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Downtown Belton Candy Fest draws thousands of trick-or-treaters



Courtesy photo/ Christopher Winston

Shrek and his family get into the Candy Fest spirit by handing out candy to attendees.

By Jon Humphries
The Belton Journal

What began years ago as a small downtown Halloween celebration has grown into a community tradition, drawing thousands of costumed children and their families to downtown Belton on Sunday afternoon for the annual Candy Fest.

Downtown streets and sidewalks filled with families and children dressed in Halloween costumes made their way from through dozens of vendor tents and businesses, collecting candy and enjoying an afternoon of festivities.

Adam Wells, recreation coordinator for the city of Belton, said the event typically attracts between 2,000 and 4,000 visitors.

"We're expecting about as much as we've had in year's past, with maybe a little up-tick this year."

Wells said this was the first year the city's recreation department participated in organizing the event.

For longtime downtown business owners, Candy Fest has become an annual tradition that has grown alongside the community.

Lisa Miller, co-owner of Miller's Smokehouse, remembers when the celebration attracted only a few hundred children.

"When that very first started, we were down the street in our original location, about 300 kids," Miller said.

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BELTON JOURNAL/Jon Humphries

Weldon Hicks honored for his longtime service and support of the organization, JAIL Ministries.

Jail ministry banquet highlights faith, second chances and community support

By Jon Humphries
The Belton Journal

For more than three decades, volunteers with Jesus Acts Inmates' Lives (J.A.I.L.) Ministry have carried a message of faith, forgiveness and second chances into Bell County's jail system, offering inmates an opportunity to change their lives.

That mission was celebrated during the ministry's recent 2026 annual fundraising banquet, which brought together community leaders, law enforcement officials, pastors and supporters.

Steve Cannon, executive director of J.A.I.L. Ministry, served as master of ceremonies, while the Rev. Jeff Schreve, senior pastor of First Baptist Church in Texarkana, delivered the keynote address.

Cannon discussed the organization's ongoing programs, including Bible studies conducted throughout the week at Bell County correctional facilities. Male and female volunteers lead separate studies, providing religious instruction and encouragement to inmates.

The ministry also operates Jail Ministry Radio, which provides Christian programming to inmates through electronic devices available inside the facilities.

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Council OKs budget revisions

By David Stone
The Belton Journal

As Fiscal 2026 wraps up for the city of Belton, Council approved a series of revisions to the annual budget, including a large change to General Fund revenues related to the Brazos River Authority's Bellhouse Pipeline project that will move water from Belton Lake to Stillhouse, then to the north Austin suburbs.

According to Mike Rodgers, Belton's director of finance, revenue in the General Fund may end Fiscal 2026 about $1.9 million over budget because of the receipt of about $2.39 million for the BRA's sale of right-of-way for Bellhouse.

"Delinquent property taxes and insurance proceeds added to the surplus, while shortfall in current property taxes and insurance proceeds added to the surplus," Rodgers said in a statement to City Council. "Shortfall in current property tax revenue, grant receipts and interest income partially offset the gain."

The revision increases the budget for General Fund revenues from $25.4 million to about $27.3 million, he said.

Engineering design work and pipeline easement acquisition efforts are in progress for the Belhouse Drought Preparedness Project, which will pump water from Belton Lake to Stillhouse Hollow Reservoir, a Brazos River Authority official told the *Belton Journal*.

"The engineering design level for the project as a whole is currently about 30 percent complete," said Judi Pierce, public information officer for BRA. "The pipeline route has been selected and is essentially the same as we presented at a public

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Pet Extravaganza helps shelter animals find homes





BELTON JOURNAL/Jon Humphries

ABOE LEFT: Children enjoying animals at Addie's Petting Zoo at the 11th annual Pet Extravaganza.
ABOVE RIGHT: Captain Jack is pictured here with canine event attendee, Roux.

By Jon Humphries
The Belton Journal

Thousands of visitors gathered over the weekend for the 11th annual Pet Extravaganza, an event sponsored by Rescue Magazine which combines animal adoptions, entertainment and community involvement to help homeless pets find new families.

The two-day event featured animal rescue organizations, pet-related businesses, vendors and family activities, including pony rides, a petting zoo, a monster truck and an appearance by a professional Captain Jack Sparrow impersonator who traveled all the way from England.

Event executive director, Ron Ducharme, said attendance continues to grow each year, with several thousand visitors participating in this year's festivities and hundreds of pets being adopted.

