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Parks and Recreation annual splash pad going to the dogs



Owners and their dogs cool off at the Splash Pad. BELTON JOURNAL/Michele Weisman

By Michele Weisman
The Belton Journal

Belton Parks and Recreation welcomed dogs to the Harris Community Park Splash Pad for the end-of-season celebration. Owners brought their dogs on Saturday, Sep. 12, between 9:00 a.m. and Noon.

The area was fenced off to keep the dog families inside the water play area, including benches and grass. Doggy parents encouraged them to play

in the water, but several of the dogs made friends chasing each other on the grass.

Recreation Coordinator for Parks and Recreation, Adam Wells, said, “The splash pad is the main attraction, and then we do have some little photo ops for the dogs. We feel like the kids get it year-round so we thought it might be nice for the dogs to have a day where they can come out and enjoy the splash pad. We’re giving away bandanas.

The guests can leave with a bandana, and we also have pup cups treats for the dogs.”

Belton Veterinary Clinic helped with activities for the dogs and their parents, decorating bandanas and serving pup cups.

Rob and Heather Couture recently adopted their puppy, Rocket. Heather Couture explained they are new to

See **SPLASH.**
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BELTON JOURNAL/Jack Freedman
Brett and Sean Beamesderfer pose after riding 30 miles to Dead Fish Grill.

Father, Son cyclists ride for a cause, inspire Lions Club

By Jack Freedman
The Belton Journal

Thursday, Sept. 10, Brett Beamesderfer and his son, Sean, organizers of the Serving to Help Cyclists charity, rode their bikes 30 miles before the meeting of the Belton Lions Club chapter at Dead Fish Grill.

“I’m grateful to the Lions Club for the impact they’ve had in my son’s life,” said Brett. “Without them, we wouldn’t be where we are.”

The ride was ceremonial and recreated the duo’s first long ride as father and son. When they arrived, they gave a presentation highlighting what S2HC has accomplished and what the future holds.

S2HC was founded by Brett and Sean with the goal of helping and supporting cyclists who were rendered disabled, whether in a bike accident or from an

See **BIKING DUO.**
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Council OKs annual budget, tax rate

By David Stone
The Belton Journal

The Belton City Council approved the Fiscal Year 2027 annual budget and adopted a 2026 ad valorem tax rate of \$0.5619 per \$100 of taxable value during a special called meeting Tuesday evening at the Harris Community Center.

According to Mike Rodgers, Belton’s director of finance, the FY 2027 annual budget will raise more total property taxes than last year’s budget by \$1.194,804 or 9.13 percent, and of that amount \$286,488 is tax revenue to be raised from new property tax added to the tax roll this year.

“The tax bill for the median-valued homestead property in the city of Belton in the current year was \$1,509,” Rodgers said in a statement to City Council.

“The estimated tax bill for the same property in the upcoming fiscal year would be \$1,444 with the new bud-

get,” he said.

When adopting a budget that raises more property tax revenue than the previous year, a separate vote of the governing body is needed to ratify the property tax increase reflected in the budget. This vote is in addition to and separate from the votes to adopt the budget and set the tax rate.

City Manager Sam Listi presented the proposed FY 2027 annual budget to City Council on Aug. 11 of this year, and the budget was placed on file with the city clerk at that time.

The FY 2027 budget includes total resources of \$55,938,180 and expenditures of \$52,866,100, including use of prior year reserves, transfers between funds and activities of the Belton Economic Corporation.

The adopted tax rate will be raised by 5.5 percent and will raise taxes for maintenance and operation on a \$100,000 home by about \$23.20, Rodgers said.

The new tax rate exceeds the total no-new-revenue tax rate by 8.2 percent. A public hearing on the tax rate was held Sept. 8. The \$0.5619 tax rate includes \$0.0624 for paying debt service and \$0.4995 for maintenance and operations, Rodgers said.

Council approved the increase in total property tax revenue, adopted the FY 2027 annual budget, and adopted the ad valorem tax rate in separate votes.



Courtesy Photo

Every year Bacon, Blues, & Brews draws a large crowd with 15,000 expected this year.

15,000 expected for 10th Belton Bacon, Blues & Brews festival

By David Stone
The Belton Journal

The 10th annual Belton Bacon, Blues & Brews festival will feature live music, adult beverages and bacon cook-off between local food trucks. The two-day event will be Sept. 25-26 around the historic Bell County Courthouse.

“A strong lineup of blues bands with bacon wafting through the air is a great way to spend a Friday and Saturday in late September,” said Belton Recreation Superintendent Adam Trujillo.

“We’ll close down a few streets downtown and provide people with great entertainment in a unique setting next to the historic Courthouse,” Trujillo said.

According to James Grant, executive director of Belton Parks & Recreation, the festival kicks off at 5:30 p.m. Friday, Sept. 25.

Grant said the festival started a decade ago after City Council requested an event that would bring people downtown and help boost

downtown business. About 15,000 people are expected to attend this year’s festival.

One of the highlights of the festival is a bacon cook-off between food trucks.

“This year we’ll be having about six food trucks participating,” Trujillo said. “The participants are required to cook recipes that include bacon, but it’s up to them what they make. We’ve had bacon poppers, bacon-wrapped turkey legs and other items containing bacon.”

Following the competition, the items will be for sale to the public.

Several streets around the historic courthouse will be closed off for vendor booths and the stage, plus a large area for people to sit and listen to the music. Attendees are encouraged to bring lawn chairs or blankets to sit on.

“Belton’s Bacon, Blues & Brews Festival is a celebration of great food, live music, and community spirit in the heart of downtown Belton,” Trujillo said. “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.”

The festival begins with a kickoff party from 5:30-10 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 25, featuring:

- 1st Cavalry Division Brass Band: 6-7 p.m.
- Youth Pig Races (Ages 5-10): 7 p.m.
- South Austin Moonlighters (live blues): 7:30-10 p.m.
- The Blues Brothers movie at The Beltonian Theatre: 7:30 p.m.
- Beverages for sale by local breweries and wineries
- Food trucks.

The festival continues Saturday from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., with an all-day market and more blues and brews:

- B4 Market: 11 a.m.-10 p.m.
- Peterson Brothers: 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m.
- Bacon Bingo: 1:30 p.m., 3:30 p.m., and 5 p.m.

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BISD’s Delta program prepares participants for independent living



Courtesy Photo

Delta program participants fill bags with handouts during the United Way’s Day of Caring. Delta helps young adults with special needs transition from school to independent living.

By David Stone
The Belton Journal

Belton ISD’s Delta program is designed to assist special education students in successfully transitioning from school to independent living by implementing schedules and skills that mimic the demands of adult life.

“We help young adults transition by helping sharpen employment and job skills,” said Tammie Baggerly, principal of the Delta program. “We provide special education students with

individual education plans and help them meet their goals.”

“Delta is highly individualized — there is no bell schedule,” she explained. “We have hours we are open, but the young adults have their own schedules. Some come every day, some come a couple days a week. Some come for a couple hours each day, some come all day.”

Baggerly said there are 36 young adults in the Delta program this year.

“Last year we had 40,” she said. “There is no cap

on the numbers. We have three teachers and four job coaches, and me. If there is a need, we make it happen.”

The program is housed in a 7,000-square-foot facility funded by the 2022 school bond and completed in December. It features a living lab and a commercial kitchen for hands-on restaurant and custodial training. The building is located at 731 E Fourth.

“Some of our training takes place inside our facility, some takes place in other places,” Baggerly said. “We have wonderful community

partners who allow us to volunteer or intern at their businesses.”

Those community partners include Wes’ Burgers, Grand Avenue Theater, First Baptist Church, Belton Feed, the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, the Belton ISD Resource Center, the Belton High cafeteria, Helping Hands, Bubba’s 33, Early Childhood school, Animal Control and the Bell County Animal Shelter.

“When we go to work, we are not paid,” Baggerly said. “But, we gain valuable

work experience, and several students get to apply for positions. The community is giving to us in a big way.”

Baggerly said Delta program participants have food handlers’ licenses and most are trained in a commercial kitchen.

“We also have a home living lab so they can practice independent living skills,” she said. “They go to H-E-B to buy food, they learn how to prepare food, they practice putting sheets on a bed, folding clothes and washing clothes. They proudly wear a Delta uniform.”

“They pitch in to do chores — we only have a custodian at the facility twice a week. They also learn entrepreneurial skills — we sell buttons and greeting cards at The Mercantile. They also make hats and t-shirts, and they use a small gym to practice physical health.”

In addition, the Delta facility has a garden, and the young adults learn how to grow, harvest and prepare the foods that are grown.

“Last year, we planted collard greens,” Baggerly said. “Some had never had them. We harvested the greens and made cornbread and collard greens. You are more likely to try some-

thing new if you are part of the growing and cooking process.”

“One Delta member is certified to repair Acer products,” she said. “I hope he can get a job with his skills. We try to give the Delta participants lot of experiences — like all young adults, many don’t know what they want to do yet.”

“We are not a continuation of high school,” she said. “Some are with us until they are 21, others just a few months. But they don’t get their diploma until they are finished with the program. We try to make sure everyone graduates.”

Baggerly said participants practice home-safety skills. They went to the fire station on Sparta Road and learned how to extinguish small home fires.

“We provide skills and training that is applicable to real life,” she said. “Lessons they learn are life changing. We teach them to clean up after themselves — a lot of amazing things. We could not have done these things without the school bond and without community partners who open up their businesses for us.”

“Our partners help out because they love us and they know Delta is good for our community.”

KPA to design water, wastewater improvements to BEDC property

By David Stone
The Belton Journal

City Council authorized Belton Economic Development Corp Executive Director Cynthia Hernandez to enter into an agreement with KPA Engineers for the design of water and wastewater improvements to serve the 14 West property owned by BEDC.

According to Hernandez, BEDC has received a proposal from KPA for engineering design services to extend utilities to the property along Interstate 14.

The property is one of two sites recently acquired by BEDC, and utility improvements are needed for a competitive site in business recruitment efforts. The preliminary opinion of probable construction cost for the utility improvements is approximately \$1.2 million.

“KPA Engineers has submitted a proposal in the amount of \$105,450 for project design services,” Hernandez said. “The scope of services does not include easement negotiations, bidding services, or construction administration. Because the majority of the improvements will be located within public right-of-way, staff anticipates minimal easement acquisition requirements.”

The BEDC board of directors unanimously approved the Professional Services

Agreement with KPA Engineers on Sept. 1. Completion of the utility design will position BEDC to advance infrastructure improvements to the site, in line with the City of Belton’s Strategic Plan to provide services to BEDC property.

