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A community favorite, the annual Senior Expo







BELTON JOURNAL/ Jason Bachie

Vendors showcased their creativity and Texas pride by incorporating the "Celebrating Texas" theme into their booths. **Left:** Cornerstone Gardens earned first place. **Center:** ClearSky Rehab claimed second place. **Right:** Gentiva Hospice took third place. Each received a Favorite Booth award, highlighting their placement at the 16th Annual Bell County Senior Expo.

By Michele Weisman
The Belton Journal

The 16th Annual Bell County Senior Expo, themed "Celebrating Texas," is now one of the largest events of its kind in the state, truly celebrating seniors. The free event took place at the Huntington Bank Expo on Tuesday, Sept. 22, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Quinton Locklin served as MC, ensuring the entertainment, expert speakers, door prizes, and drawings ran smoothly and on schedule.

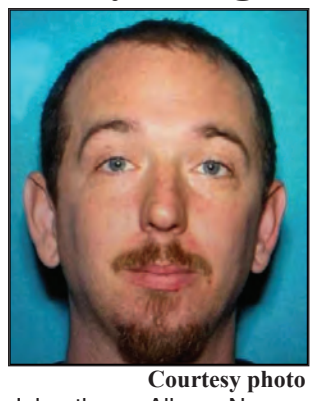
Over 3,000 attendees visited the event, walking away with brochures, questions answered, and places to call on for future services. Some booths, like Seniors Helping Seniors, had notebooks, pens, and chapstick for people to take. CarFit, Hoctil, and CenterWell with Gentiva offered simulated experiences. Attendees could find everything from legal representation to Able's Top Hot, a veteran-owned fire prevention service.

Seniorific News was there with free papers. Kelly Kilgore said, "We are a free newspaper, and you can find us at most local grocery stores, major grocery stores, CVS and Walgreens pharmacies, hospitals, doctors' offices, retailers, senior communities, and other places where seniors and boomers live, work, play, and do business."

Lena Armstrong Public Library had a booth with a display about the Talking Book Program through www.TexasTalkingBooks.org. Amanda Hairston, director of library services, said, "We have socials from time to time. We also have free Wi-Fi and free public

See **SENIOR EXPO** *Page A4*

Murder suspect faces 6 felony charges



Courtesy photo
Johnathan Allen Nance-Karl was taken to the Bell County Jail where he faced six felony counts — one for murder and five for aggravated assault on a public servant.

By David Stone
The Belton Journal

A 38-year-old murder suspect is behind bars after exchanging gunfire with Belton police and eluding authorities for about eight hours.

Johnathan Allen Nance-Karl is suspected in the shooting death of his wife, Ashley Nance-Karl, a Troy community member and former secretary at Priority

See **SUSPECT**, *Page A2*

A local who-done-it had guests teaming

By Michele Weisman
The Belton Journal

Ruby Tea Room, partnering with neighboring businesses and local professionals, served more than tea at an immersive murder mystery dining experience. Thursday, Sep. 17 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the historic Belton MK&T Depot, guests boarded the dining car, located inside Railway Express Diner. Tea and dinner awaited inside the train ride to Dallas as an interactive mystery of a murder unfolded.

The sold-out event welcomed attendees to wear clothing in the 1920s styles, and most did. The businesses that participated were Ruby Tearoom, Railway Express Diner, and Pinky's. Sly Fox offered the use of their caboose for onboarding of the guests to find clues.

A couple waiting to enter with their tickets were looking forward to the event.

Guest Erin Smith said, "We like murder mysteries, so we're kind of just excited to kind of be involved in one." Austin Kluge explained it was a chance to do something a little different.

Friends dining in coach had two reasons for attending.

Marissa Ocamp said, "I thought it'd be fun, the murder mystery, and the dressing up, and I like both places."

Maegen Cockrell said, "We are actually both school librarians, so this is our element. Plus, we can get ideas for things we can do with students."

A newsie, Davey, played by David Nevarez, beckoned guests to read all about it, handing out copies of The Belton Chronicle that introduced the main players.

Jazz music played in the dining car and Chef Sara, played by Sara Nevarez, of Ruby Tea Room, had stern words with Victor Ashcroft, who dined with unsuspecting guests. He was later found dead. Owners of Railway Express Diner, Bonnie and Clyde, played by Christi & Jay Williams, visited with guests at their tables.

The Station Master, played by Kristie Whites,

See **WHO_DONE_IT**, *Page A3*







BELTON JOURNAL/Christopher Winston

ABOVE: Guest inspect a trunk full of clues. **TOP RIGHT:**Sara Nevarez and Kristie Whites of Ruby Tea Room, enjoying a quick break before the mystery begins. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** A team of newly deputized riders read the telegram that may have clues.

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Much of the cotton crop across Bell County and Texas has been struggling under drought conditions

By David Stone
The Belton Journal

Texas farmers and ranchers continue to battle severe drought and extreme heat, and more dry weather is in the forecast. These conditions are affecting crop yields, livestock production, and preparations for the next planting season.

Farmers and rancher in and around Bell County are among those facing weather challenges. More than 90 percent of Texas is experiencing some level of drought — a third is facing severe drought or worse conditions.

Dry weather has reduced soil moisture, limited irrigation supplies, increased insect pressure, and lowered forage availability for livestock.

The ongoing summer drought has had an adverse effect on many Bell County ranches, including Baker Ranch and Screaming Goat Funny Farm, both near Belton.

"We just haven't had enough rainfall this summer," said Dr. Dudley Baker of Baker Ranch, located off FM 1123 in unincorporated Bell County. "I have 100 head of cattle, and each cow drinks about 20 gallons of water every day. That's a lot of water."

"We have enough water right now, but we may have to use county water if supplies continue to dwindle," Baker said. "The grass just isn't growing. I'm having to use my hay early because of the lack of grass, and that can affect us in winter."

"I'm hoping I have enough hay to get through winter," he said. "I grew a lot of hay thanks to the spring rains."

Renee' Tubbs of Screaming Goat Funny Farm agreed with Baker.

"Yes, the hot, dry summer has absolutely had an adverse effect on our farm," Tubbs said. "We normally have enough land to support all of our animals, but because of the drought, much of our pasture is basically dust."

"The dusty conditions have contributed to respiratory problems, and there isn't enough grass for grazing, so we're already having to purchase hay and additional feed," she added.

"Water is another major concern and expense, especially for the cows," Tubbs continued. "They need plenty of water to drink and stay cool, and they also like to stand in water during the hottest part of the day. I've been filling pools for them, which adds considerably to our water bill."

Most of Bell County is over the 700 mark on the Keetch-Byram Drought Index, a tool used to estimate how likely wildfires are in an area. It measures how much moisture is in the ground by weighing ongoing dry conditions against recent rainfall.

The index runs from 0 to 800, with lower numbers showing moist soil and little fire risk, and higher numbers showing very dry conditions and a much greater fire danger. High index numbers also provide a challenge to farmers and ranchers who need water for crops and animals.

Dr. Josh McGinty, an Texas A&M AgriLife Extension agronomist, said hot, dry weather in August is generally a good thing for farmers who are getting cotton out of the field.

"We need some good rains soon, though, to start replenishing the profile for next spring," McGinty said.

Dr. Kevin Heflin, also an AgriLife Extension agronomist, said: "For sorghum and other summer crops, this has meant sharply reduced yields on irrigated fields and outright crop failure on dryland acres, Daily water demand has been as high as half an inch per day during 100-plus degree stretches, leaving little hope that any rain can save drought-stressed summer forage crops for many producers."

Going into wheat planting season, Dr. Brandon Gerrish, AgriLife Extension small-grains specialist, said seed dealers are reporting only 60 to 70 percent of normal supplies this year.

He said the seed shortage was due to poor growing conditions in the 2026 crop. And now wheat planting conditions are still not good across the state. There have been isolated rains, but moisture dries up quickly with the high temperatures.


Courtesy photo: Laura McKenzie/Texas A&M AgriLife
Much of the cotton crop across Bell County and Texas has been struggling under drought conditions

"Growers who are wanting to graze are the most eager to get seed into the ground right now," Gerrish said. "Those planting for grain still have a few weeks before they will get going; hopefully temperatures will cool, and we'll have some more rainfall between now and then."

Floyd Ingram, Bell County's extension agent for agriculture and natural resources, said the drought primarily started after spring crops had finished growing, but ranchers are facing an up-hill battle against the hot, dry summer.

"The drought is really affecting grazing and hay crops," Ingram said. "There was a lot of green grass a month ago because of the cool spring rains, but not now. We are losing it to the drought and the mealybug."

This insect is an introduced pest and a newly recorded species in the United States. Although it is a new record for the continent, researchers suspect that the insect may have been introduced before 2022. This pest was first described in Australia in 1928, and the first detection of this species in the Western Hemisphere occurred in the Caribbean between 2019 and 2020. The pest has been found across Texas.

"Irrigated cotton is doing well, but dryland cotton likely won't yield as well," Ingram said. "We need moisture so farmers can plant oats and winter wheat in mid October. The ground is dry, and hard ground is difficult to break through."

"We sure need a quick rain," he said. "It's one thing to be dry, and another to be over 100 degrees every day. Our stock ponds are drying up. They were in good condition earlier in the summer, but drought is taking a toll."

"Rancher need to be wary of low stock tanks," he added. "When the water level drops, cows have to go down to get water and sometimes they get stuck. I've talked to a couple ranchers who have had to pull cows out of the mud."

While livestock ponds are getting low on water, Bell County lakes remain nearly full.

According to Judi Pierce of the Brazos River Authority, the full conservation level for Belton Lake is 594 feet, mean sea level, and this week's level is 592.69. Stillhouse Hollow Reservoir's full pool is 622 feet mean sea level and this week's lake elevation is 621.15.

Record diesel prices squeeze Central Texas drivers

By David Stone
The Belton Journal

The cost of diesel fuel in the Belton/Temple market hit an all-time high on Sept. 17 as prices crept close to the $6 mark.

Diesel hit $5.96 that day at fuel stations in Belton, Temple and Killeen, according to AAA. The previous record was set the day before at $5.91.

The national average for a gallon of diesel that day was $6.40.

On Monday of this week, the national average for a gallon of regular gasoline ws up 16 cents from last week at $4.43 and more than one dollar higher than it was a year ago.

Crude oil remains high, averaging $100 per barrel amid continued volatility in the Strait of Hormuz.

Gas prices are back to what they were earlier this year during the spring, and the national average is inching closer to this year's record high of $4.56 set on May 21. The all-time high for the national average is $5.01 set on June 14, 2022.

The cost of a gallon of regular grade gasoline cost an average of $4.48 on Monday.

Locally, the cost for a gallon of regular gasoline in the Belton area Monday was $3.93, up from $3.73 a month ago and $2.67 a year ago.

Mid-grade gas locally was $4.34 Monday, up from $4.07 a month ago and $3.06 a year ago. Premium-grade gas was $4.67 in Belton on Monday, up $4.38 from a month ago and $3.38 a year ago..

Monday's local diesel price was $5.94.

The highest price ever for regular gas in the Belton area was $4.65 on June 14, 2022.

Texas' 6,230 electric vehicle chargers averaged 0.428 per kilowatt hour on Monday.

Suspect - From Page A1

Charter School in Temple. She was found deceased at her home in the 700 block of Tower Street in Troy at around 1:20 a.m.

At around 10:44 a.m., Belton PD officers were dispatched to the 1600 block of East Sixth Avenue after a Flock safety camera in Belton located Nance-Karl's vehicle.

"We received a hit on a Flock camera indicating that a vehicle that was being sought in connection with a crime was in our area," said Belton Police Chief Larry Berg. "Belton PD intersected Nance-Karl at Belle Oaks Apartment, where he fled into a heavily wooded area on foot."

"He later emerged from the woods adjacent to FM 93, and he pointed his gun and fired at officers," Berg said. "They fired in response, and Nance-Karl ran back into the wooded area. No one was injured in the gunfire exchange."

That sparked a massive response involving multiple local and state law enforcement agencies, with officers searching on the ground and from the air throughout the day.

Several law enforcement agencies — including the Bell County Sheriff's Office — assisted Belton police in the manhunt for Nance-Karl after he reportedly exchanged fire with authorities shortly before 11 a.m. near the McDonald's on Interstate 35. Drones, K9 units and helicopters also were used in the search, Berg said.

Other agencies assisting in the investigation were police departments from Troy, Killeen and Temple; Texas Rangers; Game Wardens; the Texas Department of Corrections; Texas Department of Public Safety; and multiple Bell County constable offices.

"Through our partnership with all of these agencies we were able to find him. We had a lot of support," Berg said. "It was just amazing to see the sheer volume of partnerships help us with this operation. Everybody came together."

Berg said Nance-Karl was apprehended at about 7:40 p.m.

"Officers were able to capture him as he ran on foot. He was handcuffed and later evaluated by medics, then was booked into the Bell County Jail."