"The most important thing is trying to get these animals a home," Ducharme said.

Ducharme described Pet Extravaganza as the largest indoor pet adoption and trick-or-treating event in Central Texas. He estimated that between 150 and 200 animals would be adopted during the weekend.

For participating shelters, Pet Extravaganza provides an opportunity to reach prospective pet owners beyond their usual service areas.

Connie Rowe with the Madisonville Animal Shelter reported eight puppy adoptions Saturday. The shelter brought 14 dogs Saturday and another eight Sunday.

Rowe said that Pet Extravaganza is the largest adoption event that the shelter will attend outside of the Madisonville area.

The shelter typically cares for approximately 40 dogs despite having only 20 kennels, making adoption events an important part of finding permanent homes for animals in its care.

Representatives of Pet Circle Regional Animal Center, Jesleigh Norman and Shirley Bloodworth, reported three adoptions Saturday and one more on Sunday. The organization brought 16 different dogs to the event over the two days.

"Saturday was busier so we brought eight more dogs today and we got one more adoption today. It's been great to see so many people here."

Belton Veterinary Clinic was also on hand,

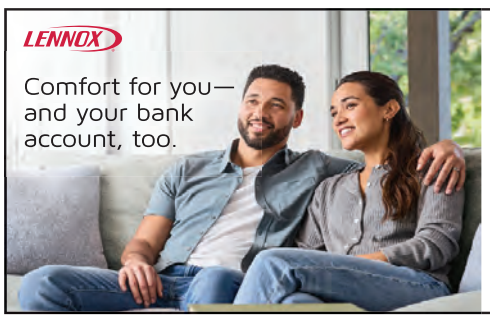
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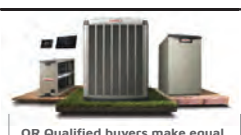












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Scottish Gathering and Highland Games Happening in Salado



Courtesy photo

Each year Salado Scottish Gathering and Highland Games hosts a parade for all to enjoy.

Special to the Journal

The 65th Salado Scottish Gathering and Highland Games takes place November 13-15 on a beautifully wooded property beginning at 108 Royal Street in Salado, Texas. Heralding all things Scottish, this landmark Salado event is the oldest Scottish festival in Texas and has been sponsored continuously by the Salado Museum since 1961.

"The Scottish Gathering is the main fundraising event for the Salado Museum and College Park and continues to draw thousands of visitors to Salado every year," says Lynette Jones, museum executive director. "Our planning committee and our event staff are all volunteers from Salado and nearby towns and event participants come from all over the country."

"Thanks to all of their ongoing commitment and the generous support of our patrons, local and area business sponsors, and the people of Salado, we are able to continue this tradition so vital to the maintenance and operation of the museum and College Hill," Jones adds.

The Scottish Gathering weekend's activities include bagpipe bands, athletes Tossing the Caber, Highland dancers, Celtic musicians, the popular Bonniest Knees Contest, a Celtic marketplace, food trucks, and more. The main feature of the event is the Clans Village, the largest gathering of Scottish Clans in Texas where members share Scottish history and family genealogy with visitors. (www.

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Candy - From Page A1









Courtesy photos/ Christopher Winston

Kids and adults make their way among vendors during the Candy Fest, enjoying an assortment of treats

Today, she estimates the crowd has grown to over 3,000 participants.

Miller said the restaurant has participated since the event's early years, when smaller crowds allowed businesses to offer more than just Halloween candy.

"We started in the beginning, and there was not as many kids, and we would do apples and waters, and candy, and mac and cheese," she said.

With thousands now attending, the event has become a much larger undertaking for participating downtown merchants.

For newer businesses, Candy Fest offers an opportunity to connect with local families and participate in a longstanding community celebration.

Candy Abreu, owner of Candy's Beauty Lounge, said this was her second year participating in the event. Her business opened its current location shortly before last year's festivities.

"We opened in October last year, just before Candy Fest, so this is our second year. It's been really busy… we've had children coming from both directions."

While the celebration provides Halloween entertainment for children, it also brings families into the downtown business district, introducing visitors to shops and restaurants they might not otherwise have the opportunity to visit.

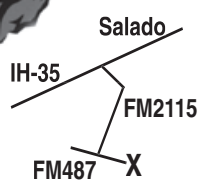
For merchants like Miller, who have watched the event grow from a few hundred children into a gathering of thousands, Candy Fest remains a familiar part of Belton's fall traditions.