At last week’s Council meeting, City Manager Sam Listi was authorized to extend an agreement with American Medical Response ambulance services for the provision of emergency medical services within the city for an additional two years.

Back in 2024, Council authorized the current agreement with AMR for the provision of medical services for two additional years. Since the contract is near its end, the city has engaged with AMR to develop an extension for Council’s consideration.

The current contract ends Sept. 30 and includes two two-year renewal options for a maximum term of six years. AMR will continue to respond from Belton Fire Stations 1 and 2, and it will pay \$800 per month per station to lease space for EMS crews.

AMR will be the sole provider for 911 ambulance service within Belton, and it will ensure that the city is covered through mutual aid agreements when assigned ambulances are on other calls.

The ambulance company will provide its own billing and collection services, and it will continue to send monthly reports to Fire Chief Rhea Cooper for evaluation of services provided.

Two Belton ISD Schools Earn Purple Star Designation

Special to the Journal

Belton ISD’s two newest campuses are also its newest Purple Star schools.

Hubbard Branch Elementary and James L. Burrell Elementary have earned the Purple Star Campus Designation, bringing the district’s total number of currently designated campuses to six. Burrell opened in January 2024, followed by Hubbard Branch in August 2024.

The two schools join Belton High School, Lake Belton Middle School, High Point Elementary and Charter Oak Elementary as Belton ISD’s six currently designated Purple Star campuses.

The Purple Star Campus Designation recognizes Texas schools that demonstrate a commitment to meeting the unique needs of military-connected students and their families, particularly as they navigate the transitions that often accompany military life.

“Nearly 30 percent of our students are military-connected, and we understand how important it is for them to feel a sense of belonging from the moment they arrive,” said Dr. Malinda Golden, Belton ISD Superintendent. “Our military families experience transitions that can bring unique challenges, and our

campuses are intentional about making sure students feel welcomed, connected and supported. These Purple Star designations reflect our commitment to being a place where military-connected students can thrive.”

To earn the Purple Star designation, campuses must meet criteria that include establishing a campus-based military liaison, maintaining resources for military families and implementing programs that help military-connected students transition into their new school communities.

For Hubbard Branch and Burrell, earning the designation less than three years after opening reflects an early commitment to creating school communities where military-connected students and families feel at home.

“Earning the Purple Star designation is a deeply gratifying milestone that reflects our team’s unwavering dedication to supporting military-connected students and their families,” said Amber Ross, Hubbard Branch Elementary Principal. “We are incredibly proud to know that our efforts to ease school transitions and build a welcoming community have been recognized. Above all, this reinforces our commitment to creating a safe, supportive place where every student can belong, excel and thrive.”

“We are incredibly proud to be recognized as a Purple Star

Campus,” said Cheyenne Babb, James L. Burrell Elementary Principal. “Our military-connected population continues to grow, and this designation reflects our commitment to making sure those students and families feel welcomed, supported and truly at home at Burrell.”

Across the district, Belton ISD supports military-connected students through campus-based resources, transition programs and opportunities for students to connect with peers who understand the military experience. Student-led programs such as Military Student Ambassadors help welcome incoming military-connected students and provide peer support as they adjust to a new school.

Belton ISD also partners with the Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) to help address the academic, emotional and social challenges that can accompany a military lifestyle. Each April, the district recognizes the Month of the Military Child, including Purple Up! Day, to celebrate military-connected students and honor the service and sacrifices of their families.

The addition of Hubbard Branch and Burrell reflects Belton ISD’s continued commitment to ensuring military-connected students feel welcomed, connected and supported throughout their educational journey.

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Publisher: David Tuma, David@BeltonJournal.com; **Classifieds & Legals:** Elsie Wiley, Legals@BeltonJournal.com; **Advertising:** Shanna Grote, Marketing@BeltonJournal.com, Randa Miller, Sales@beltonjournal.com; **News Editor:** Annie Wilson-Dockery, News@BeltonJournal.com; **Sports Editor:** Clay Whittington, Sports@BeltonJournal.com; **Sports Reporters:** Tony Adams, Aries Ramos **Graphic Artist:** Jason Bachie; **Creative Consultant:** Susan Kolodziejczyk; **News Reporters:** David Stone, Michele Weisman, Jack Freedman

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

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

Polka on the Square festival set for October

Special to the Journal

Belton’s Polka on the Square festival will return to the historic downtown square next month. The free two-day event will be at 101 E. Central Ave., with festivities running on Friday, Oct. 9, 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. and Saturday, Oct. 10, 11:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. This is the city’s second year hosting the celebration of Central European music, Czech-inspired foods, and cold craft beverages.

“The inaugural Polka on the Square last year was a success, so we know that Texans enjoy these musical and cultural traditions,” said Adam Trujillo, Parks Superintendent for the City of Belton. We encourage everyone to come enjoy the energetic music and delicious food and drink.

Festival Schedule: Friday, Oct. 9
• Food Vendors, Breweries, and Wineries: 5–10 p.m.

Live Music:
• The Fritz Hodde Fabulous Six Band, 5:30-7:30 p.m.
• The Praha Bros., 8-10 p.m.
Saturday, Oct. 11
• Food Vendors, Breweries, and Wineries: 11 a.m.–10 p.m.

Live Music:
• Jerry Haisler and the Melody Five, 5:30-7:30 p.m.
• Brave Combo, 8-10 p.m.
Attendees are encouraged to wear traditional attire, dance, bring a lawn chair, and enjoy the festive atmosphere in the heart of Belton.



Sent to Serve welcomes helping hands, neighbors in need

By Jack Freedman
The Belton Journal

On Sept. 27, Belton Church of Christ will hold their second Sent to Serve Sunday, an entire morning dedicated to mission work in the community. They have recognized the calling to do work for the people of Belton and to glorify God while doing so.

“This is something we started doing back in May, and we are hoping to turn it into something we do twice a year,” Der-ran Reese, lead minister of Belton Church of Christ, said.

Churchgoers will meet at the building at 9 a.m. and take communion before going out in various groups to

serve the people of Belton. This will be held in place of the normal service.

“Each group has been given a different task based on what they’re best at,” Reese said. “We’re doing lawn work, putting in a wheelchair ramp, repairing fences, sighting on homes, debris removal.”

Even though the mission is hosted by Belton Church of Christ, they are welcoming volunteers from the community and Christians from other churches to come and help them serve.

“Last time we did this, we had a good turnout of both members and non-members,” Reese said. “We’re hoping for a similar turnout.”

After completing their work, churchgoers and volunteers will come back and have lunch provided by church members who stayed behind.

“Most people will go home around noon, but there will be some of us who will stay a little longer, myself included,” Reese said. “There will be some jobs that will go well into the afternoon. One of these will be making a bathroom handicap accessible.”

In order to figure out whom they can help, the church put out flyers in Belton and enlisted the help of schools and businesses to spread the word.

“We got word out by putting flyers in our neighborhood and have a part-

nership with Leon Heights Elementary who helped spread the word,” Reese said. “People would sign up and call us if they needed help and we would follow up with them. I’m not sure how many total people have signed up so far.”

Reese and his church have made it clear that they expect nothing in return and purely hope to serve both their community and serve God.

“The purpose of this is purely to love and bless our neighbors and our hope is that this blesses our community,” Reese said. “Hopefully we can build relationships with them in the process.”

If you are interested in helping Belton Church of Christ’s mission to help serve or if you have a specific need, scan the QR code or contact the church at 254-939-1816.



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Discover the Story of the Historic Texas Longhorn and Cattle Trail Drives at the Salado Museum September 20

Special to the Journal

Salado Museum and College Park (saladomuseum.org) is pleased to announce a special program telling the story of the historic Texas Longhorn and the legendary cattle trail drives of the 19th Century presented by educator and historian Frank Sharp and Scottish singer and folklorist Ed Miller on Sunday, September 20, at 2:00 pm in the Lucile A. Robertson Center.

The program will include an audio-video presentation, live music and song, and trail drive artifacts such as cowbells, branding irons, a cowhide, steer skull or other cowboy related items. The program is free and open to the public.

Donations to support the museum and its programs are always appreciated. “Sadly, the historic Texas Longhorn is being bred out of existence,” Sharp says. “Today these cattle are on the critically endangered list. Through our preservation efforts and educational programs, we strive to impact saving these iconic animals.”

Sharp will tell the history of the State of Texas Longhorn Herd as well as the major impact of Texas Longhorns during the great cattle trail drives. Miller will play and sing the old songs that cowboys sang while driving cattle along the Chisholm Trail (which passed through Salado). Frank Sharp is the lead educator and historian for the Official State of Texas Longhorn Herd with more than 40 years’ experience as an educator, rancher, and nationally recognized authority on the history, preservation, and genetics



Courtesy photo

Salado Museum to present program on historic Texas Longhorn and cattle drives on September 20

of the historically correct Texas Longhorn. Ed Miller is a native of Edinburgh, Scotland, who came to Texas as a young man and made Austin his home. He holds graduate degrees in Folklore and Geography from the University of Texas at Austin. He has led a series of folk song-based historical tours of Scotland and currently hosts the program,

Across the Pond, at sunradio.com.

Salado Museum and College Park are a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Its mission is to promote and preserve the pioneer history of Salado, Texas, through educational programs and exhibits that document the settlement and heritage of this area. saladomuseum.org.

First-generation college student and Belton resident serves as CTC summer commencement speaker



Courtesy Photo

Central Texas College Chancellor Dr. Michele J. Carter presents Belton graduate Kember Maruna with her diploma during the 2026 Summer Commencement Ceremony, celebrating her academic achievement and the successful completion of her CTC journey.

Special to the Journal

For Kember Maruna of Belton, earning a college degree was about more than academic success. It was about purpose, perseverance, and creating a better future for her family.

Maruna, a first-generation college student, addressed fellow graduates as the chosen class speaker during Central Texas College’s Summer 2026 Com-

mencement Ceremony, sharing her personal journey and encouraging classmates to embrace challenges rather than avoid them.

Graduating with an Associate of Arts degree in social science with a concentration in psychology, Maruna served as president of the Psi Beta Community College National Honor Society in Psychology. She is also a Dean’s List student and member of the National Society of Collegiate Scholars. This fall, she will attend Texas

A&M University-Central Texas, where she plans to major in psychology and has been selected for a research analyst and program coordinator position.

“One of the greatest lessons I have learned during this journey is that life does not get easier because we avoid the hard things,” Maruna said. “Challenges will come either way. The difference is that we get to choose what we are willing to work hard for.”