Troy police said officers were called to the home on Tower Street after receiving a report of a person not breathing. Officers found Ashley unresponsive, and she was pronounced dead at the scene. Troy police confirmed that the woman had been shot, and Texas Rangers were called in to lead the homicide investigation.

Johnathan Nance-Karl was identified as a person of interest in the murder, and with help from the Flock camera, authorities tracked him to the area off State Highway 93 and I-35 in Belton.

The shootout blocked off an area in Belton as of 1 p.m. Thursday and multiple schools were placed on hold.

The city of Belton put out a press release Thursday afternoon that stated Belton ISD campuses were no longer on hold as of 1:20 p.m. Schools that had been secured included the BISD Delta Program facility, Hubbard Branch Elementary School, New Tech High School, the District Alternative Education Program and Belton Early Childhood School. Belton Christian Youth Center was also on hold.

City officials asked people to avoid the area as part of East Sixth Avenue was blocked off and there was a heavy police presence in the area — FM 93 east of Interstate 35.

Jail records currently show six charges against Nance-Karl, including murder and five felony counts of aggravated assault against a public servant after authorities say he opened fire on Belton police officers and Bell County Sheriff's Office deputies.

Bail was set at $3 million on the murder charge.

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OBITUARIES

Pollom

Sharron Louise Pollom
January 22, 1956 –
September 7, 2026

Sharron Louise Pollom, 70, of Belton, passed away September 7, 2026, in Temple, Texas. She was born January 22, 1956, in Fort Knox, Kentucky. A celebration of life will be held at noon Thursday, September 17, 2026, at Crotty Funeral Home & Cremation Services in Belton.

She is survived by her husband, Anthony Pollom of Belton; son, Steven Long of Gatesville; daughter, Sarah Dube of Worcester, Massachusetts; brothers, William Robert Madison Moore Jr. of Mart, Wayne Roger Moore of Temple, and Johnny David Moore of Bruceville-Eddy; and six grandchildren.

Arrangements are under the direction of Crotty Funeral Home & Cremation Services of Belton.

Belton resident earns Paramedic certification through CTC



Courtesy Photo

Chayton Drake, a paramedic graduate from Belton and employee of Williamson County EDS #5, receives his certificate from CTC Vice Chancellor Dr. Tamara Clunis during the Paramedic Program Course Completion Ceremony on Wednesday, Sept. 17.

Special to the Journal

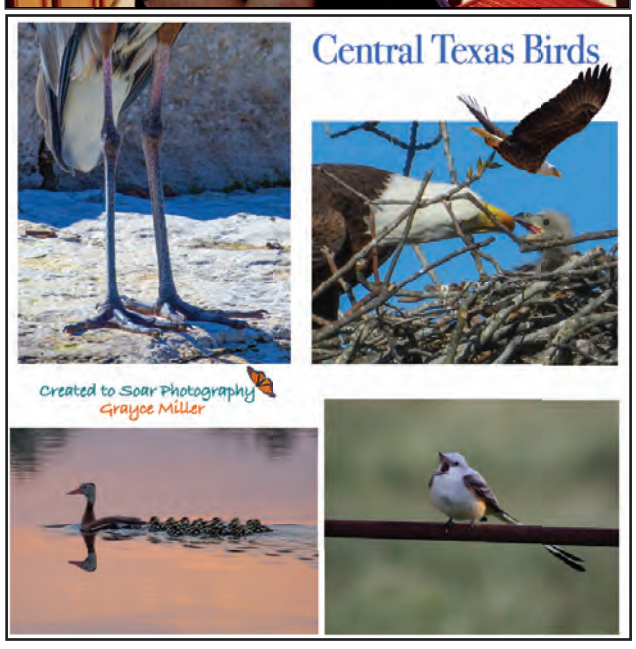
Chayton Drake of Belton is among 19 graduates who recently completed the Paramedic Program Course Completion Ceremony at Central Texas College, earning the advanced certification needed to provide critical emergency medical care throughout Central Texas.

Drake, who works with Williamson County ESD #5, said

See **CTC**, *Page A7*

Local photographer publishes first books featuring local birds





Courtesy Photo

TOP: Grayce Miller in her homemade studio at home. **ABOVE:** The cover of Grayce Miller's newly released book.

By Michele Weisman
The Belton Journal

Grayce Miller, photographer, author, and substitute teacher at North Belton Middle School, is sharing fifteen years of photos through several newly to be released books. *Central Texas Birds*, her first book, was published in July. Shortly after, *Life of a Monarch Butterfly* was released. With two more following soon.

Miller wants to share her collection of birds, butterflies, wildflowers, and dragonflies, to reveal their beauty close up in their habitats.

Miller said, "I'm trying to find a way to share my pictures that I've spent 15 years taking."

She explained the hours spent in wetlands, "getting eaten by the big old fat mosquitoes and the chiggers, just to be able to share them."

Nolan Creek is a location where she shot many of the birds in her first book.

Miller said, "The great Blue Heron, the Whistling Ducks, hang out down behind Belton Scott and White off of the Loop 121."

In *Central Texas Birds*, there are also photos of the kite crested caracara, American kestrel, red-shouldered hawk, Canada geese, and more.

Miller's capture the entire life cycle of the Texas state insect in *Life of a Monarch Butterfly*.

Her desire to show the beauty of a butterfly's transformation and process is important to her. The book explains, through photos, the monarch butterfly needs the milkweed to live on and for food.

Miller said, "How long they're in the egg, how long they're in the chrysalis, and one of my goals is to correct the error of The Hungry Caterpillar from 60 years ago."

Miller has stories about every place she took photos. Her next book to come out is Wildflowers, Dragonflies, and More.

Miller said, "The dragonflies, a lot of them, are from UMHB's (University of Mary Hardin-Baylor) pond. They have lotus flowers there, lily pads that are blooming, and a lot of dragonflies."

Created to Soar, will be the final book for now. It is a watercolor depiction of photographs she's taken over the years, of butterflies in her backyard, thriving on milkweed.

Miller said, "We are created to soar. It's going to be comparing our life to the life of a butterfly."

Grayce Miller's books are available locally at The Porch on Central Avenue in Belton, and will be available at larger retailers. Miller's photos are on display at Chicken Salad Chick and is hired for real estate rental photos and more. To find out more go to her website, createdtosoarphotography.pixieset.com.

Who-done-it - From Page A1

of Ruby Tea Room, announced the deputizing of all first-class and coach passengers. Detective packets were handed out, and groups were formed. They all left dinner behind, tasked with moving about the historic train station in search of clues and to interview the cast of characters.

An investigation brought the guests closer to who the murder was. The evening winded down with The Final Pour, including desserts, scones.

Susan Kolodziejczyk attended the event with her daughter Grace and said, "This was so well done. The details they put into this were amazing. We had an absolute blast."

Whites said, "I want to thank the cast who was made up of local business owners and leadership within the community. That was the focus, communiTEA! We included local vendors within our props and decor. The Bell County Museum gave us a great insight into the real murder and the witness accounts from that time. We made a point to integrate historical elements as much as possible."

Other cast members included Randy Pittenger, who played Randolph Chamberlain; Dawn Orange, who played Miss. Lillian Belle, Liz Vargas played Lizzy Vale, Mrs. Evelyn Hart was played by Amy Stewart, and the caboose attendant was played by Alisa Thompson. Christopher Winston took photos and Rodriquez Automotive & Custom Detailing parked period cars out front of the event.

Due to popular demand, Ruby Tea Room is scheduling additional Murder on the Railway Express events Nov. 12 and Jan., the date still to be set. Tickets are on sale now for Nov. at rubytearoom.com.

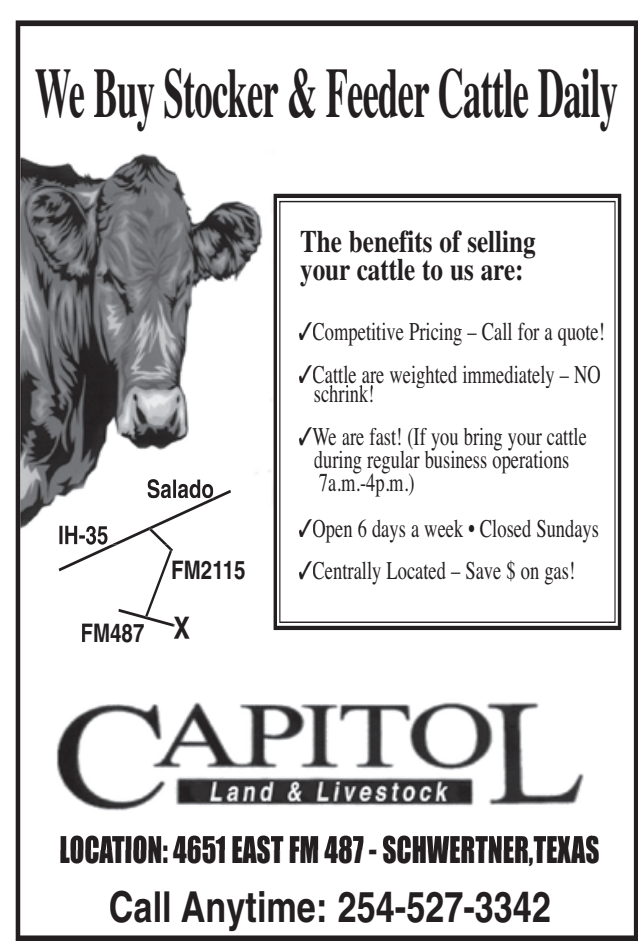






















Senior Expo - From Page A1

access computers. We offer some light assistance. We offer 20 pages of prints per week for free, as well as free scanning and faxing."

Temple Public Library was there, highlighting its programs such as a knitting group and virtual author talks.

The Dementia Enrichment Center offered information about its adult day program. Emily Gary, part owner, dementia practitioner, and music therapist, said, "We have a day program that's open from eight to five every day. We lead them through activities, give them fellowship and art experiences. We have a garden and exercise to help put off cognitive decline."

New this year was Ask the Expert, where professionals answered seniors' questions. Available were Dr. Samy Heshmat on Urology, Dr. Karen Harrison on Primary Care, Dr. Patrick Robinson on foot and ankle injuries and surgery, and Henry Ekeocha for physical therapy.

Susan Kolodziejczyk, who led the annual event's planning committee, said, "If you didn't make it out, you missed a fantastic event. Our Ask the Experts answered questions to our attendees, and they left with information and an understanding of resources available to them."

Participants were welcome to visit vendors without sales pressure.

Kolodziejczyk said about the layout of booths, entertainment, and Ask the Expert locations, "We spread the event out a little more. We centered things so people from both sides of the aisles can hear and see and peek over at what's going on. It gives them room to walk and move around easily, especially for those using wheelchairs and walkers. This room provides a safer environment for our senior community."

This year, the vendors were able to enjoy the entertainment too, which was important to the planning committee. Three grand prizes were given to vendors who decorated with the theme "Celebrating Texas." First place was Cornerstone Gardens, second place was ClearSky Rehab, and Gentiva Hospice took third. Each received an award stating Favorite Booth, their placement, and citing the 16th expo. With over 120 vendors each giving a door prize and Bell County Senior Expo holding drawings from community donors, the























grand prize being $400 in H-E-B gift cards, Kolodziejczyk said, "Thousands in prizes were given away today to our senior community."

Husband and wife, Joe and Kayle Daniel, visited the Senior Expo to find specific information.

Joe Daniel said, "I turned 65 this year, and things kind of changed. I'm a retired and disabled veteran. I wanted to see some information about the senior centers and whether I'm eligible to go there because I live in Morgan Point Resort. With healthcare going up and I wanted to get more information about supplement plans."

Kayle Daniel said, "I work in special education with Region 12 Education Service Center, Waco. I'm interested in seeing mobility options and things that could not only help us as we get older, but maybe also support our students and families."

Debbi Goolsby, visiting the event, said, "We like to get information about our time of life. So many people are here to give help. I work with a senior ministry at my church. When I go visiting a shut-in or I have a friend who just came into hospice, I can give information."

Sherry Perez, visiting The Perfect Day Getaway booth, said, "We went on a trip with them once before, and they told us they'd be here for us to come out and see them."

David Tuma, a co-founder of the event, said, "It's been fun over the years helping coordinate this event. It's a special day for the businesses, organizations, and senior citizens. Susan Kolodziejczyk and the committee did a fantastic job of organizing this event. Many of the vendors have been here for all 16 years. I just wanted to say thank you to Bell County for helping us all these years, and especially the senior citizens that attend. Without participation, the vendors would not participate."

Kolodziejczyk added, "This event doesn't happen without the huge support of our sponsors, the organizing committee, and all the vendors that showed up in a big way. So much gratitude goes to all of them for making this a grand event for our senior community."

The 17th Annual Bell County Senior Expo will be Tuesday, Sept. 28, 2027.