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Council - From Page A1

meeting in 2023."

BRA is a governmental entity responsible for developing, managing and protecting the water resources of the Brazos River Basin in Texas. Its activities include operating reservoirs and dams, managing water supplies for municipalities, agriculture, and industry, and providing wastewater services.

The Belhouse pipeline will be approximately seven miles long and up to four feet in diameter.

Council approved other budget amendments during Tuesday's meeting.

Revision No. 2 increases General Fund expenditure appropriations by $449,000 to just over $26 million.

The largest variance occurred in Parks & Recreation to repair damage at Heritage Park. Electricity costs surged in the Streets and Library divisions. Budgets were also surpassed for trash collection, vehicle maintenance, legal, overtime pay and other professional services.

Revision No. 3 relates to the Hotel Occupancy Tax Fund Hotel occupancy tax revenue ended the year $90,000 under budget while tourism related expenditures exceeded budget by $63,000 because of an extended Christmas on the Chisholm Trail event, including ice rink costs. No transfer was made to the General Fund in FY 2026.

Like the General Fund, current property tax collections in the Debt Service Fund fell short of budget by $80,000. Revision No. 4 decreases Debt Service Fund revenue by a total of $49,000 as other revenues reduced the deficit.

Water and sewer revenues were short of budget by $430,000 and $716,000, respectively. Combining a wet spring with flat sewer revenue, revenues did not meet expectations. The original budget for principal payments was $99,000 lower than it should have been. Revision No. 5 reduces Water & Sewer Fund revenues by $1.15 million, from $14.7 million to $13.6 million. Expenditure appropriations increase by $99,000 to $14,473,940.

Also at Tuesday's meeting, Council made appointments to several boards and commissions.

The Building & Standards Commission terms of Brian Johnson, Priscilla Linneman, Samantha Crumbaugh and Elizabeth Scarmardo (Alternate No. 1) end on Nov. 10. The term of Eric Haugeberg ends Dec. 13, and the term of Ralph Masters ends Jan. 12. Mayor David Leigh recommended appointing all to a term ending April 30. Clinton Bailey (Alternate No. 2) has resigned as he has moved outside the city limits. Leigh has recommended Jon Fontenot as his replacement.

The term of Roxanne Sanders ends Nov. 30 for the Library Board of Directors. Leigh recommended her for reappointment to a term ending April 30.

The Belton EDC terms of Tyson McLaughlin and Stevie Spradley end Nov. 30 and both are reappointed to terms ending April 30.

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Belton ISD students link together for United Way of Central Texas

Special to the Journal



Courtesy photo

Two Belton ISD students link Spirit Chain together on the field..

Twenty-five cents at a time, Belton ISD students turned school spirit into support for the United Way of Central Texas through the district's annual Spirit Chain fundraiser.

Over a two-week period, students across the district purchased spirit chain links for 25 cents each, watching colorful chains stretch through their campuses as the donations added up. The fundraiser culminated October 16 at the Spirit Chain Game, where students brought their chains to Tiger Field for a pregame presentation before the Lake Belton High School football game.

Combined with contributions from Belton ISD employees, the district raised $9,302.75 for the United Way of Central Texas.

Funds raised through the campaign support United Way initiatives focused on health, financial stability, education and basic needs for individuals and families across Central Texas.

"Our students, staff and families have shown what's possible when a community comes together for a shared purpose," said Chris Flor, Belton ISD Board President. "Through the Spirit Chain fundraiser and employee giving campaign, even the smallest contributions add up to meaningful support for our neighbors across Central Texas."

The Spirit Chain fundraiser gives students an opportunity to put Belton ISD's Journey of a Graduate competencies into action, particularly empathy and collaboration, as campuses work together toward a shared goal.

OBITUARIES



Knight

Bubba Knight
October 19, 2026

Bubba Knight, a familiar face around Belton who loved music, dancing and his Dallas Cowboys, passed away Oct. 19.

Born in Killeen, Bubba grew up in Belton near the area known as the Flats. He ran track at Belton High School, graduating in 1971.

Many knew Bubba from his part-time work at Smith Brothers Drive-In or from seeing him ride his bicycle around town. For Peggy Smith, he was both a dependable employee and a dear friend.

After losing his father in a traffic accident, Bubba later cared for his mother when she became ill. He continued caring for her until her death in 2015.