Maruna said her path to graduation was not a straight one and that returning to college helped her discover her purpose.

“There were days when I questioned whether I was capable of finishing,” she said. “When I wanted to quit, my husband reminded me why I started. He believed in me on the days I couldn’t believe in myself.”

Central Texas College Chancellor Dr. Michele J. Carter celebrated the achievements of the graduating class and reflected on the significance of the milestone.

“This moment is more than a ceremony. It is a testament to the human spirit, to the belief that no matter where you start, you can choose where you go,” Carter said.

Reflecting on balancing school and family responsibilities, Maruna said she often reminded herself that the sacrifices she made today would create more opportunities for her children tomorrow.

Addressing the graduating class, she emphasized a message of resilience.

“We did not give up,” Maruna said. “And none of us reached this moment alone.”

Carter also praised graduates for overcoming obstacles and pursuing their goals despite life’s challenges.

“Class of 26, you are living proof that hope is stronger than hardship, that perseverance is more powerful than circumstance, and that dreams are worth the fight,” Carter said.

The ceremony celebrated not only academic achievement but also the determination, support, and perseverance that carried the Class of 2026 to graduation day.

Proposed Interstate 14 Corridor would boost rural, freight, and military connections

Special to the Journal

The Transportation Construction Coalition (TCC), the unified voice of America’s transportation construction industry, released a new [case study](#) examining the transformational impact of Interstate 14, a proposed multi-state corridor that would [strengthen connections](#) between businesses, military installations and strategic ports.

Congress designated I-14 as a high-priority corridor in the 2021 surface transportation law. The “Forts to Ports” route would extend from Texas through Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Georgia, connecting military installations, freight routes, ports and communities that lack a direct east-west interstate connection.

Although I-14 will eventually span 1,300 miles, to date, only 25 miles have been completed. By improving connectivity, this federal investment will be an economic driver for small communities and keep goods and people moving safely and efficiently.

“The proposed Interstate 14 corridor shows the impact and potential of long-term federal transportation funding, and what’s at stake across America. Corridors of this scale take years of planning, coordination and investment, and states cannot make those commitments without long-term federal certainty,” the coalition said. “As Congress considers the next surface transportation reauthorization, policymakers should prioritize funding for projects like the I-14 corridor, which are crucial to improve freight movement and

expand access to jobs and services for rural communities.”

The finished structure will provide a wealth of benefits to drivers from Texas to Georgia:

Delivering interconnectivity: Talbot County, Georgia has a 22% poverty rate and residents have an average commute of almost 43 minutes. By lowering commute times and increasing access, I-14 will help connect underserved rural communities to growing industries.

Reducing congestion: 54% of the main lanes around the proposed I-14 are two-lane roads, and less than one-third have adequate shoulder width. Investment in the corridor will provide the structures needed for smooth, swift transport.

Improving safety: The Texas Department of Transportation recorded 30,913 crashes and 441 fatal crashes on the roads that will form the I-14 corridor. Continued investment in interstate-standard improvements can help save lives and address harmful roadway conditions.

The Interstate’s high-priority corridor designation allows federal and state planning to advance, but it does not fund or authorize construction of the full interstate. Congress must enact a long-term surface transportation reauthorization before the current law expires on September 30, 2026, to sustain federal highway investment and give states and stakeholders the certainty to plan, advance, and deliver projects along I14 and nationwide.

Splash- From Page A1

the area and had just heard about this event.

Rob Couture said, “It’s a great opportunity for the dogs to get out and have fun in the water and enjoy the day.”

Allen Pearson was there with two labradoodles and said they come to the event every year.

Pearson said, “We’re making a day out of it for them.”

Belton Police mascot, BADGE, a blue dog, made an appearance. The dogs

gathered around BADGE for photos.

The Citizen Emergency Response Team and Animal Control had a display table with examples of disaster to-go-kits for pets. They had pet food in portable containers, small pet toys, and first-aid suggestions.

Clark Moor, who takes care of the Splash Pad and the athletic fields, was at the annual event. He said, “It’s always nice to have them come out. The dogs love it, playing in the water and chasing each other around.”

Festival - From Page A1

- Youth Pig Calling Contest (Ages 12 and under): 2 p.m.
- Jay White & The Blues Commanders: 2:30-4 p.m.
- Youth Pig Races (Ages 5-10): 4:30 p.m. featuring robotic pigs.
- ZZ Tex Band: 4:30-7 p.m.
- Food Truck Competition Awards Ceremony: 5:15 p.m.
- Adult Pig Calling Contest (Age 13 and up): 7 p.m.
- Texas Flood Band: 7:30-10 p.m.
- The Blues Brothers movie at The Beltonian Theatre: 7:30 p.m.

According to Grant, there will be about 35 vendors at the festival selling bacon- and blues-themed items, plus about 10 food and drink vendors.



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Temple man indicted for death of Josiah Alcozer

Special to the Journal

A Belton Police Department investigation has resulted in the arrest of Jesse Hernandez III of Temple on a charge of criminally negligent homicide in connection with a shooting death late last year in Belton.

A Bell County Grand Jury indicted Hernandez on Sept. 9 in connection with the death of Josiah Alcozer, 17, of Belton. Alcozer was shot at 8:13 p.m. Dec. 30, 2025 in the 800 block of West Avenue I. He was transported to Baylor Scott and White Hospital where he later died.

Hernandez was booked into the Bell County Jail on Thursday. He previously was charged with tampering with evidence on Jan. 7.

Belton Police Chief Larry Berg praised Belton detectives' work in the case. "The persistent and dedicated work of the Belton Police Department exemplifies our passion for finding justice for the family in this tragic incident," Berg said.



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A6
Thursday,
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LIFESTYLES

THE BELTON JOURNAL

Empathy dementia experience at the Senior Expo

By Michele Weisman
The Belton Journal

Gentiva Hospice and CenterWell Home Health, is bringing a dementia empathy simulation to the 16th Annual Bell County Senior Expo, Tuesday, Sept. 22. Certified Dementia Practitioner, Jeanine Chatman, is certified to use and train the staff making it possible for Gentiva offering the experience to caregivers, healthcare professionals, and family members for the last year.

Krystal Wall, senior hospice care consultant for Gentiva Hospice in Temple, said, "The experience is designed to help participants better understand what everyday life can feel like for someone living with dementia. Simple tasks that become unexpectedly challenging and participants experience some of the confusion, frustration, sensory changes, and difficulty processing information. The goal is to build empathy, patience, and understanding."

Brandi Gutierrez, a home health specialist with CenterWell Home Health, will be at the Senior Expo educating people on home health services and helping with the dementia empathy simulation program. She looks forward to meeting the seniors and hearing their stories. She also has advice for them regarding home care.

Gutierrez said, "Reach out and learn what the companies offer. The hospitals will just give them all kinds of information and tell them to pick. They have a choice, and there's dif-



Courtesy Photo

Gentiva Hospice and Centerwell Home Health are providing a Dementia Empathy Simulation for attendees at the 16th Annual Bell County Senior Expo on Sept. 22.

ferences in the choice that they make for care."

Wall encourages families to reach out for assistance. She explained there are support groups and programs where they can get help with caregiving services, so they can get a break when they're taking care of their loved one twenty-four seven.

Wall said, "I hope they walk away with more

patience and greater understanding that what we sometimes call a behavior, like a patient is acting out, maybe a person responding to confusion, fear, overstimulation, or difficulty communicating what they need. Sometimes changing their approach can make an enormous difference."

Wall said, "We're nationwide, and we provide different services in differ-

ent states. Locally, we provide hospice and palliative care, and we partner with CenterWell on our home health."

Gentiva provides hospice and palliative home health care, cancer comfort, cardiac comfort, dementia care, and veterans care are provided by the tenured staff. Visit www.gentivahs.com for more information.

City of Belton receives awards



Courtesy Photo

City of Belton receives Savvy award.

Special to the Journal

The City of Belton received three national communication awards, including a first-place Savvy Award for graphic design for the Polka on the Square logo, Thursday at a competition hosted by the City-County Communications and Marketing Association (3CMA) in Denver, Colorado.

The competition, called the Savvy Awards, honors excellence in local government communications. Belton's award-winning entries were three of 1,249 entries from 317 different jurisdictions and 37 different states.

The Polka on the Square logo also received a Silver Circle Award (second place) for Best New Logo.

Belton also won an Award of Excellence (third place) in the Social Media category for a July 2025

Facebook post about a Belton firefighter who finished mowing a lawn for a man who had fainted and could not continue because he needed medical attention.

"It is so satisfying to see Belton's work recognized among so many other communication professionals," Belton Director of Communications Paul Romer said. "It is a reminder that talent and teamwork are a powerful combination and that empathy is a characteristic that people still value."

Entries are judged by local government professionals and individuals from professional, consulting and academic communities throughout the country.

In June, the same logo won a first place TAMI Award at the Texas Association of Municipal Information Officers (TAMIO) conference in Austin.

Biking Duo- From Page A1

illness.

"One of my friends was hit by a car and the other one was hit with a critical illness on the same day," Sean said. "The first one is doing better, and the other is still going through treatment. But today's ride was in honor of them."

Brett and Sean raise money for their cause through and in addition to Brett and Sean, they are also helped by Ricardo Acosta and Tava Wil-

liams who assist in setting up their fundraisers.

"The money to pay for medical bills can bankrupt people, so our goal is to aid people until they can get back on their bikes again," said Brett. "We also want to spread awareness, especially between riders and drivers."

The group places emphasis on helping veterans, with Brett being a retired major in the Texas Army National Guard.

"We're about to do a

military medical appreciation ride and a father-son ride," Brett said. "The proceeds from people joining that will go to support injured and sick veterans."

In addition to hosting various biking tournaments in the near future, Brett and Sean are training for the biking trip of a lifetime.

"In 2034 we're going to ride across the country," Sean said.

GUESS WHO ?

I am an athlete born in Texas on September 17, 1995. I played football, basketball and baseball while in high school. But football is where I eventually gravitated, despite my father playing professional baseball. I have led the Kansas City Chiefs to several Super Bowl victories.

Answer: Patrick Mahomes

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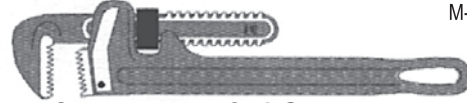
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When Jesus Wept, And So Did I



John C. Perry

When is the last time you cried? Was it tears of joy at the birth of a child, sorrow at the death of a loved one, or a powerful message that moved you to weeping?

I was raised in a generation taught that “real men” never show emotion. I vividly remember the first time I ever cried in public.