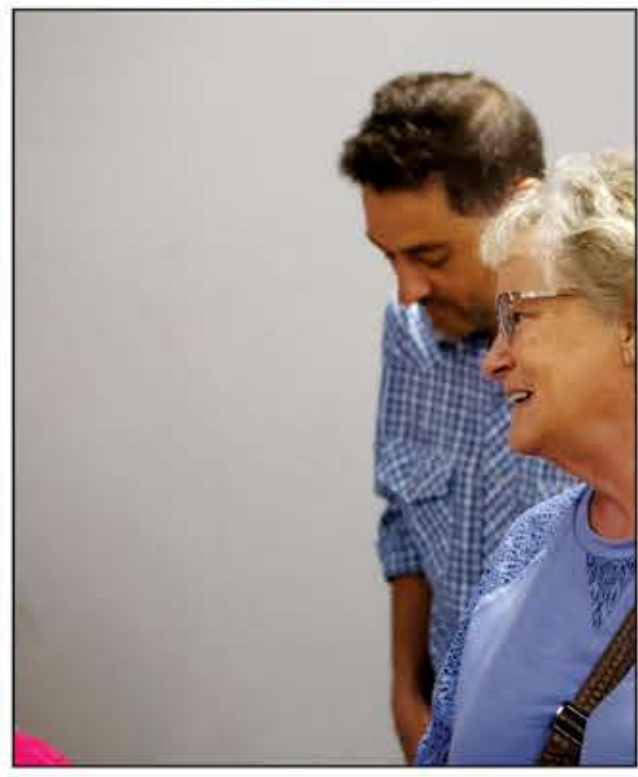




















Two Belton ISD Students Named National Math Stars Second Consecutive Year

Special to the Journal

Belton ISD is celebrating another standout year in mathematics, with two students earning recognition as 2026 National Math Stars and a strong pool of second- and third-graders demonstrating exceptional math performance across the district.

Third-graders Apollo Barth of Lakewood Elementary and Katie He of Sparta Elementary were selected for the highly competitive National Math Stars program, which identifies young students with extraordinary mathematical ability and provides long-term academic support and enrichment opportunities.





Courtesy photo

LEFT: Apollo Barth of Lakewood Elementary selected for National Math Stars program **RIGHT:** Katie He of Sparta Elementary was selected for the National Math Stars program.

They are Belton ISD's third and fourth National Math Stars in just two years, joining 2025 honorees Aayana Jain of Lakewood Elementary and Rosalynn "Rosie" Canto of Sparta Elementary.

The recognition comes from a strong pool of young mathematicians across Belton ISD. This year, 161 second- and third-grade students scored among the top 5% nationally on the Renaissance Star Assessment in math and were invited to apply for National Math Stars.

About 85 Belton ISD students applied. Applicants first completed a math assessment administered through National Math Stars, with top performers advancing to a second, proctored assessment. From there, six Belton ISD students were named finalists and participated in family interviews.

In addition to Barth and He, finalists included fourth-graders Brayden Marin and Hazel Sanderford of Lakewood Elementary, Brodie Durfee of Joe M. Pirtle Elementary and Yunjae Jeong of Sparta Elementary.

With this year's re-

See **STUDENTS**, *Page A8*

Moffat, Nolanville VFD's get Forest Service grants

By David Stone
The Belton Journal

The Texas A&M Forest Service awarded nearly $5 million to 118 rural volunteer fire departments across the state to support firefighting equipment and emergency response needs.

Two rural Bell County volunteer fire departments were included in the grant dispersal. The Moffat VFD received $25,000 to purchase personal protective equipment, and the Nolanville VFD received $10,000 for training aids.

"We have had several folks join our department recently, and we needed more gear," said Tamara Hedberg, EMS captain and public information officer for the Moffat Volunteer Fire Department. "We needed gear for our new members — the equipment is only good for 10 years so we needed to replace some."

"We bought seven sets of new bunker gear," she said. "Bunker gear protects firefighters who go inside a burning structure."

According to Hedberg, the sets include bunker pants and a bunker jacket, boots, gloves, protective hoods and helmets.

"We are up to about 24 members, and we were just running out of gear," she said.

The $4.99 million awarded last month will help departments purchase firefighting apparatus, fire and rescue equipment, protective clothing and other resources needed to safely and effectively respond to emergencies in their communities.

Rural volunteer fire departments provide essential emergency response services across Texas and often serve as the first line of response to wildfires and other emergencies. Funding through the Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Program helps departments maintain response capabilities while providing firefighters with the resources needed to safely serve their communities.

"We work diligently to utilize all available program funds to assist fire departments in acquiring the necessary equipment and training to allow them to better protect life and property across the state of Texas," said Jason Keiningham, Texas A&M Forest Service Capacity Building Department head. "We're proud to do everything in our power to help our partners in the fire service.

The assistance was awarded during the fifth and final round of fiscal year 2026. Demand for assistance through the program routinely exceeds available funding as volunteer fire departments work to maintain and replace vehicles, protective gear and other essential resources. In response to the continued need, the 89th Texas Legislature allocated an unprecedented $192 million in one-time additional funding to address outstanding funding requests.

In fiscal year 2026, Texas A&M Forest Service awarded more than $227 million through the program to support 1,229 volunteer fire departments across the state.

In addition to providing grants for firefighting apparatus and equipment, the program provides funding for training tuition, volunteer recruitment resources and the repair or replacement of equipment damaged or lost following catastrophic events or declared states of disaster.

Applications not approved during the Aug. 26 funding round will automatically move forward for consideration during future funding rounds. The next funding round is scheduled for October.

kids' corner

What's the Difference?

Find the four differences between the two pictures.

A



B



Answers: 1. Second crate of apples 2. Bunny in grass 3. Missing apple in hand 4. Woman in background

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

SEP 26

1789: George Washington appoints Thomas Jefferson the first United States Secretary of State.

1905: Albert Einstein introduces the special theory of relativity.

2024: Hurricane Helene makes landfall in Florida as a Category 4 storm.

Science FACT:

Leaves change color in the fall when shorter days and cooler temperatures signal trees to stop producing this substance.

Answer: Chlorophyll

NEW WORD

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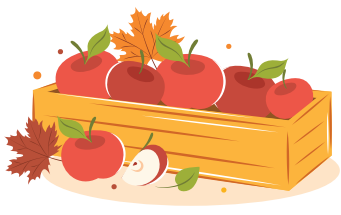
leaves of a plant or tree

How they say that in...

English: Leaf
Spanish: Hoja
Italian: Foglia
French: Feuille
German: Blatt

Did You KNOW?

Many varieties of apples ripen and are ready to pick come the fall.



Get the PICTURE?



Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

Answer: Fall hiking path



SNHU announces President's and Dean's Lists

Special to the Journal

It is with great pleasure that Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) congratulates the following students on being named to the Summer 2026 President's List. The summer terms run from May to August.

Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.700 and above for the reporting term are named to the President's List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired 8-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring, and summer.

Elizabeth Nollet of Salado, Christian Ellis of Belton, Jenny Mansell of Belton, Vivienne Dodson of Belton, Dawin Vasquez of Belton, Ethan Razor of Little River Academy, Stanley Abrahams of Belton, Monica Martinez of Belton and James Davis of Salado.

Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) congratulates the following students on being named to the Summer 2026 Dean's List. The summer terms run from May to August.

Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.500 to 3.699 for the reporting term are named to the Dean's List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired 8-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring, and summer.

Alysson Dixon of Belton and Amanda Brooks of Belton.

Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) is a private, nonprofit, accredited institution with a 94-year history of educating traditional-aged students and working adults. Now serving more than 200,000 learners worldwide, SNHU offers approximately 200 undergraduate, graduate, and certificate programs, available online and on its 300-acre campus in Manchester, NH. Recognized as one of the "Most Innovative" regional universities by U.S. News & World Report and one of the fastest-growing universities in the country, SNHU is committed to expanding access to high quality, affordable pathways that meet the needs of each learner.

CTC - From Page A3

his decision to pursue a career in emergency medicine was inspired by his father.

"My dad is a paramedic, seeing and hearing about the things he has done for people really inspired me," Drake said. "I heard the CTC instructors were the best at what they do and that is why I chose Central Texas College."

According to Julie Jordan, lead instructor in the program, many students enter paramedic training with experience as EMTs and firefighters and pursue certification to expand their knowledge and career opportunities.

"Most of our students are employees of local fire departments, so they are current EMTs and some are firefighters as well, and now they'll be eligible to be basic paramedics or firefighter paramedics within the community," Jordan said.

The CTC paramedic program combines classroom instruction, laboratory exercises, clinical experiences and field internships to prepare students for emergency situations ranging from traumatic injuries to life-threatening medical conditions. Throughout the program, students gain hands-on experience working alongside healthcare professionals in hospitals, ambulance services and emergency response agencies.

Drake credited the program's faculty for helping students succeed in a challenging curriculum.

"The instructors were very intentional in lecture and in lab ensuring we have every tool needed to be successful," Drake said. "Instructors would go above and beyond to ensure providing tutoring where it was needed."

One of the most rewarding aspects of the training, he said, was seeing the direct impact of the knowledge and skills gained in the classroom.

"During clinicals, getting the chance to see improvements in my patients from the knowledge I gained in class was extremely rewarding," Drake said.

He also pointed to field experiences as a highlight of the program.

"I most enjoyed doing ride outs with Harker Heights Fire Department," Drake said. "My preceptors would ask with every call what I wanted to do. Those paramedics empowered me to be the decision maker and after the calls we would review any questions I had. It was beneficial to see how different services operate from county to city."

Drake encourages others considering a career in emergency medicine to explore the program.

"If you want to learn good medicine CTC is the school for you," he said.

To learn more about Central Texas College's Emergency Medical Services programs, visit www.ctcd.edu and search "Paramedic."

Written by Wendy Sledd, CTC Chief of Marketing and Communications

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Native Plant Expert Shares Design Tips at Grizzly's Hidden Falls Nursery

By Jack Freedman
The Belton Journal

On Thursday, Sept. 18 from 6 to 8 p.m., Grizzly's Hidden Falls Nursery and Landscaping hosted the Region 8 Texas Native Landscape Association (TNLA) meeting. The meeting was hosted by Microlife saleswoman and conservationist Nessa Spence and organized by nursery owner Ben Gillilan. Throughout the meeting, Spence talked about her experience gardening in the past year and gave suggestions to the guests.

"I serve as the Region 8 chair for the [TNLA]," Spence said.

Spence works heavily into plant design work and gives lectures at a variety of settings, including college campuses. She has been interested in plants and gardening since a young age.

"My father made us do manual labor, which I loved, and my mother was an organic gardener, which she learned from my great grandpa," Spence said. "He was a botanist who worked for the CIA."

Gillilan purchased Grizzly Nursery back in 2003. At the time it was a failing business, but he managed to turn it around and keep it going during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"When I retired from the army, I started a small landscape company and eventually came here," Gillilan said.

Guests first started arriving at the nursery around 5:30 p.m.. Free food and drink was provided by Chick-fil-A. As the guests took their seats, they were given several magazines from Microlife and the TNLA as well as raffle tickets.

Throughout Spence's presentation, she touched up on multiple points. These included cohesive design, vertical interest, plant palettes, and designing around use. She also made sure to emphasize investing in resilient plants.

"It's important to have good design, and to make sure that you have plants that can survive in a harsh environment like Texas," Spence said.


BELTON JOURNAL/ Jack Freedman
Nursery owner Ben Gillilan closes the meeting.

Once Spence finished her presentation, Gillilan returned to host the raffle drawing. Attendees won books, seeds, and hats. Spence hopes to come back yearly.

"My biggest advice is to connect with nature," Spence said. "Always keep learning and surrounding yourself with people smarter than yourself."

Quilts of Valor Foundation honors veterans


BELTON JOURNAL/Michele Weisman
Veteran admiring the quilt made for her.

By Michele Weisman
The Belton Journal

Quilters with a Heart, held a formal Quilts of Valor® (QOV) presentation ceremony upstairs at the Bell County Museum on Saturday, Sep. 19, at 1:00 p.m. Local veterans and active-duty service members who have been involved in a war, who were nominated, received this symbol of gratitude for their "service, sacrifice, and valor."

The public was invited, and the room was filled with family and devoted friends of the recipients. Prior to the ceremony, the quilts had been on exhibit at the Bell County Museum. The quilts are presented with a certificate and on the quilts, there is a special patch noting the presentation on America's 250th birthday.

Bobby Holcomb, a veteran and former QOV recipient, nominated Eddie Beard, a veteran who served in Panama, Germany, and Fort Hood. Holcomb. Working with Beard for 26 years, they are not related but refer to each other as pop and son.

James Rosenberry was also in attendance to receive a QOV. He was nominated by Melissa Harris, a longtime neighbor and friend. Rosenberry served in Germany, Korea, and at Fort Polk in Louisiana.