"He quit his job to take care of his mother after she got ill. Bubba did this for a long time. He needed a job with odd hours. We worked around his schedule due to his mother's illness," Smith said. "Bubba was good help and a good friend. All the customers loved him."

Bubba also worked as a part-time disc jockey and enjoyed fishing, watching the Cowboys and finding any reason to dance.

His sister, Della, said his love of music was something people would remember.

"I remember his love of music. I just had somebody tell me he was a DJ at their great-great-grandmother's birthday. He was a great friend and took care of us," she said.

One memory especially close to her heart was a dance Bubba created last year at the Hole-in-the-Wall.

"Bubba loved to dance. Last year at the Hole-in-the-Wall, he made up a dance he named the stomp. I did the stomp in the hospital before he passed away. That boy could dance," Della said.

Funeral services will be held at 11 a.m. Saturday at Greater Belton Church of God in Christ in Belton.

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Salado - From Page A2

saladoscottishfestival.com)

Events begin on Friday with a special presentation in words, images and music by Scottish fiddler and historian, Colin MacLeod at 2pm in the Salado Museum with a suggested donation at the door.

The historical Calling of the Clans torchlight ceremony is held at 6pm on the banks of Salado Creek just north of the museum and is open free to the public. A ticketed social and light buffet follows at the Museum.

Festival grounds are open Saturday from 9am to 5pm. Opening ceremonies are held at noon with the Bands and Clans Parade and a massed bands presentation. The parade starts at Main Street and North Pace Park Road and moves south on Main to Royal Street and the festival grounds.

In addition to bagpipe band, dancing and athletic competitions, the day's activities include live Scottish music by folksinger and storyteller Mark Clavey, playing with Scottish fiddler Colin MacLeod, and by the Celtic band, Murder the Stout, featuring Scottish button accordionist Hugh Morrison.

On Sunday, grounds are open 9am to 3pm starting with the Kirkin' o' the Tartan devotional service at 9am. The day's activities include Scottish musicians, a performance by the Silver Thistle Pipes and Drums and the Hill Country Highland Dancers of Austin, a Dog Costume Contest and Parade, Children's games, dog agility demos, Scottish Country Dancing participation dances, a Celtic marketplace, food trucks, and more.

The Wee Scots Gift Shop is open all three days at the Salado Museum on South Main Street. All proceeds from the event and gift shop benefit the museum, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. For ticket prices and more information, visit www.saladoscottishfestival.com or call 254-947-5232.

J.A.I.L. - From Page A1

Cannon explained that the radio ministry began in 2012, following a conversation with then-Bell County Sheriff Dan Smith about expanding opportunities to reach inmates. The original system used low-power transmitters and portable radios before eventually transitioning to electronic tablets. Schreve's broadcasts have been part of the programming since its early years.

Bell County Sheriff Bill Cook addressed those in attendance, emphasizing the importance of volunteer programs within the county's correctional system. Currently, there are over 1260 inmates housed in Bell County.

Cook described the challenges of managing one of Texas' larger county jail operations, including housing, feeding and supervising more than 1,200 inmates. Some members of the jail staff and several area elected officials were also recognized.

One of the evening's more personal moments came when Johner Martin, adult volunteer coordinator for J.A.I.L. Ministry, shared his experience of incarceration and the influence ministry volunteers had on his life.

"A man came into the jail back in 1993, 33 years ago, and told me something that I could believe," Martin said, recalling being told that God loved him and that his circumstances did not have to define his future.

Martin spent five years in prison before returning to the community, where he eventually became involved in helping others through the same ministry that had reached him.

The banquet also included recognition of the Rev. Weldon Hicks for his longtime service and support of the organization. Presenters praised Hicks' commitment to bringing encouragement and Christian ministry to incarcerated individuals.

"I'm just so surprised to receive this," Hicks said, adding that the opportunity to have served was all the thanks he needed for the work that he's done.

Cannon also acknowledged volunteers involved in the ministry's Angel Tree program, which provides Christmas gifts for children whose parents are incarcerated.

Keynote Speaker

Schreve's keynote address centered on the responsibility individuals have to use their abilities, resources and opportunities to help others.

Drawing from the biblical parable of the talents in Matthew 25, Schreve described three servants entrusted with different amounts of money. Two invested what they received, while the third buried his portion out of fear.

"What are you doing with what the Lord has given you in your time, in your talent, your gifts, your abilities, in the treasure that he's given you, and the opportunities that he's given you?" Schreve asked.