Back in the 1980s, my company brought in a guest speaker named Gerald “Jerry” Coffee. A Navy pilot shot down over North Vietnam in 1966, Lt. Commander Coffee spent seven agonizing years inside the infamous Hanoi Hilton. On two meager rations a day, he endured starvation, solitary confinement, and brutal torture on the ropes before his release in 1973.

Communication among prisoners was forbidden under threat of severe punishment. Yet Coffee and his fellow POWs overcame that isolation using a covert tap code through the cell walls. Message by message, they lifted one another up. He recounted how, at the end of every brutal day, those beaten, starving men would tap out one final message to each cell

down the line: “God Bless You.”

Hope literally passed through concrete.

Listening to him, a lump formed in my throat, followed by tears rolling down my cheeks. I couldn’t stop them. I felt instant shame, embarrassed that the tough exterior I’d spent years building could crumble so quickly in front of my colleagues. Then I looked around the room. There wasn’t a dry eye in the house. In that moment, I learned that tears aren’t a fracture of character; they are a bridge of empathy. When I wept, I wasn’t breaking. I was connecting to a brother’s faith and courage.

And the older I’ve gotten, the more I’ve realized something: the strongest people I’ve ever known

have been people unafraid to feel deeply. Courage and compassion are not opposites. They often arrive together.

Sometimes I think the real danger isn’t in shedding tears, but in refusing to. Holding everything inside hardens us in ways God never intended. A heart that never breaks eventually stops bending, and when it stops bending, it stops loving well. Tears keep us human.

That truth is written all over Scripture. Jesus Himself, the perfect model of strength, was also a man who wept. He wept at the tomb of Lazarus (John 11:35). He wept over a stubborn, broken Jerusalem (Luke 19:41). And in the garden before the cross, He offered up fervent prayers with loud cries and tears (Hebrews 5:7).

Christ’s tears were never a confession of weakness; they were the overflow of divine love and deep compassion. If the Son of God could weep without shame, surely His people can too.

Tears are not a flaw in our design. They are God’s sacred release valve for a hurting world, proof that our hearts are still beating, still feeling, and still capable of loving as deeply as our Savior loves us.

So never be ashamed of your tears. Sometimes they are the holiest thing we have to give.

John C. Perry is the Immediate Past Lay Leader with New Life Methodist Church. They meet every Sunday at 9 a.m. (Bible Study) and 10 a.m. (Worship Service) in the Salado Middle School at 1169 Williams Rd.

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BREWRIES, WINERIES, FOOD, & B4 MARKET | 11 AM - 10 PM

PETERSON BROTHERS | 11:30 AM - 2 PM

BACON BINGO | 1:30, 3:30, 5 PM

YOUTH PIG CALLING CONTEST (AGES 12 & UNDER) | 2 PM

JAY WHITE AND THE BLUES COMMANDERS | 2:30 - 4 PM

YOUTH PIG RACES (AGES 5-10) | 4:30 PM

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THE BELTON JOURNAL



Tigers put their 3-0 mark online in tough home test against Midway

By **Tony Adams**
Belton Journal Sports

The Belton Tigers will put their perfect pre-district mark on the line Friday night as they host the Hewitt Midway Panthers.

Kick off from Tiger Field will be at 7 pm and will be broadcast on Dave Campbell Texas Sports/NFHS Network (subscription required).

Belton is coming off a 41-0 road shutout of Bastrop, in which the defense not only posted a shutout, but snagged seven interceptions and recovered a fumble in the process.

Azian Wilkinson had three interceptions, Graham Chambley pulled down two, and Alex Carpenter and Anthony Garcia each had a pick.

Belton outgained the Bears offensively, 430-206. Belton's ground-and-pound outgained Bastrop 225-97, and the Tigers outgained the Bears in passing, 205-109.

Will Shepard was 13-of-19 passing for 182 yards, two TDs, and two INTs. Gavin Ross caught 11 passes for 171 yards, two receiving TDs, and added a four-yard rushing TD. Nash Jordan picked up his first career 100-yard rushing game, chipping in 152 yards on six carries and a touchdown. Brody Lee added 44 hard-earned yards on the ground and a touchdown.

It is the first shutout for the Tigers under Josh Mann, first since a 35-0 blanking of Rudder on Oct. 24, 2025, and the first road shutout for Belton since Oct. 20, 2016, when they shut out Killeen Shoemaker at Leo Buckleby Stadium, 56-0.

Through three games, the Tigers averaged 219 yards passing, 192.7 yards rushing and 411.7 total yards.

Shepard (43-of-64, 636 passing yards, 8 TDs, 4 INTs, 9-57 rushing yards, rush TD) will get the call at quarterback. Jordan (27-205, TD), Javid Nua Planz (22-153, 2 TDs), and Lee (23-142, TD) will be in the running back rotation. Ross (30-493, 6 receiving TDs) will be the primary receiver, with Cason Morton (6-81, 2 TDs) and Josh Brown (2-45) also getting turns in the pass patterns.

Wilkinson (21 tackles, 11 solos, 3 INTs, 2 pass de-



BELTON JOURNAL/Tony Adams

fenses), Alex Carpenter (5 tackles, 3 INTs), Kainyn Smith (8 quarterback hurries, 7 tackles, 3 sacks, forced fumble), Oakley Torres (11 tackles, 8 solo, 3 tackles for loss), and Chambley (9 tackles, 3 TFL, 2 INTs, a kick-blocking menace on special teams) are among the defensive leaders to watch for on Belton's defense.

After starting the season with a 19-0 shutout win over Rouse and 28-21 impressive road win at powerhouse Aledo, Midway dropped a 39-34 heartbreaker to Cedar Park at Panther Stadium.

The Panthers have averaged 27 points per game and allowed 20 points per game defensively.

William Cort Strickland (36-of-48, 387 passing yards, 3 TDs, INT, 7-44 rushing yards) is Midway's starting quarterback. Lathan Whisenton (26-229, 3 rushing

TDs) is the Panthers' feature back. Jacoby Hamilton (14-143 receiving yards, 2 receiving TDs), Marcus Cain (14-143 receiving yards), and Hayden Brock 7-87, receiving TD) are three of the targets in the passing lanes for the Panthers.

The Panthers have 20 quarterback hurries, 12 tackles for loss, five sacks, five passes defended, and a fumble recovery.

Ronin Aranda (14 tackles, 9 solo), Gavyn Reeves (10 tackles, 7 solo), Noah Friesen (9 tackles, 7 solo), Caden Byrd (9 tackles, 6 solo), and Carl Simmons (9 tackles, 5 solo) are the leading tacklers for the Panthers defensively.

"It's another big test against a quality opponent," Belton head coach Joshua Mann said.

Broncos Brace for talented Ellison Eagles

By **Aries Ramos**
The Belton Journal

The Lake Belton Broncos are back on the field this week with a matchup against the Killeen Ellison Eagles, a team that may be sitting at 1-2 but brings the kind of individual talent that can make a record look misleading in a hurry.

Ellison enters the game riding the momentum of a 26-14 win over Chaparral, a result that snapped the Eagles' early season slide and gave a young roster something to build on. That victory showcased a team that has started to figure out its identity on both sides of the ball, and Lake Belton will be walking into a game against an opponent that believes it has finally turned the corner.

At the center of everything Ellison does offensively is junior quarterback Marlyn Smith. Already holding an offer from Lamar University, Smith has been productive from the opening week, throwing for more than 500 yards and seven touchdowns through just three games. The fact that he's doing that as a junior, with another full year of recruiting ahead of him, is privy to the kind of arm talent the Broncos will be fac-

ing. Smith has shown he can push the ball down the field and keep drives alive, and a defense that gives him time to survey the field is likely to pay for it. Lake Belton's ability to generate pressure and force Smith into quicker decisions may be one of the deciding factors in this one.

Ellison's talent isn't limited to the offensive side of the ball, either. Junior safety Demetrius Perry Jr. anchors the back end of the Eagles defense and is drawing plenty of Division I attention, already holding an offer from Texas State. Perry's presence in the secondary means Lake Belton's passing game will have to be sharp, a safety with that kind of range can take away the middle of the field and punish any throw that hangs. Up front, defensive tackle Dorian Rhoten Jr., who holds an offer from Midwestern State, gives the Eagles a disruptive interior presence capable of collapsing the pocket and clogging running lanes before a play ever develops.

That combination, a productive quarterback, a ball hawking safety, and a defensive tackle who can win at the line of scrimmage, gives Ellison a foundation of legitimate college prospects that few 1-2 teams can claim. The Eagles' record is more a reflection of an early schedule and a roster

still gelling than a lack of talent, and Lake Belton's staff will have to prepare accordingly.

For the Broncos, the key will be winning the matchups that Ellison's standouts create. Neutralizing Rhoten's push in the middle would allow Lake Belton to establish its ground game and control the tempo, while accounting for Perry over the top opens up the rest of the field. Defensively, keeping Smith uncomfortable and limiting explosive plays through the air would go a long way toward keeping the Eagles' offense from finding the rhythm it discovered against Chaparral.

It sets up as a game where Lake Belton's execution will be tested by an opponent with real firepower at a handful of key positions. If the Broncos take care of the football and win at the line of scrimmage on both sides, they'll be in good shape, but Ellison has enough talent to make it a long night if they don't.



Belton volleyball bounces back from defeat to sweep Shoemaker

By **Clay Whittington**
The Belton Journal

The Lady Tigers finished Tuesday evening with a 2-1 District 16-5A record, and it is due to their starts.

On the heels of a five-set defeat to visiting Killeen Ellison on Friday, Belton traveled for a road encounter with league unbeaten Killeen Shoemaker.

While forced to survive a late comeback attempt, the Lady Tigers successfully rebounded from last week's loss with a 25-16, 25-16, 28-26 victory against the Lady Grey Wolves.

Although lots of things factored into the outcome, Belton interim head coach Lindsey Chandler believes it all goes back to the beginning.

"We came out swinging in each set," she said, "and when we are doing good, we are really doing good. That really got us on a high to start.

"Then, we were really serving well. We were just really operating as a fam-

ily early on."

The Lady Tigers were in complete control initially and never trailed in the first set as senior Ella Tucek served up eight consecutive points en route to a 9-0 lead before helping extend it to 11 points at 20-9.

In the second set, the pattern repeated, and Belton immediately created a cushion, winning 11 of the first 13 points. Moments later, Mali Pula's hit capped off a 7-1 outburst for the Lady Tigers, creating an 18-7 gap.