Barbara Maufas, retired major, was a nurse during Desert Storm and was with the 15th Evac.

Maufas, not sure who nominated her, said, "I was contacted by the guild to let me know that I had been selected to receive a Quilt of Valor. I had never heard of it, so I wasn't even sure it was. I've been in the military. It's not something that I go around talking about."

Michael Hankins attended with his wife, Andrea Hankins, who nominated him for the QOV.

Hankins said, "I have 22 years in the army. Went to school in Massachusetts as military intelligence. During Vietnam, they sent me to Germany on the East German border. Then they closed the intelligence chain and sent me to El Paso to air defense radar repair school. Then sent back to Germany. I was on the NATO team."

Camern Brown, who attended with his young family, said, "I think it's a great opportunity to get recognized for your service and for the amazing volunteers of donate their time to recognizing us." Brown's served at Tyndall Airforce Base, and Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, ending his service in 2001 after 10 years. He is now a drug and substance abuse counselor.

The ceremony began with thanking the Bell County Museum for displaying the quilts and hosting the official presentation ceremony.

Prior to presenting a QOV to the veterans, a statement is read, in part: "Today we pause to honor the men and women who have worn the uniform of the United States Armed Forces. Each veteran has a story-a story of courage, sacrifice, and unwavering devotion to freedom. They are the guardians of our liberty, the defenders of our nation, the embodiment of selfless service. Whether they served in times of conflict or peace, at home or for all, their dedication was shaped, has shaped the very fabric of our country. They left behind families, homes, and familiar comforts to protect ideals greater than themselves. Their bravery ensures that the flag of freedom continues to wave proudly over our land. For every battle fought, fought, every hardship endured, and every life forever changed. We owe them a debt that cannot be repaid, but will never be forgotten. Let us always remember that freedom isn't free; it has been earned and safeguarded by our veterans, our heroes. We thank you. We honor you. We salute you. We have a very special request."

Each recipient is wrapped in their quilt and embraced, being told, welcome home.

Quilters with a Heart, part of the Quilts of Valor Foundation, are looking for help with pressing, measuring, and monetary donations. Contact Laura Winckel at 254-681-8239 or quilterswithaheart@gmail.com to help. For more information about the nationwide foundation or to nominate a veteran, visit www.QOVF.org.

Students - From Page A6

sults, Belton ISD has now had nine students reach the National Math Stars finalist stage and four students named National Math Stars since the district began participating in the program in 2025.

"I couldn't be more excited to have National Math Stars," said Dr. Deanna Lovesmith, Belton ISD Director of GT Services. "I truly believe it speaks to our commitment to each and every student and to following their dreams and their pathways. We have a lot of kids who are going to be good at math, but we also have kids where math is everything for them."

For Lovesmith, who has a background in math, seeing so many Belton ISD students demonstrate exceptional ability at such a young age is also about what those students could accomplish in the years ahead.

"I geek out when I think about what these kids are going to do when they're 25 or 30 and we have given them this pathway and an opportunity to really pursue their math," Lovesmith said. "We have to keep advancing them as fast as they can go and put no barriers there."

Math Stars works with schools and districts to identify mathematically exceptional second- and third-grade students through a rigorous application and assessment process. Students ultimately selected as National Math Stars demonstrate what the organization describes as one-in-1,000 mathematical talent.

Selected students receive 10 years of individualized support designed to help them continue developing their mathematical abilities through advanced learning opportunities, guidance, mentorship and a community of similarly talented students.

With students performing among the top 5% nationally, six finalists and two new National Math Stars, Belton ISD's results tell a much bigger story—one of exceptional young mathematicians being identified early, challenged to grow and given opportunities to see just how far their talents can take them.

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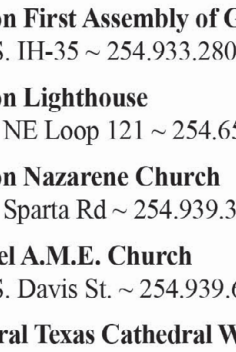
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The Porch, the Spring, and the Circle



John C. Perry

Yesterday morning my wife and I ventured north into the Florida Panhandle from our condo in Destin. We thought we were simply taking a short drive to see a couple of natural springs. Ponce de Leon State Park was peaceful and clear as glass; Morrison Springs shimmered like a hidden jewel under the pines. But the real surprise came on our way back, when we stopped in a charming Southern town I had never heard of, DeFuniak Springs.

We had lunch at the Sweet Southern Comfort Restaurant, the kind of place where the tea is sweet, the portions generous, and the cooking tastes like someone's grandmother is still in charge.

From there we walked to the town's centerpiece: Lake DeFuniak, one of the world's rare, naturally spring fed, almost perfectly circular lakes, one of only two in the world, according to local tradition. A quiet loop encircles the lake, lined with Victorian homes that look like they were lifted straight out of a Hallmark movie - wraparound porches, gingerbread trim, and tall windows facing the water.

It feels like stepping back in time. And while visiting with the local Chamber president, we discovered why.

The entire town exists in its current form because of a Christian revival and education movement: the Florida Chautauqua Assembly. Beginning in 1885, DeFuniak Springs became the winter home of the New York Chautauqua movement, founded by a Methodist minister, John Heyl Vincent, and an inventor, Lewis Miller. Their mission was simple and bold: to educate Sunday school teachers, train disciples, and strengthen Christian families.

Those Victorian homes weren't built as vacation cottages. They were boarding houses for thousands of seekers, teachers, and families arriving by train to study Scripture, philosophy, and practical ministry on the banks of that spring-fed lake. And here's what struck me: the founders didn't build the community on a grid. They oriented every home, porch, and church to face inward, toward the spring.

The architecture itself preached a message. The verandas faced the public street, not fenced-in backyards. Homes were designed for calling out to neighbors, welcoming passersby, and fostering fellowship. In a world that now builds outward in chaotic sprawl, DeFuniak Springs was designed to face inward toward a clean, renewing source.

Standing there, hearing how thousands once gathered around that spring for learning and renewal, I felt a quiet conviction. Jeremiah 2:13 warns that God's people had traded the fountain of living water for broken cisterns. DeFuniak Springs reminded me that orientation is a choice. You face the spring, or you face the world.

Today we build gated communities. We close garage doors behind us. Many people don't even know their next door neighbors. Our lives often circle around noise, busyness, and self interest.

So, here's the question that stayed with me as we drove back to Destin: What sits at the center of your daily circle? Is your life oriented around the loud, demanding world, or the quiet, living spring of Christ?

One small Southern town in the Florida Panhandle still remembers how to face inward toward the source. Maybe the rest of us need to relearn that God-inspired design.

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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Business Showcase

Scotti's Brings a Taste of the Jersey Shore to Belton



Scotti's Italian Ice now serves customers out of its brick-and-mortar location and its well-known trailer. Located at 7546 Prairie View Road suit 130, they celebrated with a grand opening in June of this year.

Ann Scotti and her daughters decided to introduce gourmet Italian ice to the Belton area, a little over a year ago, using a trailer. Earning a place in customers' heart with their service and care for the community, a permanent physical location was the next step.

Here they were able to expand their menu, offering SoftServe.

Still serving Italian ice out of their trailer, they now serve soft serve in their shop. Owner It's open Sundays, 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. and Monday through Saturday from 1 p.m. to 10 p.m. The Scotti's Italian Ice trailer is still in operation.

Proud of their flavor selection, including U.S.A. Rainbow, Cotton Candy, and Pina Colada, they also sell Italian soda, iced espresso, and, in multiple flavors, and fresh squeed lemonade.

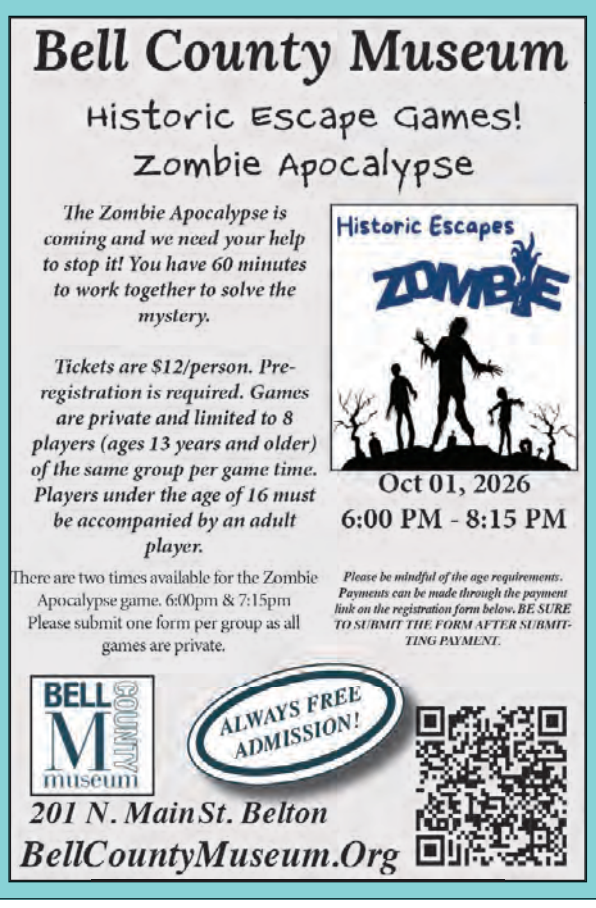
People who don't know about Jersey Shore Italian ice come expecting an icy treat and leave with a creamy ice with multiple flavor options ready for enjoying. Scotti and her daughters, Mikayla Devins and Danielle Devins, enjoy the customer new-found dessert becoming a local treasure.

Scotti's Italian Ice ships gourmet New York-style Italian ice for local residents to enjoy. Scotti is a retired veteran and was inspired by her daughters' fond memories of Italian ice when visiting family in Jersey.

On their website, customers can place orders, book catering, email, and see their merch.

Find out more at scottisitalianice.com.









SPORTS



Broncos face Midway to start District 12-6A play



Photo Credit/ Tony Adams

By Tony Adams
The Belton Journal

Texas High School Football. Old rivalries and new matchups always keep the game lively.

On Friday night, the Lake Belton Broncos will play their first 6A district game at Tiger Field, as the Midway Panthers come calling after taking on the Belton Tigers in a non-district game last week.

The District 12-6A opener kicks off at 7 pm. The game can be seen on the NFHS Network/Dave Campbell's Sports (subscription required).

Lake Belton is coming off a 54-52 win over Ellison at Searles Field in Killeen.

The Broncos survived a pair of deficits, which included a 34-24 halftime score. Lake outscored the Eagles 30-18 in the second half, stopped a two-point conversion and a Hail Mary attempt to clinch the win.

Lake had 752 all-purpose yards, which included 565 offensive yards

Jessiah "Tank" James had a massive performance, having gone 14-of-24 for 357 yards passing, tossed two touchdowns and an interception.

The Broncos had three 100-yard receivers on the night in Brock Von Racjs (4-128, TD, also 108 kick return yards), Zion Harness (4-102, TD), and Luke Phillips (4-100).

Adrian Pippins was the workhorse out of the backfield, toting the rock 32 times for 199 yards and four touchdowns.

Gavin Carpenter and Carter Mach each had 11 tackles for the Broncos' defense.

Jiyson Sherman also came up huge for Lake on defense and special teams, with an interception, fumble recovery, and two blocked field goals.

The Eagles put together 455 yards on offense, with dual-threat quarterback Marlyn Smith throwing for 208 yards and rushing for 194 yards on 20 carries. Tyler Reed caught eight of Smith's 13 passes for 120 yards and a touchdown.

The Panthers had their own battle against Belton on Friday night, as the two teams faced off for the first time in nearly seven years in the conclusion of 2019 District 12-6A season after being district foes for many years prior.

Midway bounced back from a heartbreaking 39-34 loss to Cedar Park with a hard-fought 21-10 win over the Tigers.

Notre Dame commit Lathan Whisenton was the talk around the stadium on both sides, and did not disappoint. He carried the ball 15 times for 140 yards and three touchdowns, including a back-breaking 34-yard score to give the Panthers an 11-point lead in the third quarter.

The Tigers kept Cort Stricklin to 97 yards passing on 11 completions. In return, Stricklin contributed 38 rushing yards to the Panthers' 212 rushing yards collectively.

Belton drove in the latter stages in the game, but an end zone interception by Carl Simmons ended the Tigers' scoring threat.

Forward to Friday's district opener. The Broncos average 243.8 rushing yards and 237.8 passing yards per contest through four games.

James (38-of-72, 920 passing yards, 8 TD, INT, 98 rushing yards) will get the start for the Broncos at quarterback. Pippins (77-455, 9 TDs) and James Maiwo (28-362, 4 TDs) will handle the workload in the backfield. Harness (12-428, 5 receiving TDs) and Von Racjs (6-179, 2 TDs) will be the Broncos primary targets in the passing lanes.

