required for purchases at the administration offices.

BOOSTER CLUB

The Belton Tiger Athletic Booster Club is currently accepting memberships for the current school year.

Contributions benefit all athletes across all sports for the entire school year with options for both community and corporate memberships. Benefits vary based on memberships.

For the community, Cub (\$75), White (\$150), Red (\$300) and Varsity (\$500) options are available, while corporate options are Tiger (\$1,250), Elite (\$3,000) and Legacy (\$5,000).

Payments for memberships can be made online at BeltonTigersABC.org, through Venmo by using the handle @BeltonTigers-ABC or by sending via mail to BTABC, PO Box 1454, Belton, TX, 76513.

For more information, visit BeltonAthletics.com or BeltonTigersABC.org.

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 Pavillion.

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.



Belton Tigers sweep Legacy Ranch to open District volleyball play

By Aries Ramos
The Belton Journal

The Belton Tigers volleyball team kicked off district play in style Monday night, sweeping Legacy Ranch in three sets at home to claim their first district win of the season.

Belton took care of business in straight sets, winning 25-21, 26-24, and 25-22. Each set followed a similar script, with the Tigers having to fight off a competitive Legacy Ranch squad down the stretch rather than run away with any of the three frames. The second set in particular was a battle, with Belton having to close it out 26-24 after Legacy Ranch pushed the set past its normal finish line.

The win moves Belton to 7-15 overall on the season and, more importantly, 1-0 in district play. After an up and down non district slate, the Tigers now have

a clean slate where it matters most, and a season opening district win at home is the kind of result a roster can point to as they try to string together wins against District competition.

Belton won’t have much time to enjoy the win, though. The Tigers are right back at home for their next match, this time against Ellison, a team that also opened district play with a win of its own. Ellison comes into the match with an 18-10 overall record and, like Belton, sits at 1-0 in district play, setting up a matchup between two teams looking to keep their district records unblemished.

Ellison’s overall record suggests a squad that has had plenty of success against a tough non district schedule, and the Tigers will need to bring the same fight they showed in all three sets against Legacy Ranch if they want to leave the match with another win. Belton’s ability to close out tight sets will likely

be tested again, if Tuesdays match is any indication, this Tigers team isn’t afraid of a dogfight late in a set.

A win over Ellison would push Belton to 2-0 in district play and give the program real early-season momentum heading deeper into the conference schedule. For a team sitting under .500 overall, building a strong district record is the only thing that truly matters, and this next home match offers another chance to keep that push going.

First serve for the Ellison match is set for Friday at home, where Belton will look to carry Tuesday’s momentum into a second straight district win.



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This application would authorize construction of a Rock Crushing Facility located at 16680 Moody Leon Road, Moody, Bell County, Texas 76557. This application is being processed in an expedited manner, as allowed by the commission’s rules in 30 Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 101, Subchapter J. Additional information concerning this application is contained in the public notice section of this newspaper.

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Cross Country - From Page B1

won the race in 16:32.08.

Belton traveled to the Lampasas Floyd Farms Invitational on Friday, where the Lady Tigers were second (35) in the Class 5A-6A race despite rainy and muddy conditions.

Placing third, sophomore Ayla Waker-shauser (13:11.91) was the first Belton harrier to cross the three-kilometer route’s finish line, and she was followed by three more teammates who placed in the top 10.

Lady Tigers senior Nataly Valdez was sixth (13:22.42), junior Isabella Warner was seventh (13:26.28) and sophomore Ella Johnson was 10th (13:53.35), while sophomore Natalie Mott’s 14th-place time of 14:15.62 rounded out the total.

Additionally, sophomore Leimya Palomares (15th, 14:17.10), freshman Markayla Allen (16th, 14:34.21), freshman Ava Boeselt (17th, 14:54.80) and sophomore Ella Johnson (18th, 14:54.80) crossed consecutively for Belton.

Chaparral sophomore Autumn Scotting was first (12:26.50), guiding the Lady Bobcats to the team championship with 22 points.

Killeen Shoemaker was third (80).

The Tigers were fifth (81) behind senior Jose Perez-Diaz (6th, 19:37.50), senior Ezra Kahler (13th, 21:22.60), junior Taj Keller (19th, 22:12.56), sophomore Luke Roberts (21st, 22:43.91) and sophomore Noah Majano (22nd, 22:49.42).