The momentum carried into the third set, where Emma Harvey, a junior, accounted for a scoring block, an ace and a kill to help Belton build a 14-2 lead.

The Lady Tigers' dominance ended there, though.

Shoemaker won 20 of the following

29 points before freshman Aurelia Lefiti's scoring block tied the score 23-23, and the Lady Grey Wolves went ahead 25-24 on junior Imari Walker's hit.

Belton tied the score on the ensuing point as libero Rexlynn Drake set up Pula's kill, but another hit from Walker returned the lead to Shoemaker.

The Lady Tigers answered with three consecutive points, however, punctuated by Kensley Wolfe's kill to secure the win.

"We struggled a little bit in the third set," Chandler said, "and we went down a little mentally. They worked hard, they fought and they found a way. "That's all I can really ask for."

In the loss to the Lady Eagles, Belton rallied from an 0-2 deficit before eventually falling.

Cirian Messersmith and Tucek fin-



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Sports Briefs

By Clay Whittington
The Belton Journal

Ella Bralley, Betsy Bralley and Bella Costa each took part in last week’s New Tech Novice Tournament, and the Lady Dragons golfers delivered some impressive rounds.

Played at Killeen’s Stonetree Golf Club, the nine-hole event is intended to help beginning players learn about tournament play, scoring and rules.

Ella Bralley finished with a one-over-par 38, while Betsy Bralley and Costa posted rounds of 47 and 50, respectively.

Another tournament is set for Tuesday, and it will also be held at Stonetree.

GIRLS BASKETBALL

The Lady Broncos traveled to Austin for the She’s Just Different Showcase and recorded a 1-1 record.

In its opener, Lake Belton fell to Wylie East by 10 points, 38-28. Alexa King and Olivia Dann produced eight points apiece in the loss.

Then, versus Austin Vandegrift, the Lady Broncos cruised to a 40-25 victory as Dann finished with a game-high 13 points, while King followed with 12 points.

Lake Belton’s next showcase event is the CenTex I-35 High School Showdown on Oct. 26 at Round Rock.

TENNIS

Lake Belton improved to 9-3 overall on Saturday, when it split a doubleheader at home.

The Broncos and Lady Broncos began the day with a 15-4 victory against Georgetown East View highlighted by five doubles wins.

The tandems of Ethan Muehlstein-Andrew Williams, Ben Johnson-Reid Ramirez, Micah Briggs-Quint Mackenzie, Sara Stephens-Alyssa Naumann and Eli Stewart-Abigale Harris were each successful.

Lake Belton could not maintain the momentum,

though, falling to Georgetown 17-2 later in the day.

Ramirez was responsible for both wins, teaming with Johnson in boys doubles before claiming a victory in singles competition as well.

The Broncos and Lady Broncos travel to Liberty Hill for a 9 a.m. start Saturday before returning home for a match versus Killeen Chaparral on Tuesday at 4:30 p.m.

Belton is idle until Tuesday, when it hosts Killeen Shoemaker at 4:30 p.m.

New Tech returns to action today, looking to capture its first district win against visiting Lago Vista. The match will be played at the Crossroads Tennis Complex, starting at 4 p.m.

Tuesday, the Dragons and Lady Dragons return to the site for a 4 p.m. start against Jarrell.

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.



Broncos push Eagles to limit in three-set loss

By Aries Ramos
The Belton Journal

The Lake Belton Broncos came up short against Salado, dropping the match in three sets and falling to 10-19 overall on the season.

The scores, 25-18, 33-31, and 25-21, tell the story of a match that was much closer than a 3-0 sweep might suggest. Salado took the opening set 25-18, but Lake Belton settled in from there and pushed the Eagles to

the brink in a marathon second set that stretched all the way to 33-31 before Salado finally closed it out. That set alone featured a long stretch of back and forth volleyball, with neither team able to string together the two point cushion needed to end it, and it ultimately proved to be the turning point of the night. A Lake Belton win there would have flipped the momentum and forced a fourth set. Instead, Salado escaped, and the Broncos were left facing a 2-0 hole.

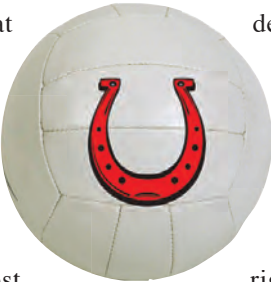
To their credit, Lake Belton didn’t fold in the third.

The Broncos hung with Salado and kept the set within striking distance before falling 25-21, closing out a match where they were competitive in every frame but couldn’t quite convert in the biggest moments. Finding a way to win those tight points, the ones that decided both the second and third sets, is the clearest area for growth as the Broncos head deeper into the season.

The loss drops Lake Belton to 10-19 on the year, but the record that matters most right now is the district mark. The Broncos currently sit at 0-2 in district play and will be looking to get that first district win on the board when they return to action on the 18th against Copperas Cove.

That match represents an important opportunity. An 0-2 start in district isn’t insurmountable, but every additional loss tightens the margin for error in the race for postseason positioning. For a Lake Belton squad that has shown it can go point for point with quality opponents the difference between 0-3 and 1-2 is significant, both in the standings and in the confidence of a team trying to find its footing.

Lake Belton will be back in action on the 18th, hunting for its first district win of the season and a chance to change the trajectory of its conference schedule.



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Belton Forces Eight Turnovers in 41-0 Rout of Bastrop

By Aries Ramos
The Belton Journal

A weather delay pushed kick-off back to 9:30 p.m., but once the Belton Tigers finally got on the field, they wasted no time turning what was billed as a potential shootout into a complete defensive and offensive domination, rolling to a 41-0 win over the Bastrop Bears.

Belton's defense set the tone for the entire night, hauling in interception after interception and never letting Bastrop's offense find any rhythm. By the time the final whistle blew, the Tigers had forced eight turnovers, an avalanche that buried any hope Bastrop had of keeping the game competitive.

The Tigers wasted little time getting on the board. After an early interception on their first possession, Belton's defense answered immediately when Graham Cham-

bley picked off a Bastrop pass and returned it to the Bastrop 35. Two plays later, quarterback Will Shepard found Gavin Ross on a short pass, and Ross made the defense pay, hurdling one defender and spinning away from another en route to a 19 yard touchdown that put Belton up 7-0 with 7:07 left in the first quarter.

Bastrop couldn't answer. A three and out, aided by a tackle for loss from safety Azian Wilkinson, gave the ball right back to Belton. The Tigers put together a long drive behind runs from Nash Jordan and a series of catches by Ross, but the possession stalled in the red zone and Belton missed a 24 yard field goal, keeping the score 7-0 late in the first.

Belton's defense picked up right where it left off to open the second quarter, with Kainyn Smith stuffing a Bastrop run for a loss be-

fore Wilkinson came up with his first interception of the night, setting Belton up near midfield. Running back Brody Lee took over from there, ripping off runs of 9 and 13 yards, the second going for a touchdown to push the lead to 13-0.

Bastrop tried to answer with an end around and a deep shot down the field to flip field position, but Chambley came up with his second interception of the half to shut the drive down. Belton capitalized again, this time with Ross taking a short pop pass and turning it into a 77 yard touchdown, his second score of the night, making it 20-0 with 6:48 left in the half.

The Tigers weren't done. With backup quarterback Sawyer Harbin in for a series, Belton methodically drove the field behind Nash Jordan's legs before Ross punched in his third touchdown of the half on a

short run, extending the lead to 27-0. Bastrop's misery continued on the ensuing possession when Alex Carpenter jumped a route and returned an interception 57 yards for a touchdown, making it 34-0. Bastrop turned the ball over yet again before halftime, this time to Wilkinson for his second pick of the night, and Belton took a commanding 34-0 lead into the locker room.

The third quarter was mostly a battle of Belton's defense against a Bastrop offense searching for answers. The Tigers forced a turnover on downs and later got a third interception from Wilkinson, who finished the night with three picks from his safety spot. Belton had a couple of uncharacteristic miscues of its own, throwing an interception and losing a fumbled snap, but the defense continued to bail the offense out, with Anthony Garcia coming

up with a fourth quarter interception to close out a night of takeaways.

Belton put the finishing touches on the win to start the fourth quarter. After some penalty confusion on a third and 9 conversion to Ross, Jordan broke free for a 59 yard touchdown run, pushing the lead to 41-0 with 10:08 remaining. Belton later added its eighth forced turnover of the night on a Bastrop fumble before running out the clock and closing out the shutout.

Ross finished the night with three total touchdowns, two receiving and one rushing, while Belton's defense authored one of its most complete performances of the season, turning a matchup between two potent offenses into a one sided defensive showcase. The 41-0 win keeps Belton unbeaten as the Tigers continue to roll under first year head coach Josh Mann.

Belton ISD cross country excels at regional preview meet

By Clay Whittington
The Belton Journal

Belton and Lake Belton traveled to Fort Worth last week to get a glimpse of the upcoming regional meet's new location, and based on the results, the teams were pleased with the route.

The Region II Preview Meet was conducted Friday at the Rolling Hills Soccer Complex, giving teams an opportunity to get a feel for the course before potentially returning to site next month, when state berths will be earned.

While each Belton ISD squad found success, the Broncos emerged with the top showing.

Led by senior Wyatt Potts' eighth-place time of 17 minutes, 8.6 seconds across the five-kilometer trek, Lake Belton placed fourth overall in the Class 5A-6A boys division, scoring 83 points.

The effort was complemented by sophomore Drew Houston (19th, 17:37.4), junior Tyler Adkins-Beltran (22nd, 17:48.8) and seniors Josiah Briggs (24th, 17:55.6) and Jack McCullagh (27th, 18:00.1).

Additionally, junior Cooper Schels (29th, 18:09.6), senior Austin Adams (30th, 18:09.6), senior Adrian Rentas-Quiles (38th, 18:19.7), junior Kyan Whitmire (68th, 19:59.5) and junior Anthony Garza (74th, 20:13.0) represented the Broncos, but their times did not count toward the team total.

Wylie scored 54 points to claim the team

title, beating out Midlothian (2nd, 63) and Lucas Lovejoy (3rd, 69).

Liberty Hill sophomore Zander Radziwon (1st, 15:53.8) was the individual champion.

The Tigers were ninth (223) with senior Hayden Brown (44th, 18:37.4), sophomore Ethan Trevino (49th, 18:43.9), junior Marcus Hernandez (58th, 19:30.1), senior Ezra Kahler (60th, 19:36.3) and junior Taj Keeler (64th, 19:50.8) accounting for the points.