Carpenter (33 tackles, 22 solo, 6 tackles for loss), Carter Mach (25 tackles), and Jamari Haye (21 tackles) are the leading stoppers for the Broncos.

Although the Tigers held the Panthers to 97 yards passing, Midway still averages 189.3 yards passing and 177 yards rushing per contest.

"It's another test for us, this time in district," Lake Belton head coach Kirk Rogers said.

Strickland (63-of-93, 693 passing yards, 6 TD, 3 INT) will be behind center, with Whisenton (59-502, 8 TD) as the featured back. Marcus Cain (22-270, TD), Jacoby Hamilton (19-238, 3 TD), and Hayden Brock (14-147, TD) will be the targets for Strickland in the passing lanes.

Simmons (39 total tackles), Gavyn Reeves (38 tackles), and Ronin Aranda (34 tackles) are Midway's top tacklers.

Belton seeks road rebound against Bobcats

By Aries Ramos
The Belton Journal

The Belton Tigers hit the road this week for a Class 5A/6A crossover test against San Angelo Central, a Bobcats squad that's building real momentum under third year head coach Mark Smith.

Belton enters at 3-1 but comes in off a 21-10 setback against Midway that snapped their early season momentum. The Tigers will be looking to answer that loss with a bounce back performance on the road, a tall order against a Bobcats team playing with confidence after a lopsided 42-7 win over MontWood pushed San Angelo Central to 2-2 on the year.

San Angelo Central is in the midst of a program turnaround. Last season, Smith's second full year at the helm, the Bobcats went 8-4 and made the playoffs for the first time in three seasons, then won a playoff game for the first time since 2020, before falling to Southlake Carroll in the area round. That success wasn't a one year blip, San Angelo returns 35 lettermen and 11 starters, giving them one of the more experienced rosters in the region.

At the center of it all is quarterback Micah Smith, the coach's son, who put up big numbers a season ago over 2,200 passing yards and 27 touchdowns. He'll be working with a mostly new group of receivers after last year's top four pass catchers graduated, but he won't have to do it alone. Junior running back Zeyvion Johnson, who topped 1,000 yards on the ground last season, gives San Angelo a proven workhorse to lean on as the passing game retools. Protecting that backfield up front is 6 foot 4, 302 pound guard Ethan Boyd, a UTSA commit anchoring the offensive line.

Defensively, the Bobcats bring back a unit that held opponents close all season, their two district losses a year ago came by a combined 24 points. Defensive back Troy Ceballos earned second team all district recognition after racking up 55 tackles and two interceptions, and he'll patrol the back end again this fall. Up front, linebacker Tucker Beatty and defensive lineman Riley Oines give San Angelo disruption at the point of attack, with Beatty racking up nearly four dozen tackles and Oines turning in a strong sack total a season ago.

For Belton, this game is as much about response as it is about the scoreboard. After putting up just 10 points against a stout Midway defense, the Tigers will need their offense to find rhythm early against a Bobcats defense that's shown it can bend without breaking. San Angelo's home crowd and a defense that limits big plays will test Belton's ability to sustain drives and finish in the red zone.

Kickoff is set for San Angelo, where the Bobcats will look to keep their momentum rolling after last week's blowout win, while Belton looks to get back on track against one of the district's most improved programs.

Lake Belton runners excel at Hoka Invitational, host home meet

By Clay Whittington
The Belton Journal

The Broncos and Lady Broncos took their talents to the ultra elite Hoka Round Rock McNeil Invitational last weekend, and delivered some of the top times.

In an event featuring thousands of runners in multiple divisions across two days, there was plenty of competition, and Lake Belton provided some of it.

Racing along a five-kilometer course at Round Rock's Old Settlers Park, Lake Belton seniors Madelyn Rivas and Wyatt Potts each landed among the top 50 in the Class 6A races.

Rivas completed the route in 22 minutes, 8.6 seconds to place 41st, grinding the Lady Broncos to ninth in the Class 6A team standings with 367 points.

The Broncos were 22nd (630) thanks in part to Potts' 48th-place time of 17:49.5.

Completing the scoring for Lake Belton was sophomore Drew Houston (147th, 18:45.0), senior Josiah Briggs (148th, 18:45.0), senior Austin Adams (153rd, 18:46.3) and junior Cooper Schels (194th, 19:09.1).

Additionally, senior Adrian Rentas-Quiles (221st, 19:28.6) and juniors Kyan Whitmire (235th, 19:37.8), Anthony Garza (316th, 20:37.5) and Tyler Adkins-Beltran (390th, 25:39.5) represented the Broncos, but their times did not count toward the team total.

Round Rock Cedar Ridge (1st, 70), Progreso (2nd, 205) and Weatherford (3rd, 206) occupied the top of the leaderboard, and Progreso junior Nathan Villarreal (1st, 16:30.0) was the individual winner.

Paced by junior Madison Sheppard (1st, 19:39.6), Tomball Memorial easily emerged with the team title, scoring a mere 36 points to eclipse Weatherford (2nd, 70) and Flower Mound (3rd, 147) in the standings.

The remainder of the Lady Broncos' total was produced by junior Lucy Loa (79th, 22:49.6), junior Elizabeth Sandlin (87th, 22:55.9), senior Sarah Gray (106th, 23:13.7) and sophomore Keira Dzenowski (115th, 23:22.6).

Also racing for Lake Belton were freshman Amara Bodeman (148th, 23:45.3), junior Alayna Fulton (159th, 23:54.4) and sophomore Sophia Garza (189th, 24:29.1).

Belton ISD's remaining runners remained close to home, taking part in the annual Lake Belton Invitational at Temple's Crossroads Park.

The Lady Tigers had the programs' best outing, placing fifth (139) in the Class 5A-6A division as junior Isabella Warner was fifth (20:16.3) individually.

Placing 20th, Ayla Wakershauser, a sophomore, led Belton's other scorers with a time of 21:29.19, while senior Nataly Valdez (30th, 22:10.90), sophomore Natalie Mott (52nd, 23:09.73) and freshman Markayla Allen (53rd, 23:09.74) followed.

Round Rock Westwood (1st, 74), Temple (2nd, 103), Pflugerville Hendrickson (3rd, 104) and Jarrell (4th, 119) were ahead of the Lady Tigers.

Lake Belton was seventh (183).

Lady Broncos senior Shreya Muni (19th, 21:25.48), senior Abigail Glasser (43rd, 22:46.93), freshman Kimberly Solis-Colon (44th, 22:48.15), freshman Sage Anderson (47th, 22:54.98) and junior Catalina Esquivel (54th, 23:14.56) combined for the total.

New Tech sophomore Ellie Megoulloa also competed in the division, placing 88th (24:06.04).

In the Class 1A-4A division, Lady Dragons junior Daniella Idumebor (51st, 17:09.21) and freshman (61st, 18:51.28) raced the 2-mile course as individuals just like their counterparts in the five-kilometer race.

Dragons freshman Daniel Zubaty was 34th (20:44.40), sophomore David Martinez was 69th 923:53.99), sophomore Abel Carey was 76th (25:41.20) and senior Desmond Long was 77th (25:49.26).

The Tigers were ninth (233) in the Class 5A-6A race as senior Jose Perez-Diaz (31st, 18:03.04) and sophomore Ethan Trevino (38th, 18:10.87) cracked the top 40. The remaining points came from senior Hayden Brown (68th, 19:07.50), junior Nelson Funez (70th, 19:10.60) and junior Marcus Hernandez (71st, 19:10.61).



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Sports Briefs

By Clay Whittington
The Belton Journal

The Lady Tigers suffered a District 16-5A defeat Tuesday evening, falling in three sets at state-ranked Liberty Hill.

Kierra Ellis and Emma Harvey finished with six kills apiece, while teammate Mali Pula followed with five.

Amiyah Cruz, Rexlynn Drake, Ella Tucek and Harvey each had a serve.

Defensively, Drake had 14 digs.

The loss drops the Lady Tigers' league record to 3-2 with two matches remaining in the opening round.

Belton will attempt to bounce back Friday, when it hosts Waco at 6 p.m.

TENNIS

The Broncos and Lady Broncos hosted Liberty Hill last week and suffered a 15-4 defeat despite six matches ending with 10-point tiebreakers.

In doubles, the tandem of Quint Mackenzie-Eli Stewart fell just shy of victory, while teammates Ethan Muehlstein and Reid Ramirez also experienced three-set defeats in singles.

On the winning side, however, for Lake Belton was the girls doubles team of Sara Stephens and Alyssa Naumann, and Addie Kruppa, Stewart and Stephens in singles.

In extra matches, James Robinson and Micah Briggs won.

Also last week, Belton delivered a dominant 18-1 victory against Waco.

The Tigers and Lady Tigers won six of seven doubles contests and never eased up en route to improving their overall record to 11-2 with a 4-1 showing in District 16-5A.

BASKETBALL

The Broncos began hosting a weekly fall league on Wednesday, playing two games each week for four weeks.

Lake Belton played Temple and Salado to begin.

Next week, the Broncos face Gatesville (6:15 p.m.) and Killeen (8:15 p.m.). Then, they will play Killeen and Salado on Oct. 7 and Little River-Academy and Gatesville on Oct. 14.

The University Interscholastic League permits teams to begin practicing for the upcoming season Oct. 28. The first day for scrimmages is Nov. 7, and games are allowed starting Nov. 13.

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 Pavilion.

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

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

Broncos seek rebound against unbeaten Midway

By Aries Ramos
The Belton Journal

The Lake Belton Broncos volleyball team came up short in district play Tuesday night, falling to Temple in straight sets, 3-0. The loss drops Lake Belton to 11-20 overall and 1-3 in district competition, as the Broncos continue searching for consistency during a tough stretch of their season.

Temple controlled the match from the opening whistle, taking Game 1 comfortably, 25-12. The Broncos showed more fight as the match progressed, pushing Temple to the brink in both of the next two sets. Game 2 was a back and forth battle that Temple ultimately closed out 25-21, and Game 3 followed a similar script, with Lake Belton battling to the wire before dropping a 25-23 decision to complete the sweep.

While the final result wasn't what the Broncos were hoping for, the tightening scores from set to set suggest a team that's finding its footing against quality district competition, even if the results haven't yet followed. Closing out sets down the stretch will be the next step for a Lake Belton squad looking to string together wins in the second half of district play.

There's little time to dwell on the loss, though. The Broncos turn their attention quickly to Friday, when they'll face a stiff test against Midway High School in another key district matchup. Midway enters the contest as one of the top teams in the area, sporting a 21-6 overall record and a perfect 3-0 mark in district play, good enough for sole possession of first place.



The contrast in records paints a clear picture of the challenge ahead for Lake Belton. Midway has been nearly unbeatable within district play so far this season, and a win over the Broncos would only tighten their grip on the top spot in the standings. For Lake Belton, Friday's match represents an opportunity to prove they can hang with the district's best, and to notch a signature win that could jumpstart a turnaround in the second half of the season.

At 1-3 in district, the margin for error is shrinking for the Broncos as they look to climb back into playoff contention. A strong showing against Midway won't just be about salvaging pride, it could be a springboard heading into the rest of the district slate. Whether Lake Belton can carry over the competitiveness they showed in sets two and three against Temple will go a long way in determining how Friday's match against the district leaders unfolds.

Lake Belton will look to regroup at practice this week as they prepare for what promises to be one of their toughest tests of the season.

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High school students to get a look at items made locally

By David Stone
The Belton Journal

The Belton Economic Development Corporation has joined forces with the National Manufacturing Institute to highlight local manufacturing and innovative technologies for the younger generation during National Manufacturing Day. Local

"National Manufacturing Day was officially launched in 2012, and this is the seventh year Belton ISD high school students will tour local companies to learn about modern manufacturing practices, required skills and career pathways," said Warren Ketteman, Belton Economic Development Corporation's director of industry development.

"Economic development organizations have always supported local manufacturers," he said.

Belton City Council proclaimed Oct. 15 as Belton Manufacturing Day during it's Sept. 22 meeting.

Mayor David Leigh presented the proclamation and said National Manufacturing is an initiative to celebrate modern manufacturing and to inspire the next generation of manufacturers.

According to the proclamation, "manufacturing fuels innovation, generates employment and strengthens the US economy and communities such as Belton."

"It is essential to showcase advanced manufacturing processes, automation, skilled careers and STEM education to students, educators, parents and civic leaders in Belton," Leigh said while reading the proclamation.

"The Council is always very receptive of our events," Ketteman said. "It's a known fact that Mayor Leigh was a manufacturer as well."

Ketteman said the purpose of Belton Manufacturing Day is two-fold.

"First, it's to recognize and support local manufacturers and what they mean to our community, their employees and the local tax base," he said. "We have companies in Belton doing business all over the world. The day also exposes high school students to manufacturing. They get a behind-the-scenes look at local manufacturing, and maybe they see a role for themselves. The students get a look at whatever kinds of products are being made here in Belton."