He also shared his journey into ministry, describing how he left a successful career in chemical sales during the 1990s to pursue what he believed was God's calling.

With a wife, young children and financial obligations, Schreve said the decision required considerable faith.

"I'm so glad that I said yes," he told the audience. "I'm so glad that I took that step of faith."

Schreve encouraged those attending to support the ministry financially, emphasizing the importance of putting faith into action.

"This is a ministry that we need to get behind, that touches lots of lives," Schreve said.







Pet - From Page A1

providing information and supplies for pet owners and families adopting animals.

Veterinary technicians Patience Groves and Tyesha Lane said the clinic distributed leashes, pens and other items, along with special welcome bags containing supplies for newly adopted cats and dogs.

The clinic also helped prepare shelter animals for the event, by vaccinating several animals on Friday before the extravaganza started.

"I think we vaccinated 30 of their animals on Friday," Groves said.

Lane added that attendance was strong throughout the weekend, with the clinic exhausting most of its supply of giveaway items Saturday.

Ducharme said the event's success largely depends on the cooperation among shelters, businesses and community members.

"It's a community event, so it brings a lot of people together," he said. "And it all serves animal welfare as far as getting animals a home. People tell people and the event continues to grow." Organizers are planning an additional Pet Extravaganza in June, Ducharme added.

"When the community comes together, and more people keep attending, it makes an impact on the lives of these animals."

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Fogle named Clerk of the Year



Courtesy photo

Michelle Fogle who has been with the City of Belton for 20 years was named Clerk of the Year.

By David Stone
The Belton Journal

Michelle Fogle, Belton's executive administrative assistant to City Manager Sam Listi, was named Clerk of the Year last week by the Central Texas Chapter of the Texas Municipal Clerks Association.

Fogle said she was totally surprised by the announcement.

"I was totally thrown off guard," she said. "I never expected this to come my way because I am not actually a city clerk, but the executive administrative assistant to the city manager."

"I have been a member of this organization for many years, and I pursued and obtained my Municipal Clerk Certification in 2020 and renewed it in 2025 to assist our city clerk in her absence and as needed daily," she said. "I enjoy networking with all the members of the Central Texas Chapter of Municipal Clerks, and I hold the office of Benevolence Officer."

"On a daily basis I assist the city manager and assistant city manager with daily tasks, reports, research, scheduling, travel arrangements, Strategic Plan updates, plan annual employee events, among other duties," Fogle explained.

City Manager Sam Listi said Fogle is a vital part of Belton's city government.

"For the past 20 years, Michelle has provided vital administrative, technical and creative support to the city manager and assistant city manager," Listi said.

"She serves as a liaison to the City Council, city clerk and all city departments," he said. "We are fortunate to work with Michelle here in Belton and appreciate this well-deserved recognition."

Belton Mayor David Leigh agreed.

"Michelle exemplifies the loyalty, dedication and commitment that make an organization strong," Leigh said. "She has been a steadfast member of the Belton team for many years, always willing to contribute and genuinely invested in the people she works alongside."

"I'm pleased to see her commitment to our city and her colleagues recognized by her peers, and I congratulate her on this well-deserved honor," the mayor added.

The Central Texas Chapter is a regional branch of the Texas Municipal Clerks Association (TMCA) that supports city secretaries, municipal clerks, and local government professionals through local networking, leadership, and continuing education. The chapter provides regional professional development, peer mentoring and educational programming tailored to municipal clerks and deputy clerks in Central Texas.

Fogle was born and raised in Killeen but has lived in Belton since 2011.

"I love to call this small-town home," she said.

"I have worked for the city for 20 years, since March 2006," she said. "Prior to working for Belton, I worked for the city of Temple for 16 years in the city Manager's office as well."

Fogle said she didn't expect to win the recent award." I honestly don't know why I received the honor," she said. "I attend our TMCA Central Texas Chapter meetings on a routine basis. We share a lot of useful information at our meetings.

Belton Battle of the Badges to host November blood drive

By Jon Humphries
The Belton Journal

Belton Battle of the Badges will partner with Carter BloodCare on Tuesday, Nov. 3, to sponsor a community blood drive at the Walmart located at 2604 N. Main Street in Belton. The drive will give residents an opportunity to donate blood ahead of the holiday season. The Battle of the Badges adds a friendly competition to the blood drive, with Belton police officers and firefighters competing to see which department can generate the most blood donations.