Belton senior Zander Orsag (71st, 20:05.1) and sophomore Luke Roberts (73rd, 20:11.3) also raced.

In the girls division, Lake Belton was sixth (137) behind sophomore Keira Dzenowski, who placed 14th (20:40.0).

The remainder of the points were produced by sophomore Demi Fisher (30th, 21:52.9), senior Sarah Gray (32nd, 21:57.7), senior Madelyn Rivas (34th, 22:13.1) and junior Elizabeth Sandlin (35th, 22:14.1).

Also racing for the Lady Broncos were junior Alayna Fulton (41st, 22:41.0), freshman Amara Bodeman (47th, 22:51.7), sophomore Sophia Garza (56th, 23:25.6) and senior Abigail Glasser (58th, 23:29.9).

The Lady Tigers followed at 7th (192) thanks to junior Isabella Warner (25th, 21:32.2), sophomore Ayla Wakershauser (28th, 21:48.5), sophomore Natalie Mott (50th, 23:01.3), senior Nataly Valdez (51st, 23:01.8) and freshman Markayla Allen (62nd, 23:42.7).

Belton also fielded sophomore Leimya

Palomares (66th, 24:14.9), freshman Kate Jones (73rd, 24:48.9), freshman Ava Boeselt (77th, 25:28.5) and sophomore Ella Johnson (78th, 25:43.0).

Behind individual champion Emily Armstrong (1st, 18:57.9), Lovejoy won the team title with a mere 19 points. Liberty Hill (2nd, 73) and Wylie (3rd, 76) followed.

Although a majority of the rosters were in Fort Worth, the Lady Tigers' and Lady Broncos' remaining runners traveled to Salado for the annual Tenroc Invitational, where Lake Belton was fourth (78).

Paced by senior Shreya Muni (12th, 22:47.08), the Lady Broncos landed all five of their runners in the top 25.

Sage Anderson, a freshman, was 16th (23:35.92), while junior Catalina Esquivel was 18th (23:49.18), senior Gracie Hassell

was 19th (23:55.22) and freshman Kimberly Solis-Colon was 24th (24:02.74).

Round Rock Westwood (1st, 43), Jarrell (2nd, 48) and Temple (3rd, 53) were the only teams to beat Lake Belton.

The quintet of junior Lilian Baggett (34th, 25:40.24), senior Fancy Jaime (41st, 26:29.21), sophomore Yesenia Guardiola (43rd, 26:36.31), freshman Aleena Chavez-Bustos (44th, 26:38.46) and senior Roxanna Delgado (45th, 26:40.96) amassed 160 points to place the Lady Tigers sixth.

New Tech took part in the West Invitational, finishing with one runner in the top 70 of each race.

Dragons freshman Daniel Zubaty was 41st (21:14), and Lady Dragons sophomore Ellie Megoulloa was 65th (15:46).

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09.17 PD

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(830)743-5999/(254)760-1695/stanley@texgasoilswap.com
08.27,09.03,09.10,09.17pd

LEGALS

THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
JUDICIAL BRANCH
NH CIRCUIT COURT

6th Circuit - Family Division – Concord, 32 Clinton Street, Concord NH 03301, Telephone: 1-855-212-1234, TTY/TDD Relay: (800) 735-2964, https://www.courts.nh.gov

CITATION FOR PUBLICATION - MARITAL
Case Name: In the Matter of James Murdough and Mika Murdough, Case Number: 629-2026-DM-00064 On March 03, 2026, James Murdough of Concord, NH filed in this Court a Petition for Divorce with requests concerning:

The original pleading is available for inspection at the office of the Clerk at the above Family Division location. Until further order of the court, each party is restrained from selling, transferring, encumbering, hypothecating, concealing or in any manner whatsoever disposing of any property, real or personal, belonging to either or both parties except (1) by written agreement of both parties, or (2) for reasonable and necessary living expenses or (3) in the ordinary and usual cause of business. The Court has entered the following Order(s): Mika Murdough shall file a written Appearance Form with the Clerk of the Family Division at the above location on or before November 25, 2026 or be found in DEFAULT. Mika Murdough shall also file by November 25, 2026 a Response to the Petition and by November 25, 2026 deliver a copy to the Petitioner’s Attorney or the Petitioner, if unrepresented. Failure to do so will result in issuance of Orders in this matter, which may affect you without your input.
August 27, 2026
BY ORDER OF THE COURT, Tracy L. Meyer, Clerk of Court
09.10,09.17,09.24

NOTICE OF REQUIREMENT TO COMPLY WITH
THE SUBDIVISION
AND SERVICE EXTENSION POLICY OF
PENDLETON WATER SUPPLY CORPORATION

Pursuant to Texas Water Code 13.2502 of the Texas Water Code, Pendleton Water Supply Corporation hereby gives notice that any person who subdivides land by dividing any lot, tract, or parcel of land within the service area of Pendleton Water Supply Corporation, Certificate of Convenience and Necessity No. 10003, in Bell County, into two or more lots or sites for the purpose of sale or development, whether immediate or future, including re-subdivision of land for which a plat has been filed and recorded or requests more than two water service connections on a single contiguous tract of land must comply with Non-Standard Service Requirements contained in Pendleton Water Supply Corporation’s tariff.

Pendleton Water Supply Corporation is not required to extend retail water service to a service applicant in a subdivision where the developer of the subdivision has failed to comply with the Subdivision Policy.

Applicable elements of the Subdivision policy, depending on the specific circumstances of the subdivision service, may include:

Your home or land could be one
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LEGALS

Evaluation by Pendleton Water Supply Corporation of the impact a proposed subdivision service extension will make on Pendleton Water Supply Corporation’s water supply system and payment of the costs for this evaluation;

Payment of fees for reserving water supply;

Forfeiture of reserved water supply service capacity for failure to pay applicable fees;

Payment of costs of any improvements to Pendleton Water Supply Corporation’s system that are necessary to provide the water service;

Construction according to design approved by Pendleton Water Supply Corporation and dedication by the developer of water facilities within the subdivision following inspection.

Pendleton Water Supply Corporation’s tariff and a map showing Pendleton Water Supply Corporation’s service area may be viewed at Pendleton Water Supply Corporation’s office, at 9675 FM 1237 Spur, Pendleton, Texas 76564; the tariff and service area map also are filed of record at the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality in Austin, Texas and may be reviewed by contacting the TCEQ, c/o Utility Rates and Services, Section MC 153, Water Utilities Division, P.O. Box 13087, Austin, Texas 78711.

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09.10,09.17

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters of Administration for the Estate of REX OLIVER LUCAS, Deceased, were issued on July 30, 2026, in Cause No. 26CPB00068, pending in the County Court at Law No. 1, Bell County, Texas, to: MICHELLE LUCAS All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them to the undersigned within the time and in the manner prescribed by law. c/o: Mary Wiley Attorney at Law, 100 W. Central Texas Expressway Suite 306, Harker Heights, Texas 76548
DATED the11th day of September 2026.
MARY WILEY Attorney for MICHELLE LUCAS, State Bar No.: 24032669, 100 W. Central Texas Expressway Suite 306, Harker Heights, Texas 76548, Telephone: (254) 634-6969 ,Facsimile: (254) 634-6587, E-mail: mary@lindleylawoffices.com
09.17

THE STATE OF TEXAS
CITATION BY PUBLICATION
CASE NUMBER 26CPB00540

TO: OTHER LIVING RELATIVES OF JAMES
EDWARD BARNETT

No Known Address
JANET BARNETT, Applicant, on September 09, 2026, filed an Application for Appointment of Guardian of Person With Full Authority in a proceeding styled: JAMES EDWARD BARNETT, Incapacitated, and bearing the number 26CPB00540 in the County Court of Bell County, Texas. The court will hear the aforesaid Application after the expiration of ten days, exclusive of the day of publication, from the date this citation is published which will be September 17, 2026 in the County Court at Law #1 Courtroom, at the Bell County Justice Complex, 1201 Huey Road, in Belton, Texas. All persons interested in the aforesaid estate are commanded to appear at or before the time set for said hearing by filing a written contest or answer to said application should they desire to oppose or contest it. Said written contest or answer shall be filed in the office of Shelley Coston, County Clerk, Bell County, Texas, PO Box 480, Belton, Texas 76513. The name and address of the attorney for applicant is: MARY WILEY, 100 W CENTEX EXPWY, STE 306, HARKER HEIGHTS TX 76548 The officer serving this Citation shall, in compliance with the Law, serve it by publication once in a newspaper of the general circulation in this, the County in which the decedent last resided as required by Section 202.052 of the Texas Estate Code, for not less than ten days before the return day hereof, exclusive of the day of publication, and the date of publication said newspaper bears shall be the day of publication. Issued and given under my hand and seal of said Court at office on September 10, 2026. Shelley Coston County Clerk of Bell County, Texas, PO Box 480, 1201 Huey, Road Belton, TX 76513
By: Angela Busby, Deputy
09.17

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of PRANEE JARUPHONG LAHUE, Deceased, were issued on September 9, 2026, in Cause No. 26CPB00469, pending in the County Court-At-Law No: 1, Bell County, Texas, to: MALANIE SUNCIRY VANCEGONZALEZ. All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them to the undersigned within the time and in the manner prescribed by law. c/o: MALANIE SUNCIRY VANCEGONZALEZ, 13516 Acqua Dr., Temple, Texas 76504
SIGNED on September 14, 2026
/s/James O. Cure, James O. Cure Attorney for M A L A N I E SUNCIRY VANCEGONZALEZ, State Bar No.:

LEGALS

05252800, 2584 Blue Meadow Dr., Temple, TX 76502, Telephone: (254) 778-8934, Facsimile: (254) 773-2477, Email: jocure@cureandfrancis.net
09.17

THE STATE OF TEXAS
CITATION BY PUBLICATION
CASE NUMBER 26CPB00444
TO: UNKNOWN HEIRS

SAMANTHA SUE TEAL, Applicant, on July 14, 2026, filed an Application to Probate as Muniment of Title More than 4 Years After Decedent’s Death in a proceeding styled: DAVID WELDON TEAL, Deceased, and bearing the number 26CPB00444 in the County Court of Bell County, Texas.