Also racing for Belton were sophomore Ethan Trevino (23rd, 22:54.61), senior Jetli Carbajal-Diaz (24th, 22:54.65), sophomore Dereck Santos-Garcia (26th, 23:20.75), junior Marcus Hernandez (27th, 23:38.40), senior Zander Orsag (29th, 23:48.29), freshman Jasiel Gonzalez (30th, 24:04.68) and junior Emiliano Gloria (32nd, 24:25.43).

Chaparral (48) won the five-kilometer trek, while Shoemaker (2nd, 61) and Killeen (3rd, 65) joined the Bobcats on the medal stand.

Elgin sophomore Erik Trevino (17:49.29) won the race.

Belton New Tech was also in attendance with the Dragons finishing 8th (188) and the Lady Dragons landing 11th (292) in the Class 1A-4A division.

For the Dragons, freshman Daniel Zubaty (38th, 21:19.27), sophomore Zorian

Hajduk (39th, 23:21.26), senior Zane Trusky (57th, 27:07.20), senior Desmond Long (60th, 27:20.91) and sophomore David Martinez (63rd, 28:21.33) combined to produce the score.

The Lady Dragons’ total was amassed

by freshman Nyla Mathews (48th, 15:37.57), sophomore Ellie Megoulloa (61st, 16:44.68), junior Daniella Idumebor (68th, 18:36.08), freshman Melyann Tort-Negron (71st, 19:49.15) and freshman Julisa Bedolla-Martinez (74th, 23:05.91).



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WORDS

ACOUSTIC
ANTHEM
BALLAD
CADENCE
CHORD
CRESCENDO
DYNAMIC
ENSEMBLE
HARMONY
IMPROVISE
LYRICS
MELODY
OCTAVE
OVERTURE
RHAPSODY
RHYTHM
SERENADE
SOLO
SONATA
STACCATO
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TEMPO
TIMBRE
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PUBLISH DATE: *October 29*

EDITORIAL

I beg to differ

My Front Porch • Lynette Sowell

When you’re working on a project, it feels nice when everyone has the same ideas and wants to do things the same way. Especially if the outcome is successful. But how often does that really happen? No matter if it we’re in a club, a church, a school, or a family, there are exceptions to smooth sailing more times than not.

Inevitably, someone is going to disagree with the flow of the group and conflict can result.

But what makes a conflict, true conflict?

Simply disagreeing isn’t conflict.

Unless you’re dealing with a toddler, whose whims change on the breeze. Like when toddler wants said older sister’s seat to watch TV, as I dealt with this morning.

I read a particularly interesting meme on social media. For technophobes, a meme is a photo that includes a saying, which can be either humorous or pithy.

This quote I read was the latter, and it came from Ralph Waldo Emerson:

“Let me never fall into the vulgar mistake of dreaming that I am persecuted whenever I am contradicted.”

Hmmm. I pondered that as I read, and it made me stop and think a bit.

We as a society are prone to wanting smooth sailing and we have become conditioned to the idea that whenever someone contradicts us, that we are being persecuted or “hated on.”

Persecuted, as in picked on, degraded, unreasonably questioned.

Somehow we’ve gotten the idea that if we ever make suggestions contrary to what someone is doing, it can be interpreted as an attack on a person’s character or demeaning to them.

It’s a knee-jerk reaction.

“You questioned me? You dare to have a differing idea? Why are you picking on me?”

Some leaders are happiest when they have the clout to get things done their way, which of course

has to be the best way. They could be great leaders. Or they could be horrible leaders whose ways are no longer effective and they won’t listen to contrary, or opposing, ideas. They won’t even entertain questions or can see questions as a bother because, why, who is someone else to question, let alone be “contrary?”

But back to Ralph. When we’re the ones questioned, it can be a good thing.

Questions can make us pause and think if what we’re doing is really the best idea. But our pride can sometimes get in the way of realizing maybe someone else might have a better idea and we dwell more on the personal perceived irritation that someone questioned us.

Maybe it’s a better idea to take a deep breath and realize we’re not falling into the Ralph trap, of thinking we’re being picked on because of a question or two. There’s nothing wrong if someone else begs to differ. Maybe, just maybe, a little contrariness can help us head in a better direction.

Why We Love Scary Movies

Coffee Talk • Renae Brumbaugh Green

It’s time for the fall decorations to come out. I still have my Fourth-of-July wreath on my door, but this weekend I plan to haul out boxes of pumpkins leaves and pretty autumn-colored throw pillows. But there’s one aspect of the season I’ve never embraced: the scary stuff. I just can’t do it.