In the past, Career & Technical Education students from Belton High and Lake Belton High have participated in a tour of local manufacturers, and this year they will be joined by students from New Tech.

"We were contacted by New Tech and they wanted their students to participate as well," Ketteman said. "The students will visit TRU Homes, the city of Belton Public Works Department, Beltec, CGI, and Stratasys. We have great partners lined up."

"The New Tech students work with robotics and drones, and they will get a look at how drones are being used in local business and city government," he said.

After the tour, the students will head to the Harris Community Center for a luncheon and visits by Temple College, Workforce Central Texas, Texas A&M Central Texas Engineering Department and Fort Hood.

"Fort Hood is embarking on a 3D printing program to produce parts on a speedy basis," Ketteman said. "Stratasys does 3D printing, and they are working with Fort Hood to get that going. Fort Hood will be bringing some military equipment, and they will put the students through an obstacle course."

In addition to the student tour, Belton Economic Development Corporation is hosting snow cone days for employees of local manufacturers.

"October 1 and 2, and 8 and 9, are snow cone days," Ketteman said. "We rent a snow cone business, and it goes to the plants. Belton EDC takes orders and delivers the free snow cones to the employees. It's our way of treating the employees."

TC presents ceramic artist David Hill

By David Stone
The Belton Journal

Temple College will welcome ceramic artist and University of Mary Hardin-Baylor educator David Hill for *Vessels and Vestments*, a compelling exhibition of his contemporary ceramic work.

The event opened Saturday at the Michael Donahue Gallery inside Temple College's Workforce & Visual Arts Building. The exhibition will remain on view through Oct. 22.

By combining two recent series of Hill's work, *Vessels and Vestments*, visitors can explore a broader collection of his ceramics. Hill's work extends beyond the traditional boundaries of pottery and sculpture, exploring faith, the search for meaning, and the sacred value of beautiful objects in everyday life.

Through form, material, and process, his work invites viewers to consider how ordinary objects can become vessels of memory, contemplation, and spiritual significance.

"*Vessels and Vestments* presents two recent series of my artwork in conversation with each other," Hill said. "Though they differ in approach and outcome, both are integral parts of my practice as an artist."

Hill is a professor of art at UMHB, where he has taught ceramics and sculpture since 2012. He earned a Master of Fine Arts in Visual Arts from Clemson University in 2010 and a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Studio Art from Shorter College in 2005.

His artwork has been featured in solo and group exhibitions throughout North America.

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PUBLISH DATE: October 29

13,500 STUDENTS KICK OFF A NEW YEAR IN BELTON ISD

And we're off! Approximately 13,500 students returned to Belton ISD campuses, kicking off a new school year alongside 2,100 employees ready to welcome them. With a shared purpose and new horizons ahead, the 2026-2027 school year is officially underway!

From first-day hugs to new classrooms and familiar faces, excitement filled our campuses as students stepped into a year full of possibilities.

Scan here to see first day of school pictures











Q&A WITH DR. MALINDA GOLDEN



As Belton ISD begins the 2026-27 school year, Superintendent Dr. Malinda Golden shares what the launch of Destination 2031 means for the district, the experience she wants families to have in Belton ISD schools and why strong partnerships between home and school matter.

Q: This year marks the launch of Belton ISD's new strategic plan. What does that look like in action for students, staff and families?

A: I'm excited about the launch of Destination 2031 because it is the culmination of input from our community, teachers, staff and students. It gives us a roadmap for how, together, we will move toward our vision of inspiring dreams and empowering futures for each and every learner over the next five years.

This is not a document that will sit on a shelf. It will guide how we continuously improve as a school district and meet the expectations our community has shared with us. Our community wants exceptional learning for each and every learner, and they want our students empowered to pursue their dreams and enrich their communities.

That will not happen by chance. It will happen by design and through the continued hard work of our 2,100 team members. Students and families should see that commitment reflected throughout the district, from well-maintained facilities to the support and collaboration our teachers receive to provide exceptional learning experiences. Destination 2031 should permeate every aspect of our work.



Q: What is one thing you hope every family experiences when they walk onto a Belton ISD campus this school year?

A: I want every person who walks onto one of our campuses or into one of our departments to feel welcomed and know they are part of the process.

We will not achieve the goals of Destination 2031 or our vision if we are not working together in a united way toward good outcomes for each and every learner. I want families to experience a safe, warm learning environment where they know their partnership in educating our students is welcomed and valued.

Q: How can families best partner with schools to help students succeed this year?

A: Sometimes people think family involvement means coming to school and volunteering during the day. If that is possible for a parent, it is always welcomed and appreciated, but true partnership can be as simple as staying connected with your child's teacher.

Ask questions. Seek information. Understand how your child is progressing and where they may need additional support. When the partnership between the classroom and home is strong, the sky is the limit on what children can do.

That partnership does not mean there will always be agreement. It means working to understand the needs of the child and determining what support can happen at home, what needs to happen at school and how we can bring the two together on behalf of the student.

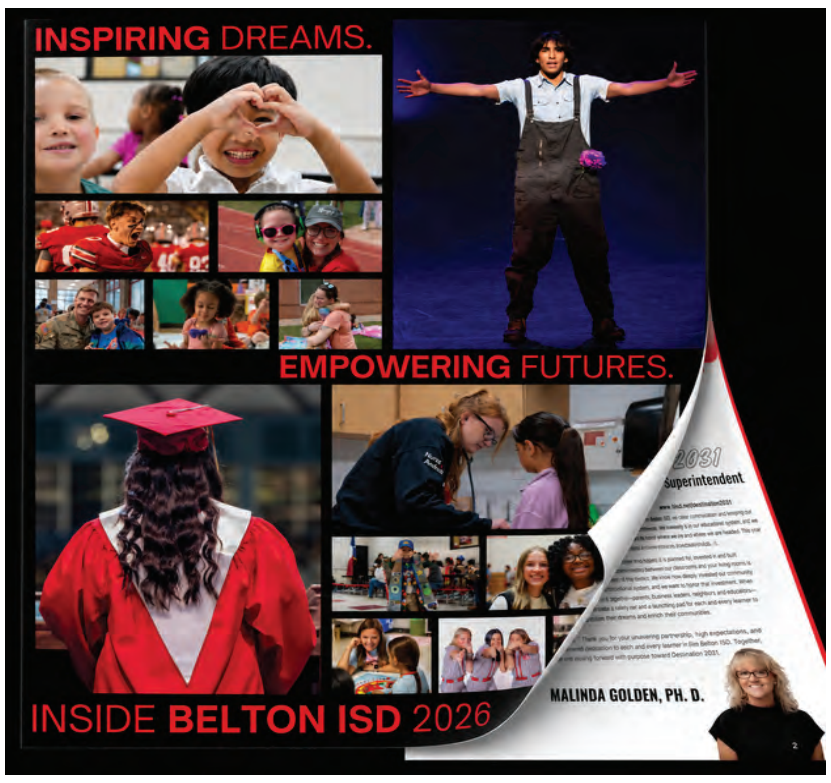


INSIDE BELTON ISD 2026

Take a look inside the people, programs and opportunities that make Belton ISD a destination district for more than 13,000 students across Central Texas.

- Inside Belton ISD 2026 is hot off the press, sharing stories from across the Big Red Community and highlighting the exceptional learning experiences happening every day. From academic achievement and innovative programs to student opportunities, community partnerships and the people who make it all possible, this year's edition offers a glimpse into what makes Belton ISD special.

Scan the QR code to explore Inside Belton ISD 2026.



BELTON ISD SADDLES UP FOR A NEW SCHOOL YEAR AT WESTERN-THEMED CONVOCATION

Belton ISD kicked off the new school year with its annual Convocation on August 10 at the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor's Mayborn Campus Center. More than 2,100 employees came together for an afternoon of student performances, celebrations and plenty of Western-themed fun.

With the theme "Rooted in Values. Inspired to Reach New Horizons," employees were treated to everything from stick horse races and roping to a principal line dance. Lake Belton High School's Silver Strings and the Belton High School Drumline also took the stage, while LBHS student Hayden Maroney, the school's first student to earn first chair at State TMEA, opened the event with the National Anthem.

Superintendent Dr. Malinda Golden and Board President Chris Flor helped officially kick off the year as employees celebrated the shared purpose that will guide Belton ISD into the year ahead.

With boots on and new horizons ahead, Belton ISD is ready for 2026-2027.









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TEACHERS TEACHING TEACHERS: BELTON ISD EDUCATORS LEAD THE LEARNING

When Belton ISD teachers returned to classrooms to prepare for a new school year, some of the people leading their professional learning were familiar faces.

They were fellow teachers.

Across the district, educators stepped into leadership roles this summer to share strategies, experiences and lessons learned in their own classrooms with colleagues. For Cheyenne Holman, a fifth-grade math and science teacher at Hubbard Branch Elementary, and Camille Hicks, an interventionist at Leon Heights Elementary, that meant helping other educators take new approaches back to their students.



Holman, who is beginning her third year in education with Belton ISD, led professional development focused on Research-Based Instructional Strategies, or RBIS.

At the heart of the training was a simple belief: students are capable of doing hard things.

Holman encouraged teachers to challenge students with rigorous, grade-level text while providing the support and instructional strategies they need to be successful. She said lowering the level of material for struggling readers can ultimately limit their opportunities to grow.

"All kids can do hard things," Holman said. "All kids can read hard text. All kids can read high-level text."

The training also connected to Belton ISD's literacy framework, which Holman helped develop alongside other district educators. She said the framework puts students at the center while giving teachers, particularly those who are newer to the profession, a concrete foundation for strong reading instruction.



Leading professional development after only two full years in the classroom initially felt intimidating, Holman admitted. But it also reinforced something she had experienced herself as a new teacher: educators at every stage of their careers have something valuable to contribute.

As a first-year teacher, Holman said veteran Belton ISD educators supported her, modeled lessons and helped her better understand instruction. Now, she has the opportunity to pass that knowledge along.

"Once all that learning comes and is pulled together, we make this result that shows in data but then also shows when students go out to be our future presidents and senators and Congress people and doctors and nurses," Holman said.

At Leon Heights Elementary, Hicks was encouraging teachers to step outside their comfort zones in a different way.

Hicks, who is entering her 12th year in education and fifth year with Belton ISD, led training on Project Lead the Way, a hands-on STEM curriculum designed to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills. During the training, teachers became students themselves, building, modeling and exploring the curriculum before considering how they would bring it into their own classrooms.

That experience was intentional.

Hicks knows hands-on STEM learning can feel intimidating. It can require additional preparation. It can get loud. And sometimes, it gets messy.

But she has also seen what happens when teachers are willing to try.

Hicks recalled working with kindergartners on a biomedical lesson that included building casts and learning advanced vocabulary such as "diagnosis."

Months later, her own son, who participated in the lesson, heard the word in conversation and immediately remembered what it meant.

"He learned, and he retained," Hicks said. "What we really want is for our students to have those memorable learning experiences."

That is why Hicks hopes teachers leave the training willing to be brave, try something new and give students opportunities to learn by doing.

For both educators, there is also power in who is delivering the message.

Learning from someone who is currently working in a classroom gives professional development a different level of relevance, Hicks said. Fellow educators can move beyond explaining what a strategy should look like and share how they actually made it work with students.

"When you can watch your peer be successful and try something new, I think it gives you more of the bravery that you need to step out and actually try it," Hicks said.

Whether teachers are strengthening literacy instruction or creating hands-on STEM experiences, the goal is the same: equip educators with tools they can use to create stronger learning experiences for each and every student.

And sometimes, the best person to help a teacher take that next step is another teacher.



NEWS AND UPDATES

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences will be held districtwide on Friday, October 30. Students will have the day off.

Parents as Partners is Back!

Belton ISD's Parents as Partners series returns this school year with events and learning opportunities designed to help families stay connected, informed and engaged.

Explore the full schedule and learn more at bisd.net/parentsaspartners.

Join the Big Red Club

Belton ISD residents age 65 and older can enjoy free admission to district athletic and fine arts events as members of the Big Red Club!

Stop by the Belton ISD Administration Building, 400 N. Wall St. in Belton, to get your membership card. We're open Monday–Thursday from 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m. and Friday from 8 a.m.–4 p.m.

Just bring your driver's license for age and residency verification. We'd love to see you cheering on our students this school year!