The court will hear the aforesaid Application after the expiration of ten days, exclusive of the day of publication, from the date this citation is published which will be September 17, 2026 in the County Court at Law #1 Courtroom, at the Bell County Justice Complex, 1201 Huey Road, in Belton, Texas. All persons interested in the aforesaid estate are commanded to appear at or before the time set for said hearing by filing a written contest or answer to said application should they desire to oppose or contest it. Said written contest or answer shall be filed in the office of Shelley Coston, County Clerk, Bell County, Texas, PO Box 480, Belton, Texas 76513. The name and address of the attorney for applicant is: JAY R. BEATTY, 3106 SOUTH WS YOUNG DR BLDG D #401, KILLEEN TX 76542 The officer serving this Citation shall, in compliance with the Law, serve it by publication once in a newspaper of the general circulation in this, the County in which the decedent last resided as required by Section 202.052 of the Texas Estate Code, for not less than ten days before the return day hereof, exclusive of the day of publication, and the date of publication said newspaper bears shall be the day of publication. Issued and given under my hand and seal of said Court at office on September 11, 2026. Shelley Coston County Clerk of Bell County, Texas, PO Box 480, 1201 Huey Road, Belton, TX 76513
By: Andrea Marks Deputy
09.17

THE STATE OF TEXAS
CITATION BY PUBLICATION
CASE NUMBER 26CPB00442
TO: UNKNOWN HEIRS
SAMANTHA SUE TEAL,

Applicant, on July 14, 2026, filed an Application for Independent Administration, Letters of Administration, and Determination of Heirship in a proceeding styled: SSANG IM TEAL, Deceased, and bearing the number 26CPB00442 in the County Court of Bell County, Texas. The court will hear the aforesaid Application after the expiration of ten days, exclusive of the day of publication, from the date this citation is published which will be September 17, 2026 in the County Court at Law #1 Courtroom, at the Bell County Justice Complex, 1201 Huey Road, in Belton, Texas. All persons interested in the aforesaid estate are commanded to appear at or before the time set for said hearing by filing a written contest or answer to said application should they desire to oppose or contest it. Said written contest or answer shall be filed in the office of Shelley Coston, County Clerk, Bell County, Texas, PO Box 480, Belton, Texas 76513. The name and address of the attorney for applicant is: JAY R. BEATTY, 3106 SOUTH WS YOUNG DR BLDG D #401, KILLEEN TX 76542 The officer serving this Citation shall, in compliance with the Law, serve it by publication once in a newspaper of the general circulation in this, the County in which the decedent last resided as required by Section 202.052 of the Texas Estate Code, for not less than ten days before the return day hereof, exclusive of the day of publication, and the date of publication said newspaper bears shall be the day of publication. Issued and given under my hand and seal of said Court at office on September 11, 2026. Shelley Coston County Clerk of Bell County, Texas, PO Box 480, 1201 Huey Road, Belton, TX 76513
By: Andrea Marks Deputy
09.17

THE STATE OF TEXAS
CITATION BY PUBLICATION
CASE NUMBER 26CPB00108
TO: UNKNOWN HEIRS
WILLIAM REED BLACKSTONE,

Applicant, on September 09, 2026, filed an Application to Determine Heirship in a proceeding styled: ANDREW SCOTT BLACKSTONE, Deceased, and bearing the number 26CPB00108 in the County Court of Bell County, Texas.

The court will hear the aforesaid Application after the expiration of ten days, exclusive of the day of publication, from the date this citation is published which will be September 17, 2026 in the County Court at Law #1 Courtroom, at the Bell County Justice Complex, 1201 Huey Road, in Belton, Texas. All persons interested in the aforesaid estate are commanded to appear at or before the time set for said hearing by filing a written contest or answer to said application should they desire to oppose or contest it. Said written contest or answer shall be filed in the office of Shelley Coston, County Clerk, Bell County, Texas, PO Box 480, Belton, Texas 76513. The name and address of the attorney for applicant is: TERESA SCHILLER, 2106 Bird Creek Drive, Temple TX 76502 The officer serving this Citation shall, in compliance with

LEGALS

Celebrating

TEXAS

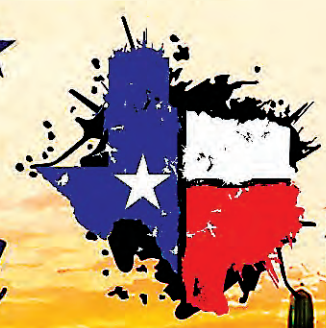
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 SCAN ME



EDITORIAL

Who’s holding our local history?

My Front Porch • Lynette Sowell

I am seeing an alarming trend that I hope our local clubs, civic organizations, and even churches will help head off at the pass. It’s giving the reins of our history to social media.

While the best bit of marketing advice I’ve ever heard is find your customers and stand in front of them, we equate social media with where our audience is.

That is partly true. But, there’s a big “however” that I hope that our local clubs, civic organizations, churches, and businesses will pay attention to.

By isolating our sharing of club, civic organization, church, and business events to social media, we are doing two things that are dangerous and potentially harmful to our community’s history – our present, which will soon be history as the days, months and years pass.

One, these groups are limiting their audience.

The audience is an “echo chamber.” A reach will only go so far, before it is lost.

Our society is struggling to connect, after two years of social distancing and limited interactions, and it is difficult enough to connect person to person. Social media often adds more fuel to the fire for misunderstandings. Your club, organization or church’s mission is not limited to people looking at their phones.

Two, and this is something we do not think of often, we are giving up our history to be stored on the servers of a company that is not local and that history will swiftly be forgotten.

Facebook is not your friend. It is an opportunity to share publicly via a product that belongs to a PRIVATE COMPANY.

Why, are we giving our history and privacy to a private company

that is not local and is ONLY out to make money?

Facebook is controlling your group’s message and who receives it, and also holding onto your history.

At my offices, we have volumes and volumes of our city’s history. They consist of printed volumes and digital files stored on our servers and backup. Right now, we have a college student home on break who is purging much of our old printed works, which will soon be bound into annual editions and also completely digitized (everything for the past 12 years or so is both digital AND print.) We don’t fight digital in our offices. We embrace it.

So, my first point, how does a group limit its audience by posting on social media?

Quite frankly, while “millions” are on social media, not everyone will see a group’s newsy post. I follow most of the civic clubs in this town, and even I don’t “see” all their news. I liken social media to a neighborhood fence where people gather to share information. From time to time, many congregate at the “fence” to share news and information. Not all of it is accurate and some is outdated, but that’s for another day. We might catch a tidbit of news while we are “there” at the fence, but then we leave and go on our way. And then, someone shares something we should know – but we don’t see it.

This is how groups limit their audience. Why would you want your audience to be limited? Wouldn’t you want your exposure to be as complete as it can be?

I have also read – and heard – people mention that they did not “see” someone’s time-sensitive notice posted online.

Running to social media and posting should not be your go-to and

sole means of distributing information to your members and the general public.

The second, and probably even more disturbing trend, is that we have groups, clubs, churches, and businesses, who are giving up their history to be stored on a faraway server of a company which is not local. The present is what it is, but as the days and weeks and months go on, our current days become history.

Many of our clubs, churches, and businesses have been around for decades. But, what has become of the history? Who is holding that information?

We are a locally owned company, whose staff and employees live, shop, and work locally. We sit in school board meetings and council meetings and committee meetings, because we have a vested interest in what goes on here and getting that information to the community via whatever means we can. A social media does not have that vested interest.

It concerns me greatly to see local groups, churches, and businesses putting their vital information and accomplishments, this present that is becoming part of our community history, on servers and storage elsewhere, seen by few and remembered by fewer.

Who will look at our history in 20 to 30 years and be able to see what happened in our community?

I am not saying that we should abandon an avenue which has become part of our way to do business. But is it not the only way to do business and get word out about what we do. Email, phone call, snail-mail the information to us. But, do not take the easy way out and post pictures which will disappear from our community’s history.

Undiagnosed ADHD

Coffee Talk • Renae Brumbaugh Green

Ever set out to get something done, only to find yourself reorganizing your desk, answering an unrelated text, or doom scrolling your phone? Forty-five minutes later, you realize you’ve gotten sidetracked on something completely different, and now you know precisely when ice cream was invented, how many species of beetles there are, and how long it takes to roller skate from Amarillo to Abilene. But you’ve accomplished nothing on your original task.

By you, I mean me. As a teacher, I recognize all the signs of ADHD. I have them all. No need for a formal diagnosis, since I don’t plan to medicate myself. But trust me. I have it. If that sounds like you, too, pull up a chair. We can be friends.

For those with ADHD, focusing isn’t as simple as trying harder. ADHD affects motivation, organization, working memory, and the sense of time. Tasks that feel repetitive, boring, or lacking a meaningful reward are hard to begin, much less complete. Yet if something grabs our interest, we might get so absorbed that hours disappear.

Many interpret these struggles as a lack of discipline or laziness. But ADHD isn’t a sign of flawed character. Understanding how the ADHD brain works is the first step toward finding solutions that actually help.

Tips for Hacking Your ADHD Brain

- Shrink the task. Don’t set a goal to finish that report. Instead, open the document and write the first paragraph. Instead of telling yourself you’re going to clean the whole house, start with clearing the bathroom counter. By breaking the goal into mini bites, you make it easier to begin. Succeed at the first task, and that small win motivates you to keep moving to the next one.
- Use external reminders. Those of us with ADHD often try to rely on memory and willpower, but that’s a big mistake for the way our brains work. Instead, use a calendar, post-it-notes, and timers to keep yourself on track. It helps to keep a “brain dump” notepad nearby, and when a distracting thought shows up, write it down. You can chase that golden goose later—you don’t have to stop what you’re doing now.
- Timers are a great tool for those who struggle with time-blindness (a common ADHD trait). It can be hard to realize how much time has passed or to estimate how long something will take. Timers set a meaningful boundary and help with focus.
- Take advantage of the way your attention works. If background noise, a cluttered desk, or office chit chat make it hard to focus, change the environment. Clear your

- desk. Wear noise-cancelling headphones. Put your phone on silent, in your bag or a drawer where it won’t distract you. Let others know you need to be left alone for a while.
- Figure out when you focus best. Maybe you work better in short bursts with lots of breaks. Perhaps you think best when you’re moving, or with music in the background. Sometimes a deadline helps create enough urgency to get you going. (Again, this is where a timer is useful.) There isn’t a perfect solution for everyone with ADHD. Experiment to find what works best for you.
- Go back to the basics. Make sure you’re getting enough sleep. Exercise regularly. Eat nutritious food, and cut back on processed foods and those with unnatural ingredients. All your body’s systems work together and support each other. If one of these is off, your entire circuit can short out. For those with ADHD, the first circuit to fry is often the ability to stay focused.
- Don’t underestimate the power of a break. When you feel overwhelmed, take some deep breaths. Go for a walk. Step away from the task and reset your mind and emotions for five minutes. This short reset can help you return with a sharper mind and clearer head.
- Give yourself grace. Many adults with ADHD spend years telling themselves they’re lazy, or believing that if they just tried harder they could get more done. There’s nothing wrong with us—so there’s nothing to fix. Our brains work differently – not better or worse – than those without ADHD. We simply need to find strategies that work with our brains, not against them.