The October page on the community calendar is filled with haunted houses, gory costume parties, and ads for horror flicks. I’d just as soon skip October and go straight to the turkey and dressing. Except for the candy apples. I love a good caramel-and-pecan-coated apple on a stick.

I don’t do scary movies. I can’t even watch a Marvel movie without hiding my eyes and yanking my knees to my chest in a fetal position until the fighting is over. My highly-sensitive nervous system can’t take it. Yet I know people who watch these kinds of movies year round. What’s up with that? Why would anyone willingly sit through something they know will stress

them out, play on their worst fears, and take their anxiety through the roof?

Psychologists have asked those same questions. And while studies are limited, they have come up with a few possible answers.

Reasons Some People Enjoy Scary Films:

• The thrill: People do all sorts of things to get their heart rates up and scare themselves silly, from riding roller coasters to bungee jumping. Watching a scary movie produces the same kind of thrill sensation in some.

• Evolution: Early humans faced a lot more danger. Though we may not need to hide from a T-Rex any more, our systems haven’t outgrown the tools our bodies use to jump-start us into fight or flight mode. Watching a scary movie gives us a safe way to exercise those responses.

• Personality: Some people like to live on the edge. They may not have the

chance to go parasailing on any given Tuesday, but they can turn on a horror flick and feel the same increased heart rate.

• Practice for real-life: Hopefully, we won’t face an axe-murderer any time soon, or ever. But when we live through pretend trauma, we practice surviving hard things. Some people gain courage through exposing themselves to situations that are worse than they’d normally face.

• Bonding: When we watch scary movies with other people, we bond over the shared squeals and spilled popcorn. Later, we can laugh with each other at our responses to a fictional scene.

It’s Not for Everyone

Some people walk away from a frightful flick feeling exhilarated, while others (me) leave feeling stressed and anxious. Traumatic themes can trigger a negative response, and inaccurate stereotypes of those with mental health issues can be damaging. It’s best to listen to your gut.

You know yourself better than anyone, and if the thought of a horror movie leaves you feeling horrified, it’s okay to join me and just say no. We have no obligation to force-feed ourselves a genre that will sabotage our mental health.

If you enjoy being scared in a controlled, make-believe setting, scary movies can provide a safe escape from real-life stressors. They can teach you more about your own anxieties and what sets them off. And most importantly, for many, they’re just plain fun.

As for me, I’ll stick to the Hallmark channel and BBC historical romance, while I sip a nice cup of cinnamon tea and nibble a pumpkin scone.

“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.” Isaiah 41:10

Wookie With A Chainsaw

Shop the Insanity • Darren Blair

Scenario. You’re engaging with some piece of entertainment media. Suddenly, the story is interrupted by a Wookie with a chainsaw. It just came out of nowhere and is now menacing the characters.

Now, if this was a work set in the Star Wars universe, it’s hypothetically possible that a disgruntled Wookie decided to just grab a space chainsaw and have at the main characters for some reason. On the other hand, if the work was set in present-day New York City, then we’d most likely be looking at a very much human slasher in a costume. Both would be appropriate for their specific setting, and as fantastic as the situation appears to be, our brains would be pretty chill with it.

But suppose for a minute that it’s present-day New York City, but it’s a *real* Wookie popping up out of nowhere with that space chainsaw. That will, as the

saying goes, cause most people’s brains to start shifting without a clutch. We know that real Wookies don’t exist, and so having one just randomly materialize doesn’t make sense unless the story has an incredibly good reason for that to happen. Unless such an incredibly good reason materializes, our brains would rubbish everything, if not the entire creative work as a whole.

This, folks, is why when it comes to entertainment media the phrase “Give them the impossible but not the implausible” is so critical. If people are truly being entertained, then not only will they relax, so will their brains. Once the human brain is so relaxed, as long as everything being presented in that work of fiction is plausible and in keeping with the overall “rules” of whatever world the material takes place in then the brain will just

give everything a pass. Yet the *minute* something pops up that causes the brain to actually get up off of its little metaphorical La-Z-Boy, that’s it. It’ll be too busy trying to reconcile how A and B happened to continue being entertained, and in fact there’s a real chance the brain will then proceed to go back to C, F, and Q to ask questions about those as well. This is going to be about when the brain tells the person it’s a part of to stand up and go ask for a refund... hence the difference between “a work where you can just turn your brain off and enjoy the ride” and “a work where you *have to* turn your brain off to have any chance of enjoying the ride”.