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THE BELTON JOURNAL

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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

THE STATE OF TEXAS
CITATION BY PUBLICATION – DIVORCE
CAUSE NO.25DFAM355368
To: BONNIE TRAN
Greetings:
You are hereby commanded to appear before the 426TH Judicial District Court, Bell County, Texas to be held at the Bell County District Courts Building in Belton, Texas, by filing a written answer to the original petition for divorce at or before 10:00 A.M. of the Monday next after the expiration of 20 days after the date of service hereof, a copy of which accompanies this citation, in cause number 25DFAM355368 styled IN THE MATTER OF THE MARRIAGE OF VINH QUANG HO AND BONNIE TRAN filed in said court on JULY 31, 2025, and the nature of which suit is a request to Divorce: No Children.
The Court has authority in this suit to enter any judgement or decree dissolving the marriage and providing for the division. of property which will be binding on you.
This was issued at the request of attorney: MARCUS BEAUDIN- THE LAW OFFCIES OF GREGORY K SIMMONS, 2109 S CLEAR CREEK RD, KILLEEN, TX 76549
NOTICE TO Defendant: You have been sued. You may employ an attorney. If you or your attorney do not file a written answer with the clerk who issued this citation by 10:00 AM on Monday next following the expiration of twenty days after you were served this citation and petition, a default judgment may be taken against you. In addition to filing a written answer with the clerk, you may be required to make initial disclosures to the other parties of this suit. These disclosures generally must be made no later than 30 days after you file your answer with the clerk. Find out more at TexasLawHelp.org.
Witness, Joanna Staton, District Clerk of Bell County, Texas.
Issued and given under my hand and the seal of said Court at office in Belton, Texas on September 21, 2026.
Joanna Staton District Clerk, P. O. Box 909, 1201 West Huey, Road, Belton Texas 76513
By: M. Cortez, deputy
09.24

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LEGALS

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Notice is given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of ANTHONY C. WATSON, Deceased, were issued on March 2, 2026, and re-issued on September 8, 2026, in Cause No. 25CPB00734, pending in the County Court at Law No. 1 of Bell County, Texas, to DONNA MARIA WATSON.
All persons having claims against the estate, which is presently being administered, are required to submit them, within the time and manner prescribed by law, and before the estate is closed, addressed as follows: c/o BRETT H. PRITCHARD, 1201 S. W.S. Young Dr., Ste C, Killeen, Texas 76543
Dated: Sept 18 2026
BRETT H. PRITCHARD Attorney for DONNA MARIA WATSON
09.24

NO. 35286
IN THE ESTATE OF CONSTANCE DIANN PEATROSS, DECEASED IN THE COUNTY COURT
OF BELL COUNTY, TEXAS
NOTICE TO CREDITORS, NOTICE OF LETTERS OF DEPENDENT ADMINISTRATION AND APPOINTMENT OF DEPENDENT ADMINISTRATOR
Notice is hereby given that on August 25, 2026, Letters **of** Dependent Administration upon the Estate of Constance Diann Peatross, Deceased, were granted to the Dependent Administrator, Don D. Ford, III, by the Honorable County Court of Bell County, Texas, in Cause No. 35286, pending upon the Docket of said Court.
All persons having claims against said Estate are hereby required to present the same within the time prescribed by law to Don D. Ford, III at the address of the attorney for the said Dependent Administrator being as shown below: Estate of Constance Diann Peatross, Deceased Ford + Bergner LL
c/o Margaret A. Solomon 700 Louisiana Street, 41st Floor Houston, Texas 77002
/s/ Margaret Solomon, Ford + Bergner LLP, 700 Louisiana Street, 41st Floor, Houston, Texas 77002, Ph: 713-260-3926, Fx: 713-260-3903, MARGARET A. SOLOMON, TBA #24025691, msolomon@fordbergner.com, Attorneys for Dependent Administrator, Don D. Ford, III
09.24

THE STATE OF TEXAS
CITATION BY PUBLICATION
CASE NUMBER 24CPB00760
To: UNKNOWN HEIRS
Harrell, Stoebner & Villanueva, P.C., Applicant, on September 18, 2026, filed an Application to Appoint Third-Party Dependent Administrator and for Issuance of Letters of Administration in a proceeding styled: DELORISE LAVONNE SCHWAKE, Deceased, and bearing the number 24CPB00760 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 24, 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 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 18, 2026.
Shelley Coston County Clerk of Bell County, Texas, PO Box 480, 1201 Huey Road ,Belton, TX 76513
By: Andrea Marks Deputy
09.24

LEGALS

APPLICATION HAS BEEN FILED WITH THE TEXAS
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE COMMISSION
For Caseys Marketing Company for a Wine Only Package Store d/b/a Casey's #4684 located at 614 W Avenue O, Belton, Bell County, TX 76513.
Officers: Samuel James – President Brian Johnson – VP,
Scott Faber – Sec./Treas,. Amanda Jansen – Asst. Sec.
09.24,10.01pd

THE STATE OF TEXAS
CITATION BY PUBLICATION
CASE NUMBER 26CPB00558
To: OTHER LIVING RELATIVES Of ZHARIA I. ARELLANO
No Known Address
CESAR CARLOS ARELLANO CANTOS and SADIA LOUISE-QUINT ARELLANO, Co-Applicants, on September 16, 2026, filed an Application for Appointment of Permanent Co-Guardian of the Estate in a proceeding styled: Zharia I. Arellano, Minor and bearing the number 26CPB00558 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 24, 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 17, 2026.
Shelley Coston County Clerk of Bell County, Texas, PO Box 480 ,1201 Huey Road, Belton, TX 76513
By: Angela Busby Deputy
09.24

APPLICATION HAS BEEN FILED WITH THE TEXAS ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE COMMISSION
For Central Roots Group LLC, DBA The Beltonian Theatre. For a wine and malt beverage retailer's on premise permit (BG). 219 E Central Avenue, Belton, TX. 76513. Officers /partners
Joseph Carlin (owner/manager of LLC),Katie Carlin (owner/manager of LLC.
09.24,10.01

No. 34344
IN THE ESTATE OF TIMOTHY B. HENRY, DECEASED IN THE COUNTY COURT
OF BELL COUNTY, TEXAS
NOTICE TO CREDITORS, NOTICE OF LETTERS OF DEPENDENT ADMINISTRATION AND APPOINTMENT OF DEPENDENT ADMINISTRATOR
Notice is hereby given that on August 4, 2026, Letters of Dependent Administration upon the Estate of Timothy B. Henry, Deceased, were granted to the Dependent Administrator, Dorothy Lorraine Demps Henry a.k.a Dorothy Henry, by the Honorable County Court of Bell County, Texas, in Cause No. 34344, pending upon the Docket of said Court.
All persons having claims against said Estate are hereby required to present the same within the time prescribed by law to Dorothy Lorraine Demps Henry a.k.a Dorothy Henry at the address of the attorney for the said Dependent Administrator

LEGALS

being as shown below: Estate of Timothy B. Henry, Deceased,
Ford + *Bergner* LLP, c/o Margaret A. Solomon, 700 Louisiana Street, 41st Floor, Houston, Texas 77002
/s/ *Margaret* Solomon, Ford + *Bergner* LLP 700 Louisiana Street, 41st Floor, Houston, Texas 77002, Ph: 713-260-3926 ,Fx: 713-260-3903, MARGARET A. SOLOMON, TBA #24025691, msolomon@fordbergner.com, Attorneys for Dependent Administrator, Dorothy Lorraine Demps Henry, a.k.a Dorothy Henry
09.24

THE STATE OF TEXAS
CITATION BY PUBLICATION
CASE NUMBER 25CPB00749

To: UNKNOWN HEIRS
JUDY BOOSE, Applicant, on December 10, 2025, filed an Application to Determine Heirship in a proceeding styled: DAVID RONALD SCHULTZ, Deceased, and bearing the number 25CPB00749 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 24, 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: ALLEN D PLACE, JR, 109 S 7TH STREET, GATESVILLE TX 76528
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 17, 2026.
Shelley Coston County Clerk of Bell County, Texas, PO Box 480, 1201 Huey Road, Belton, TX 76513
By: Andrea Marks, Deputy
09.24

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of ISAAC L. BURROUGHS, Deceased, were issued on September 16, 2026, in Cause No. 26CPB00482, pending in the County Court-At-Law No: 1, Bell County, Texas, to: ASIA BURROUGHS.
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: ASIA BURROUGHS, 3404 Huntsman Circle, Killeen, Texas 76543
SIGNED on September 16, 2026.
/s/James O. Cure ,James O. Cure Attorney for ASIA BURROUGHS, State Bar No.: 05252800 2584, Blue Meadow Dr., Temple, TX 76502, Telephone: (254) 778-8934, Facsimile: (254) 773-2477, Email: jocure@cureandfrancis.net
09.24

THE STATE OF TEXAS
CITATION BY PUBLICATION
CASE NUMBER 26CPB00551

TO: UNKNOWN HEIRS
DEREX AVERY SPENCER, Applicant, on September 15, 2026, filed an application to determine heirship and for letters of independent administration- intestate in a proceeding styled: ERNEST SPENCER, JR, Deceased, and bearing the number 26CPB00551 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 24, 2026 in the County Court at Law #1 Courtroom, at the Bell County Justice Complex, 1201 Huey Road, in Belton, Texas.
All persons interested in the aforesaid estate are commanded to appear at or before the time set for said hearing by filing a written contest or answer to said application should they desire to oppose or contest it.
Said written contest or answer shall be filed in the office of Shelley Coston, County Clerk, Bell County, Texas, PO Box 480, Belton, Texas 76513.
The name and address of the attorney for applicant is: BRETT PRITCHARD, 1201 S WS YOUNG DR SUITE C, KILLEEN, TX 76543
The officer serving this Citation shall, in compliance with the Law, serve it by publication once in a newspaper of the general circulation in this, the County in which the decedent last resided as required by Section 202.052 of the Texas Estate Code, for not less than ten days before the return day hereof, exclusive of the day of publication, and the date of publication said newspaper bears shall be the day of publication.
Issued and given under my hand and seal of said Court at office on September 15, 2026.
Shelley Coston County Clerk of Bell County, Texas, PO Box 480, 1201 Huey Road, Belton, TX 76513
By: Erika DeCasas Deputy
09.24

THE STATE OF TEXAS
CITATION BY PUBLICATION
CASE NUMBER 26CPB00552

To: UNKNOWN HEIRS
BRENT DEPONTE, Applicant, on September 15, 2026, filed an Application to Determine Heirship in a proceeding styled: MILLIKA EMELIA DE PONTE, Deceased, and bearing the number 26CPB00552 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 24, 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 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 15, 2026.
Shelley Coston County Clerk of Bell County, Texas, PO Box 480, 1201 Huey Road ,Belton, TX 76513
By: Andrea Marks Deputy
09.24

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of Frank Tindle, Deceased, were issued on 9-16-2026, in Cause No. 26CPB00505 pending in the County Court of Bell County, Texas, to: Janet Carol Gilbert Tindle.
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 J. David Dickson, Beard Kultgen Brophy Bostwick & Dickson, PLLC, 220 South Fourth Street, Waco, TX 76701
DATED the 21st day of September, 2026
. /s/ J. David Dickson, J. David Dickson Attorney for Applicant, State Bar No.: 05839500 ,dickson@thetexasfirm.com, 220 South Fourth Street ,Waco, TX 76701, Telephone: (254) 776-5500, Facsimile: (254) 776-3591 09.24



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Editor (Name and complete mailing address): Lynette Sowell
Managing Editor (Name and complete mailing address): Lynette Stowell, PO BOX 180, BELTON TX 76513

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The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes:
☐ Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months
☐ Has Changed During Preceding 12 Months (Publisher must submit explanation of change with this statement)

PS Form 3526, July 2014 (Page 1 of 4 (see instructions page 4)) PSN: 7530-01-000-9931 PRIVACY NOTICE: See our privacy policy on www.usps.com.

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15. Extent and Nature of Circulation			Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Total Number of Copies (Net press run)			1271	1253
b. Paid Circulation (By Mail and Outside the Mail)	(1)	Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (Include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)	116	128
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	(3)	Paid Distribution Outside the Mails Including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS®	2345	2249
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	(2)	Free or Nominal Rate In-County Copies included on PS Form 3541	4	4
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e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (Sum of 15d (1), (2), (3) and (4))			4	4
f. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c and 15e)			3531	3654
g. Copies not Distributed (See Instructions to Publishers #4 (page #3))			0	0
h. Total (Sum of 15f and g)			3531	3654
i. Percent Paid (15c divided by 15f times 100)			99.89	99.89

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d. Percent Paid (Both Print & Electronic Copies) (16b divided by 16c × 100)	99.89	99.89

☒ I certify that 50% of all my distributed copies (electronic and print) are paid above a nominal price.

17. Publication of Statement of Ownership
☒ If the publication is a general publication, publication of this statement is required. Will be printed in the 09/24/2026 issue of this publication. ☐ Publication not required.

18. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner: Publisher — Date: 9-18-2026

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EDITORIAL

Taking the back roads

My Front Porch • Lynette Sowell

Major interstates crisscross the state of Texas, and most of the time I am convinced they exist not only to help travelers get somewhere faster, but to help travelers do so in the most frustrating way possible.

If you have traveled at least one of these interstates, you will probably agree with me.