Those of us with ADHD often get a bad rap. The truth is, when something interests us, we hyper focus. We’re more creative than the av-er-age bear, and we bring a sense of fun and excitement to otherwise boring jobs. Don’t waste a second more of your time comparing yourself to others or wishing your brain worked differently. Use the tips here to help you stay focused, but don’t try to change who you are. Almighty God says you are fearfully and wonderfully made in His image.

Who knows? Maybe our Heavenly Father has a touch of ADHD, too. Why else would He have created the duck-billed platypus?

“For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” Ephesians 2:10

Lettuce Consider

Shop the Sanity • Darren Blair

Back when I was growing up, I would frequently see the local schools list their upcoming lunch menus in the local newspapers. The idea behind this was that parents would be informed of what their kids were eating. In reality, however, any parent who didn’t read between the lines was setting themselves up for disappointment.

For example, sometimes the menu would indicate that on a particular day a particular school would serve hamburgers, and that the side dishes would include a salad and cheese. If you fixated on the hamburger and dismissed the other two as being healthier options to balance it out, then you fell for the deception the schools were putting on. You see, that “salad” was simply a smattering of lettuce, tomatoes, and onion slices, while the cheese was literally just a single slice of American cheese that was still in the plastic.

That’s right, the school was *actually*

serving cheeseburgers, which were partially “deconstructed” (yes foodies, it was a thing before it was a thing) in order to satisfy then-current federal requirements regarding nutrition while also making it seem like the meals were healthier than they actually were. Most kids who took school lunches figured it out pretty quickly, and enjoyed the contraband meal. The parents? Not a clue.

I’ve reached the stage in my life to where I’m getting constant reminders about what I should or shouldn’t be eating, and my stomach is slowly starting to agree. As a result, I’ve been having to try and pay more attention to what’s out there, including the various diet options. And let’s just say, folks, that I am not impressed.

Such-and-such fad diet that’s popular among celebrities and influencers? All too often that diet is so expensive you’d *need* the bank account of a celebrity or influencer to afford it. And even then, there’s no guarantee it’s actually healthy in the long run.

Going 100% free of meat and dairy? Take a look at how heavily processed a lot of the substitute products are. Then remember how nut products and soy are among the top food allergens yet are also among the top protein sources *in* these heavily processed substitute products.

Eating a purely “local” diet? Not only is that a great way to wind up with a nutritional deficiency if done wrong, local ordinances can potentially restrict your ability to hunt for your meat protein. Plus, whatever you’re hunting – like wild boar or alligators (both invasive species in many parts of Texas) – might be trying to hunt you as well.

Et cetera.

Folks, if you’re going to start “eating healthier”, the first thing you need to do is talk with a licensed medical professional, then possibly a certified trainer as well. From there, you need to trust common sense instead of the weekly fad. Seek a variety of foods instead of limiting yourself to a few favorite items. Favor fresher foods over more processed foods whenever plausible. Consider your portion sizes. Learn how to read nutrition labels. And most importantly, recognize that different people have different dietary needs or restrictions (for example, I find dried fruit to be easier on my stomach than fresh fruit), so one-size-fits-all “solutions” may not work for you.

And of course, try to move around and generally go about if possible. Your doctor and trainer will help you determine an appropriate level of activity given your personal circumstances. Even stretching throughout the day can help.

I wonder if any schools are still putting their menus in the newspapers anymore. Somehow, I doubt it.

And of course, try to move around and generally go about if possible. Your doctor and trainer will help you determine an appropriate level of activity given your personal circumstances. Even stretching throughout the day can help.

I wonder if any schools are still putting their menus in the newspapers anymore. Somehow, I doubt it.

Lost Bits from the Past

Pleasant Ramblings • Mark Magnan

Thinking about things that have been misplaced in life, I have an entire list of things we no longer have. I don’t think I can get them into a single column, also I won’t spend the next six months on this topic either.

Drive-in movies come to mind as well. The concept is a good one, although compared to the quality of a movie theater today, the drive-ins leave a lot to be desired. Early on the speaker was a rattling old speaker that had been out in the weather for years and years. It hung in your window, and the case was made of metal. Occasionally someone would make a mad dash to the concession stand and would misjudge their pathway and run into the cable connecting your vehicle to the post outside and trip them and startle you something fierce. Later on, you could tune the movie soundtrack in on your car radio, slightly better, and you could keep the windows all the way rolled up in the winter. However, then you had the problem with the windows fogging, so either stop breathing as much, or go ahead and roll down the windows a bit. The drive-in movie was probably a better summertime activity. The ones that I remember had a good concession stand, inexpensive, but good, albeit fried. Since you brought your own car or truck, you could simply bring your own food, and no one cared but what fun is that.

Recently I was in a small town, and it had a small store that has probably not changed much in the last few years. Lining the walls and some very high shelves were examples of advertising from a few decades ago. Some of them I recognized and others I had not seen. This store had a variety of items but was mostly a clothing and work boot store. It appeared that the store was probably once strictly a clothing and shoe store, given the advertising. I do remember those stores; they were experts in fitting you in both clothes and shoes. These places were very popular right before the school year started up in the fall, but since we are in Texas that was actually just a part of summer. Normally jeans and boots were the standard fare for our “duds”. There was a chance to get some new and exciting “tennis shoes” for the physical education activities. Jeans, well just pick your favorite or best fitting brand of the two brands that were available at the time. Shirts, well you might get lucky and have a new style for the year.

The shoe brand that this store carried was Red Goose, this was a popular shoe at one time and had a marketing program aimed at kids and letting them enjoy the experience of buying shoes. When I was in elementary school we all wore something akin to dress shoes, actually my best friend wore wingtips. I had to wear a more structured shoe to help with some issues I had. However, when it came time for PE or just getting outside, it didn’t matter what I had on I was ready to have fun. Tennis shoes, as they were known then, were strictly for physical activities. The leather type shoes had the support that we needed for our young feet, however the leather soles were not

very athletic-friendly. As athletic shoes became more popular and better built, the old fashioned dress shoe was restricted to Sunday mornings.

The start of school meant other nifty items as well, a real lunch box, perhaps with a popular character on it. It had room for a sandwich, bologna and mayo, a small bag of chips, perhaps a dessert, and a thermos full of something to drink. Now we have an insulated bag to carry whatever you pack, throw that in a backpack so your laptop can smash the lunch. I wish I had a couple of my old metal lunch boxes, not so much to protect my lunch, but they are worth a lot more now than when I carried them to school.

As time passes we miss some things and realize that some progress is good. Watching a movie at home with surround sound is better than in a car hearing the soundtrack on a scratchy metal speaker. Or is it? I will agree that my newest running shoes are way better than any of my previous dress shoes, especially for running around a playground. I might look funny carrying a Batman lunch box, but at least my lunch will be intact and still edible. We still have some of those stores that carry mostly clothes and I like to shop there. Getting my jeans at the same store I buy groceries and lawn mowers is just not my style.

As time passes we miss some things and realize that some progress is good. Watching a movie at home with surround sound is better than in a car hearing the soundtrack on a scratchy metal speaker. Or is it? I will agree that my newest running shoes are way better than any of my previous dress shoes, especially for running around a playground. I might look funny carrying a Batman lunch box, but at least my lunch will be intact and still edible. We still have some of those stores that carry mostly clothes and I like to shop there. Getting my jeans at the same store I buy groceries and lawn mowers is just not my style.



Local Activities & Events

Fall Festoval Dance - Sept 19
Join us for the Fall Festival Dance at the Central Texas Sportsman Club, 685 Centex Sportsman Rd, Belton, 7:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m., featuring the Good Ol’ Boys Band. Free admission.

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 inforamtion visit beltontexas.gov

NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) will meet on TUESDAY, 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 mont at VFW 3859. Dinner is served at 6:30 p.m. and metting will begin at 7:00 p.m. 201 VFW Dr, Harker heights, Tx 76548. Email commandant@mc11249tx.comfor more inforamtion.

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

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

Bell County Historical Commission holds their meetings on the fourth Monday of every month at 6 p.m. in the historical Bell County Court House, 101 E. Central Ave in Belton. We are dedicated to initiating and conducting programs that preserve and celebrate the county’s historic cultural resources in alignment with state laws governing historical preservation in Texas. Our community resources consist of a research room, book repository, cemetery information, historical markers and monument records. Our services include information on historic preservation, educational programming, history community outreach and partnerships. We welcome you to join other history minded folks and get involved by serving on one of our committees that consist of preservation, cemetery, markers and education. To volunteer or for more information please visit historicalcommission@bellcounty.texas.gov, call 254-933-5917 or visit the office located in the historic Bell County Court-house, 101 E. Central Ave., RM 117. **The Bell County Genealogical Society** meets the fourth Saturday of each month. The group offers free Genealogy Guidance. Members of the Bell County Genealogical Society will be present to help those with questions about researching their family trees. General meetings are held in the Bell County Museum, 201 North Main St., Belton, TX. All meetings are open

to the public. You do not have to be from Bell County or have ancestors from Bell County to participate. For additional information please visit our website at <https://txbcgs.org/home/events/>

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

Bell Fine Arts Visitors welcome Wednesday’s from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 306 E 5th Ave in Belton. If you have a desire to meet, learn, and work together with those of similiar interests or just curious, come visit with us and see what we are about. Mah Jong games are available every Monday from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Come join the fun and meet new folks. For more information text Jeanne at 409-313-0611 or just come by.

Local chapter of the Crochet Guild of America meets from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Wednesdays at the Lena Armstrong Public Library, 301 E. First St., in Belton. The group is open to anyone interested in crochet. All skill levels are welcome. For information email Betty Reichert at bettyreichert@yahoo.com or Kathy Bement at 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.

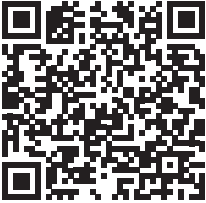
Bell County Texas Democratic Women holds their monthly meeting on the third Saturday of each month at 10 a.m. in the Belton AgriLife Center, 1605 N Main in Belton. Join us to hear from local and state candidates and about important issues and events. This is open to the public.

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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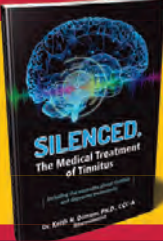
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