Hours for the drive are from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. and is part of Carter BloodCare's ongoing efforts to maintain a reliable blood supply for hospitals and medical facilities throughout North, Central and East Texas.

Blood donations are needed year-round across Central Texas to help patients facing medical emergencies, serious illnesses and complicated surgeries. With the holiday season approaching, Carter BloodCare is encouraging residents to take time to donate and help ensure blood products remain available for patients who need them.

Since being founded in 1951, Carter BloodCare is one of the largest nonprofit blood programs in Texas, serving 59 counties and supporting patients at more than 225 medical facilities throughout the region.

Carter BloodCare delivers more than 450,000 doses of blood, platelets and plasma annually to help meet the health care needs of Texas communities.

As an added incentive to participates in the blood drive, Carter BloodCare is offering donors a plush blanket during November and December. The light blue-and-white blanket is part of the organization's annual holiday donor appreciation program and will be available while supplies last.

The blanket giveaway has become a popular holiday tradition for the nonprofit blood center, providing a small token of appreciation for those who give.

Individuals as young as 16 may donate blood with parental consent, while those 17 and older may donate without parental permission. All donors must weigh at least 110 pounds and be in good health

See **BADGES,** *Page A6*

Bell County voters to decide Proposition A as higher property taxes hang in the balance

By Jon Humphries
The Belton Journal

On Nov. 3, Bell County voters will head to the polls to decide whether to establish a countywide hospital district. Supporters say the proposal, Proposition A on the ballot, could improve health care for uninsured or indigent county residents. Opponents of the proposition, however, warn that the new district could increase property taxes and jeopardize millions in existing hospital funding.

Proposition A asks voters to authorize creation of a hospital district with the power to levy property taxes to provide healthcare services in the county.

The proposal has divided county officials, with Precinct 4 Commissioner Louie Minor supporting its creation and County Judge David Blackburn and three other commissioners opposing it.

Despite their individual positions, the Bell County Commissioners Court has not taken an official position on the proposition, although a commissioners vote to place Proposition A on the November ballot failed 4-1, with only Minor voting in support.

Unable to gain the support of his fellow commissioners, Minor chose to circulate a petition to have the proposed hospital district placed on the ballot. Minor presented the petition to Blackburn on April 17 with the signatures needed to place the issue in front of voters.

Minor said the petition collected more than 1,200 signatures, substantially exceeding the 100 qualified property-taxpaying voter signatures required under state law.

Is another health care district necessary?

Minor argues that Bell County's existing system fails to adequately serve many residents who cannot afford medical care. While the county currently provides indigent health care, Minor said the application process can be exhausting, discouraging some eligible residents from seeking assistance.

He also questions whether the number of people currently receiving services accurately reflects community needs, noting that a significant portion of county indigent health care expenditures goes toward Bell County Jail inmates.

According to figures distributed by Minor, Bell County spends approximately $12.7 million annually on indigent health care, including nearly $8.8 million for medical care provided to jail inmates.

Minor said a hospital district could provide a more effective system for serving residents who currently fall through the cracks.

He points to hospital districts in Travis, Tarrant and Midland counties as examples of similar programs that have operated successfully across the state.

Precinct 2 Commissioner Bobby Whitson disagrees.

"As an individual, I will be voting 'No,'" Whitson said.

Whitson said the county's existing health care system is meeting its obligations, with recent figures showing fewer than 500 people receiving indigent care. Establishing another governmental entity would unnecessarily duplicate services already being provided, Whitson said.

What would it cost taxpayers?

Both commissioners acknowledge that a hospital district would be funded through property taxes, but disagree about its financial impact.

Whitson said the existing county health care tax rate is approximately 4.5 cents per $100 of taxable value and believes a hospital district could at least double that amount.

Minor counters that taxpayers are already funding indigent care through existing county taxes. His campaign literature estimates that approximately 3.62 cents of the county's tax rate currently supports indigent health care.

Transferring those responsibilities to a hospital district could allow the county to reduce its existing tax rate, offsetting some or all of the new district's taxes. According to Whitson, though, commissioners could decide not to lower that rate.

"There is no guarantee that the commissioners would lower the existing tax rate. We aren't required to do that, and there are always needs for tax dollars to be utilized for other projects in the county."

Minor said that while Whitson is correct in that commissioners are not required to lower the existing county health tax rate, it would be appropriate for them to do so with a new hospital district in place.