Now, as a content creator, it’s possible to nudge an audience member’s brain bit by bit, making them contemplate a theme or topic. In this case, you’re us-

ing the content you’re creating as a candy coating to make the medicine go down a little easier. The problem, though, is that when it comes to controversial themes and topics some writers are either about as subtle as a Wookie with a chainsaw or don’t actually know as much as they think they do; either way, the audience is rather likely to just nope on out.

Again folks, it’s all about care of craftsmanship. You need to know yourself as well as you know your target demographic, and you also need to periodically stop to ask yourself if such-and-such thing is ultimately a good idea or not. You might fumble with it at first, but that’s where practice and feedback come in. Even major motion picture studios will sometimes test-screen movies before release. And of course, do your homework on the topic at hand.

Influence Me

Pleasant Ramblings • Mark Magnan

The term “influencer” (which was not always a word) has really become a “thing” recently, and perhaps even a job, of sorts. They make their living (I am not sure what it pays...) by trying to influence what you think of a product or service. I am assuming their belief in whatever it is that they are “selling” is their feeling and they are trying to impart that to you.

Years ago, well when I was young, movie stars and celebrities were on television trying to sell a product. I don’t know if they used whatever product they represented, but it gave some credibility to the name brand. Of course this was often a harmful product, cigarettes were one of those, celebrities and even doctors were advertising these. I am sure seeing some big tough movie star and even a doctor telling you how good these cigarettes were would “influence” you to try them.

Today we have unknown people trying to get us to buy something just on their ability to seem excited about it. Perhaps just a regular person speaking about how good a product is might just seem more believable than a paid celebrity.

For me, I don’t always believe celebrities, their ability to make good choices is always on display. I mean if you have dozens of partners and spouses I am going to question your judgment, not to mention the long list of other problems that chip away at their credibility.

Now I probably wouldn’t make a good influencer, I don’t get excited enough to make a video about how wonderful a product can be. I mean I will tell people when I get good service or have a good experience with a product. Of course I am also vocal when I have something negative. Actually I am probably more inclined to share something that I don’t like.

I believe there are more people that will take to the comment or review section of a product that gave them a negative experience. If someone is happy with their new coffee maker then they are in there making coffee. If there is something keeping them from being happy and not giving them their coffee they have plenty of time to share their thoughts about what they don’t like, especially if they don’t have their coffee.

I do like to read reviews, and I usually head right to the 1-star comments. First you have to weed out the ones that don’t have anything to do with the actual product. Those are the ones that got a damaged box or their parcel was thrown in the shrubs or left on the wrong street. The ones that truly have something substantial about the quality or the use of a product are the comments you want to read. Of course the 5-star reviews are worthwhile as well, you need to know what people like about the item you are thinking about spending money on. Many of these are just people that are excited and would make

good influencers; *“I just received my pet skunk today, he is so cute and makes such a good pet, I will keep him forever, never have I been this happy about a new pet...”* If it was mandatory that a good comment be followed up at a later date we might get a bit of clarity on the real experience once the “new” has worn off; *“I have had my pet skunk for a few weeks now, they are not as great as the advertisement said. They apparently are night creatures and sleep all day. My skunk is up all night digging in the shag carpet looking for grubs. He also sprayed my mother-in-law when she kicked him out of the way yesterday, I didn’t know they smelled that bad. No matter how many baths you give him he still stinks! I called the Pet Skunk Store today and their phone number doesn’t work anymore. I will still give my pet skunk a 3-star rating because he is cute, and honestly my mother-in-law deserved to be sprayed!”*

I am sure that being influenced by a total stranger has merit, but you also have other things to consider. Perhaps I don’t like iced coffee, so I am not spending my hard earned money on that option because someone gets really excited over that. Maybe if I am stuck between two very similar choices and I need a tie-breaker then I will see what “influencer” does the best job of telling me why I need brand-A over brand-B. Or I might just get the one that looks nicer.



Local Activities & Events

Soggy Doggie Day - Sept 12
Pups help end the Splash Pad Season in Belton. Right after Harris Community Park’s Splash Pad closes to humans for the season, we fence it off and let dogs in! For more information and rules visit beltontexas.gov/departments/parks_and_recreation.