I was recently reminded of this on a trip up and down I-35 back and forth from Dallas. I haven't taken that road in years, so I was hoping things had changed. Um, sorta. So I've dusted this column off as a reminder that "faster" isn't always "better.

You see, I am a fan of the back roads. During our summer road trips to the beach when our kids were younger, we simply took 183 much of the way to the coast.

Now, 183 isn't exactly a back road anymore, but it sure beats I-35. We enjoyed the stop-and-go inside smaller towns and the hassle-free (for the most part) zipping along the two-lane road.

When you come upon a town in Texas, you know there will be at least one mom 'n pop place to stop and grab a snack, or a meal. There will be somewhere to stop for gas.

When you try to get back on the road after making a stop, there will be none of the adrenaline surge and pulse-pounding mania of fitting your vehicle back into traffic.

Part of the vacation for us was enjoying the back roads. Of course, on the way to Port Aransas, we could never get there fast enough, but on the way back home we certainly weren't in a hurry.

We have stopped at roadside produce stands, and one year we even stopped at Goliad for a picnic. In fact, a shell from a hermit crab who didn't quite make the trip home from the coast is likely still nestled in the crook of a tree at a rest stop.

Back roads can take you somewhere more slowly than the interstate, but when I hear about traffic backed up for hours on the interstate, the stop-and-go between the back road towns isn't such a bad thing.

Also, we are often so much in a hurry to get to our destination that we forget that part of the fun of the journey is the trip itself.

I hope to make at least one road trip this fall, and if there's a back road involved—at least in Texas—you can be almost certain the majority of our trip will be on it.

Especially since not much has changed between here and Dallas.

Gang Alliance

Coffee Talk • Renae Brumbaugh Green

I live in the country, down a rural, dead-end farm road far away from city lights and traffic. Until recently, I've enjoyed the peaceful existence this lifestyle brought. But that's all changed. We have not one, but two gangs of hoodlums that have decided our yard is a great place to hang out. We've tried to run them off separately... they've responded by joining forces. I'm worried they might win.

The first gang showed up a couple of months ago wearing suits of armor, vandalizing our yard every night after we went to bed. Apparently, we have good grass—home to fat, juicy grubs, and the armadillo gang likes to get drunk on their juice. For weeks, every morning we'd wake up to a new section of our yard dug up like a graverobber in King Tut's tomb. A few shotgun shells later, we'd scared them off.

Within days, they were back—or so we thought. My son, who is an encyclopedia of little-known trivia, noticed the dig patterns were different. "Armadillos didn't do this. These marks were made by skunks."

Skunks? Really?

Sure enough, we spotted a family of skunks slinking around the property.

Here's the thing. Birdshot may scare off an armadillo. But how in the world do you get rid of a skunk without making things a thousand times worse?

I figured we'd just surrender. I don't need a pretty yard nearly as much as I need oxygen.

But my brilliant husband and son wouldn't give up that easily. Together, they devised a plan to catch the skunks in the act, herd them out of our yard through the back gate until they were out of our air space, and shoot at them until they ran away. (At least that's what they told me, because as bad as skunks are, they're still cute, and I don't want them dead. We've agreed to a "Don't ask, don't tell" policy when it comes to controlling the critters in my yard, and I'm okay with that.)

But just about the time this genius skunk plan was hatched, the armadillos came back. The two groups joined forces in an effort to keep us guessing.

What would it look like if we humans joined forces like that? We all have our flaws. None of us is perfect. But what if, instead of working against each other, we decided to work together against the dark forces that threaten our peaceful existence? What if liberals and conservatives realized we are not each other's enemies... evil is.

I don't know if that can happen. Then again, I didn't think skunks and armadillos could live peacefully in the same yard, digging the same dirt, sharing the same field of grubs. Highly unlikely, but it's possible when each one uses its strengths.

I refuse to give in. I refuse to back down to evil and hate. Will you stand with me? I'll even let you choose your colors—skunk or armadillo. Together, I know we'll form the winning team.

"Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification." Romans 14:19.

Autism 101: Stress

Shop the Insanity • Darren Blair

Long-time readers will recall that a bit back I did a column noting that I had somehow completely blanked on the word "balcony". As I noted, whenever I was under enough stress my language center would sometimes begin to shut down. It could be that I would forget a word. It could be that various muscles would seize, leaving me temporarily unable to talk. Either way, communication would be temporarily impaired until whatever stress-related short-circuit in my brain cleared itself and so I needed people to please be patient with me accordingly.

I got to thinking about this after a recent round of issues, such as my car being down for repairs again, left me in a situation to where I started once again losing my ability to speak.

As I've noted before, I have high-functioning autism. It's not Hollywood autism, where writers try to pass off "oh so quirky!" or "anti-social know-it-all" as autism. It's "my brain and central nervous system are wired differently". Neurodivergence, the catch-all term for people with autism, ADD, ADHD, and other such conditions, is deliberately broad, however the various conditions generally have a given basket of symptoms and triggers which trained professionals and those who have these conditions come to understand.

With autism, stress load is indeed a critical consideration. You see, many people who have autism have a lower threshold for stress, a greater difficulty when it comes to operating under stress, and a greater need for down time after stress. With some individuals, it's because they're fairly sensitive to both environmental changes and changes within themselves; once the stress load starts to increase their system immediately begins throwing up red flags. With others, however, it's because that person is already running pretty close to the red line metaphorically speaking; just as a car that's about to red-line can't take too much more acceleration, so a person who's close to red-lining can't take too much more stress.

In the case of the former, a counselor, therapist, or other trained, certified individual can help the person work to develop more of a tolerance and generally get them to expand their comfort zone. However, in the case of the latter, stress management training is necessary. However, even with the help of a trusted and competent third party, stress loads can be such that a person may eventually feel the need to take a step back or even break away for a while. This gives them an opportunity to collect themselves, sort through their present emotions, activate their personal pressure release valve (music, hobbies, solitude, sleep, et cetera), and then strategize from there how they'll be handling matters. This ability to break away is especially important if they have a cardiovascular health condition, an intestinal / digestive issue, or another such problem that can be aggravated by stress.

And if someone can't break away? This can lead to autistic burnout, which not only mirrors depression but which can turn into depression. That "gifted kid burnout bingo card" meme from a few years ago becomes a lot less funny when you realize that many people who were labeled "gifted" when they were younger were individuals with undiagnosed high-functioning autism and that far too many of them broke due to the combination of unrealistically high expectations & no effective coping mechanisms.

Folks, if you're under stress, and you're having trouble coping, seek professional help. If you know someone who is crumbling under their own stress load, reach out to them. Even people who aren't autistic need that bit of assistance.

Exciting Mornings

Pleasant Ramblings • Mark Magnan

A couple of weeks back I read about a company that was ending the production of a breakfast cereal that I hadn't had since I was a kid. This had me thinking about trying something new and exciting for my morning routine. When I was young, I had to eat whatever came home with my father. I did at times get the popular and desired cereals. I remember the treat of getting something special, which I am sure was not very healthy. Probably full of sugar, however I was outside all the time, so I am sure I burned off that excess energy by the evening. One of the favorites of the day was Cap'n Crunch, it was a very sweet cereal and stayed crunchy, as the name implied. You had to pour a bowl then put the milk in and walk away. Eating dry Cap'n Crunch was abusive to your mouth, it would just work over the roof of your mouth and hurt until the next day. There were cereals with little marshmallows and of course the occasional prize inside. Lots of things to convince the child to hound the parent until that particular brand made the trip home. A lot of times I just had to endure the standard low sugar breakfast foods. I might not have been real big, but I did have an appetite. Most mornings I would eat breakfast at my house, then go down the street to a friend's house. We often walked to school together, most importantly if I timed it right his mother would be making something to eat. The standard fare at his house was fried bologna, what was perfectly acceptable for a morning. His mother was one of the fun parents that danced around the kitchen while she cooked, even being so thoughtful as to cut a couple of notches in the edges of the bologna circle to keep it from curling up into a bowl. After my second helping of breakfast I had enough energy to face the day, actually I probably needed less energy as I kept looking forward to the next time I could get outside, or the real favorite time of day; lunch.

Well back to today, well this week to be specific. The seed had been planted, and I wanted to try one of those youthful cereals for my own breakfast. I mean after all I am a grownup and I fix my own bowl of whatever it is that I eat each morning. I have been good, eating those breakfast cereals that are heart healthy and so on. So, on my visit to the store the other day I found the cereal that I wanted, I covered it up with healthy stuff to hide it, so the people that saw me didn't have to pass judgment on my breakfast selection. I put items like yogurt on top of the cereal box. Now store bought yogurt is probably not that great either, but it does have the appearance of being better for you. The real yogurt is much better, the type that is made at home with natural ingredients. However, I don't have the time or equipment to make my own yogurt, so I just fool myself and eat the best I can find in the store. I made it home with my new tasty cereal, I couldn't wait until the next morning, I think I woke up early so I could tear into the package. There was no prize or anything, just the cereal calling out to me. It was just as I remembered, and complete with mini marshmallows.

I will soon return to my dull routine of eating those healthy selections again. There is nothing really wrong with those and they don't taste that bad. I am not a person that has to have a lot of sweets, I get by on regular food. I could do with a boost of extra energy on some days. However, I don't hit the playground and monkey bars like I did when I was young. Most of the time it is shoving a lawn mower around my yard and feeding the fire ants. I can't really remember the last game of tag I played, nor see one in my near future. I still have more of this "fun" cereal left, so I have several more mornings to enjoy my return to childhood, even if it is just for breakfast.



SEPTEMBER B-TOWN BULLETIN

Local Activities & Events

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.

McDowell Cemetery Association – Oct 3
The McDowell Cemetery Association will hold its annual meeting at 10:00 am on Saturday October 3, 2026. The meeting will be held in the Sanctuary at Nolan Valley Baptist Church, 13206 FM 93, Belton. Anyone with a desire to assist with maintenance, upkeep or administration Of the cemetery is encouraged to contact the association, as we wish to keep the grounds as presentable as possible. If you have any questions or comments, John can be reached at (254) 541-4349.

Belton ISD Fine Arts – Oct 15-18, 23-24
The Belton ISD Fine Arts Department and our talented high schools are thrilled to present three theatrical performances this season. I'm excited to offer you a special invitation to be my guest at any of these shows! 30 exclusive tickets are available for each production. Lake Belton presents Little Women, Belton New Tech present MacBeth, and Belton High School presents Failure: A Love Story. If you have any questions, please reach out to Dora Martinez at dora.martinez@bisd.net or 254.215.2004. Let's celebrate fine arts in schools together. I hope you will join us!

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@mcl1249tx.comfor more inforamtion.

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

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

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

The Bell County Genealogical Society meets the fourth Saturday of each month. The group offers free Genealogy Guidance. Members of the Bell County Genealogical Society will be present to help those with questions about researching their family trees. General meetings are held in the Bell County Museum, 201 North Main St., Belton, TX. All meetings are open to the public. You do not have to be from Bell County or have ancestors from Bell County to participate. For additional information please visit our website at https://txbcgs.org/home/events/

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

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

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

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

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

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

Community Information

TAKE ME HOME PROGRAM The Belton Police Department is adopting the Take Me Home Program, aimed at helping individuals who need special assistance to return safely home after getting lost. The program is a database with photos and personal information to help police officers find someone who is lost or wandered away from home. Take Me Home is designed for individuals who may need additional aid including those with Dementia, Autism or specific mental health needs. It's free to register someone and the data is kept confidential to first responders. You can sign up a loved one here: www.beltontexas.gov/takemehome. Read more about the program here: https://www.beltontexas.gov/news_detail_T11_R1166.php.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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7pm-9pm

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Fellowship Hall-Grace Presbyterian Church
2401 S. 57th Street-Temple

Doors open at 6:30pm

In lieu of bringing in outside beverages, there will be complimentary ice cream floats/sundaes, coffee, water and tea.

This is a Listening Room performance for young adult and older guests.

Suggested Donation: $15+ per person. Performers receive all donations.

RSVP to Joni Lange
joniklange@yahoo.com

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STEP BACK IN TIME

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Ogletree Gap Park, Copperas Cove, Texas

Saturday, October 10, 2026
10:00 am - 5:00 pm



Old West Gunfight Shows

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A LITTLE SOMETHING FOR
SEPTEMBER
SIDE NOTES

TEXAS TRANSLATION
Fall on the calendar.
Summer in the afternoon.

01 / WORD ORIGIN
7
WHY SEVEN?
Its name comes from septem, Latin for seven. September used to be the seventh month.

02 / BIRTHSTONE
MORE THAN BLUE
September's birthstone is sapphire. Sapphires can be pink, yellow or green, too.

03 / THE SEASON
HELLO, FALL
The September equinox starts astronomical fall in the Northern Hemisphere.

FACT CHECK: TIMEANDDATE.COM / GIA / NASA