"If they didn't lower the rate, voters would need to take that up with the commissioners," Minor said.

Under Proposition A, a hospital district could levy as much as 75 cents per $100 of taxable value, although approval would not automatically establish that rate.

At the maximum rate, a property with a taxable value of $250,000 would generate $1,875 annually in hospital district taxes. Should Proposition A pass and a hospital district be established, county commissioners would appoint a governing board for the district which would establish its tax rate.

What happens to existing hospital funding?

Another point of contention over Proposition A involves Bell County's Local Provider Participation Fund (LPPF), a program established in 2015 to help hospitals recover costs associated with treating uninsured and underinsured patients.

According to Blackburn, Bell County hospitals contributed approximately $122 million through the program last year and received approximately $275 million in reimbursements.

Whitson argues that creating a hospital district would make Bell County ineligible for its existing LPPF program, potentially jeopardizing more than $250 million annually in hospital reimbursements.

Minor disputes the implication that the funding would necessarily disappear.

"Establishing the hospital district does not necessarily mean that the county would not be eligible for reimbursements." Minor said.

His campaign literature states that a hospital district could participate in the LPPF, providing another mechanism for supporting local hospitals.

The distinction is significant because state law governing Bell County's existing program includes restrictions involving counties served by hospital districts.

Whether the proposed district could establish or participate in an alternative funding arrangement, and how that would affect current hospital reimbursements, remains unresolved.

How did Proposition A reach the ballot?

After county officials certified Minor's petition, commissioners were required to place the proposition on the November ballot. If approved, the hospital district would become a separate taxing entity responsible for providing indigent health care services. Whitson says that's not a good idea for Bell County and encourages voters to educate themselves on the issue.

"Voters need to understand what they're voting for on the ballot. Many of them might simply vote

"Yes" without understanding the impact of that vote."

If Proposition A is rejected, the county's existing health system would remain in place.





Blaine Springston opened Xplosive U

By David Tuma
The Belton Journal

Blaine Springston opened Xplosive U, a youth sports training facility, at 5412 Hwy 317 in the Belton area. Blain grew up in Andrews, Texas, and has lived in Belton for the past 21 years. His father was a football coach.

Blain came to Belton, attended the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, and played football.

"I have always been interested in becoming stronger and faster. I trained at Next Level Sports Training in Midland when I was younger. I also worked there. This was my first experience training to become faster and stronger. The program works, and I can attest to that. I went from running a 4.6 40-yard dash to a 4.48 after eight weeks," said Springston.

Xplosive U trains athletes from age five to 18 and up. "If you're an athlete looking to improve, I can help you. Getting out of your comfort zone is part of that training. It first starts with learning proper techniques," said Springston.

Ages 5-7 focus on the fundamentals of lifting correctly. Ages 8-11 are a little more advanced but concentrate heavily on technique. "Once you learn the proper technique, you start lifting. Proper technique carries over. If you get tired, one of the first things to drop is technique. We concentrate on technique when you are tired," said Springston.

Classes are by age group, so each athlete is at the same level. Each athlete is given an assessment test. "I want to know what you can do and test eight weeks later," said Springston. Springston is a veteran in sports training, beginning in 2009.

For the training sessions, there is an area for drills, a treadmill with a 40-inch incline, and weightlifting equipment. The facility is open from 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Monday-Friday. Weekends are for assessment times.

"I like seeing the progress of those in the program. Helping people learn to run is very satisfying. Teaching youth to reach their goals is what it is about. When the light comes on, that is a joy to watch," said Springston.



Courtesy photo
Blaine Springston, far left, speaking with parents and athletes at the grand opening of Xplosiveu, which opened October 17th along Hwy 317..

Proclamation honors BISD, library Friends for promoting reading

By David Stone
The Belton Journal

Mayor David Leigh presented a proclamation at Tuesday's City Council meeting that declares Nov. 2-7 at Children's Book Week in Belton.

Representatives from Belton Independent School District and Friends of the Belton Public Library were present to receive the proclamation.

"Children's Book Week is a national celebration that recognizes the joy and importance of books, and it encouraged children everywhere to discover the excitement of reading," Leigh said to open the proclamation.

"The 2027 theme, *Get Curious*, encourages children to ask questions, explore new ideas, use their imaginations, and discover the wonderful worlds that can be found inside a book," he said.