The Sons of the Republic of Texas- Sept 19
The Sons of the Republic of Texas will hold a regular meeting on Saturday, September 19. The meeting will begin at 10:00 am at the Bell County Ag. Extension Building, 1605 N. Main in Belton. The George W. Tyler Chapter # 3 is made up of men in Central Texas who have a direct lineage to a decendent who resided in The Republic of Texas between March 2, 1836 and February 19, 1846. Contact Chapter President Robert Holt 281 639-3050 for more information. Research and application help is available to all prospective members.

MPR Explorers - Sept 24
Special Performance: Lake Belton High School Choir Ensemble. Join us as these talented students share a lively and uplifting musical program with MPR. This performance gives the singers a wonderful opportunity to gain experience in front of an audience while bringing joy and connection to our community. All welcome. Light refreshments. Sept 24, 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. at Garrett & Mic Hill Event Center, 60 Morgan’s Point Blvd, Morgan’s Point Resort.

Bacon, Blues & Brews Festival - Sept 25-26
Belton’s Bacon, Blues & Brews Festival is a celebration of great food, live music, and community spirit in the heart of downtown Belton. This festival brings together the smoky aroma of bacon-inspired creations, the soulful sounds of blues music, and a wide selection of craft brews and beverages for a day packed with flavor and fun. Enjoy performances from talented musicians, explore unique vendors, sample bacon-themed dishes, and experience the welcoming atmosphere that makes Belton special. For more information visit beltontexas.gov

NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) will meet both on TUESDAY, Sept 8th and Sept. 22nd at 6:30pm at the Temple VA Hospital. Use the entrance on the Valet parking side of the hospital and take the elevator to the 5th floor -Conference Room 5G31. Both care-givers, supporters and those suffering from mental illness are welcome to join us for mutual support and sharing of information . For more information, call 254-771-3638.

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

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

The Newcomers Club, Inc. would like to welcome ladies who have moved into Bell County and surrounding areas within the last three years. The club meets for a luncheon and program once a month and may participate in other various activities such as book clubs, a choral group, several dining out groups, walking, and games groups. The club also welcomes ladies who have just retired, or have experienced a life-changing event and are looking to connect with other ladies. For information about joining, contact Sheri Clifton at (602)-432-7510, or sherbear@bearhouse.us

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

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

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

Bell County Historical Commission holds their meetings on the fourth Monday of every month at 6 p.m. in the historical Bell County Court House, 101 E. Central Ave in Belton. 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 similar 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 katshookandneedle@gmail.com. Anyone interested in joining the local chapter of the Crochet Guild of America will also need to join the National Crochet Guild of America. Visit www.crochet.org for details.

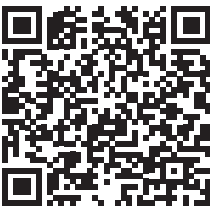
Bell County Texas Democratic Women holds their monthly meeting on the third Saturday of each month at 10 a.m. in the Belton AgriLife Center, 1605 N Main in Belton. Join us to hear from local and state candidates and about important issues and events. This is open to the public.

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

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

Community Information

TAKE ME HOME PROGRAM The Belton Police Department is adopting the Take Me Home Program, aimed at helping individuals who need special assistance to return safely home after getting lost. The program is a database with photos and personal information to help police officers find someone who is lost or wandered away from home. Take Me Home is designed for individuals who may need additional aid including those with Dementia, Autism or specific mental health needs. It’s free to register someone and the data is kept confidential to first responders. You can sign up a loved one here: www.beltontexas.gov/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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Their website has an inventory list and parts pricing, and their other yards. Their blog answers questions like, How to Sell a Car That Doesn't Run and Are Junk Yard Parts Any Good? Visit their website at www.wrenchapart.com. Call their Parts Hotline (254) 831-4905, ext. 1, or their line for Junk Car Buyers at (254) 831-4905, ext. 2. Stop by Wrench A-Part at 4497 US Hwy 190.



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Bell County Museum

**Journey Into the Past:
A Native American Celebration**



Join us to celebrate and learn more about Native American culture and traditions with fun activities, flintknapping demonstrations, and a real tepee.

Date: Sept 12, 2026
Time: 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM
The event is completely FREE for all ages.

BELL COUNTY MUSEUM

201 N. Main St. Belton
BellCountyMuseum.Org

ALWAYS FREE ADMISSION!



English Maids

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Kay English
Owner
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Lauren English-Thurman
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Tuesday-Sat 10am-5pm

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