"Reading with children helps build strong literacy skills, encourages curiosity and creativity, and creates special memories for children and the adults who read with them."

According to the proclamation, the Belton Public Library has been a valued part of the Belton community, providing children and families with books, programs, resources, and a welcoming place to learn, explore, and enjoy reading.

"The city of Belton is proud to partner with the Friends of the Belton Public Library and Belton Independent School District to encourage reading and make Children's Book Week a special celebration for the children and families of our community," Leigh added.

"Children's Book Week gives Belton an opportunity to celebrate the wonderful world of books and remind our children that a great adventure can begin simply by opening a book, asking a question, and turning the page."

Juanita Smith, president of the Friends of the Belton Public Library, said she is pleased the Belton ISD and the Friends group are included as partners in this week of promoting reading.

"I think it is extremely important for community institutions and organizations to combine efforts for the cause of literacy," Smith said. "The Friends group furnishes funds for books to be given to children during the week. I believe a child is grateful to receive a book they can keep."

"By combining community efforts, there is more chance of making the event known to children and in making the event more meaningful and fun," she added. "Our library does an excellent job of providing incentives for reading, and we are proud to be able to help with that."

The library has several events planned for Belton Children's Book Week.

On Nov. 2, there will be a Mini Music Makers activity for kids 1 o 3 years old. The next day, babies up

See **BISD,** *Page A6*

FRIGHT FLICK WORD SEARCH

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DRACULA
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GERALD'S GAME
GET OUT
GODZILLA
HALLOWEEN
HUSH
MISERY
NOSFERATU
PSYCHO
ROSEMARY'S BABY
SAW
SHAUN OF THE DEAD
THE CONJURING
THE DEAD ZONE
THE FLY
THE SHINING
THE WICKER MAN



Holiday Around Town set for Nov. 5

By David Stone
The Belton Journal

Holiday Around Town, a joint Business After Hours event for the Belton Area and Temple Chambers of Commerce, will be held Thursday, Nov. 5, at the Huntington Bank Expo Assembly Hall.

The event will run from 5:00 p.m. to 7 p.m. and will provide holiday shoppers with a perfect chance to shop locally at a centralized location.

Members of the Temple and Belton chambers will set up more than 50 "small shops" around Assembly Hall promoting local products and businesses. Each booth will be holding drawings for door prizes valued at $50 or more.

Food and beverages will be provided by the Huntington Bank Expo's catering service.

"The room will be filled with member booths sharing information about their businesses and holiday sales," said Randy Pittenger, president and CEO of Belton Chamber of Commerce.

"It is a great opportunity for chamber members and prospective members to enjoy time networking, shopping, learning about local business opportunities, and kicking off the holiday season in a festive environment," Pittenger said.

Door prizes are provided by participating businesses, creating a fun opportunity to win a prize.

"The event is open to the public, and it is one way we showcase shopping local with our Chamber members as we enter the Holiday season," said Whitney Theriot, president of the Temple Chamber of Commerce.

"Some booths will sell items from their spaces, others will just be handing out information, but it's a great place to start holiday shopping or get some great ideas," she said. "Booth space is only available to Temple Chamber and Belton Chamber members."

"Most of the vendors will be taking names or business cards for door prizes," Theriot said. "That is one thing we really stress to the vendors is to have a minimum $25 door prize that that guests can register for at their booth. They get to engage with more folks that way, and when they draw their name for the prize, that person gets to come to their location."

"Each Chamber is taking their own registrations — we each have 26 booths," she said. "Grace Wallum can assist Temple Chamber members, grace@templechamber.com, ((254) 773-2105; Dawn Orange can assist Belton Chamber members, dawn@beltonchamber.com, ((254) 939-3551.

Nominations Open for 2026 Beltonian Award

Special to the Journal

The Board of Directors of the Belton Area Chamber of Commerce is accepting nominations from the community for the 2026 Beltonian Award.

This award is given to individuals who have demonstrated longtime achievement in volunteer service to the Belton community. That service could be for service in education, church, a service organization, youth programs, or any area that improves the quality of life in Belton.

Past recipients of the Beltonian Award include Wayne Carpenter in 2025, Danny Dossman in 2024, Joe Sheppard in 2023, Don Al Ringler in 2022, Dan and Kandy Kirkley in 2021, Marion Grayson in 2020, Roscoe Harrison in 2019, and Andy Davis in 2018.

"This is a great opportunity to honor individuals for their service to our community," stated Randy Pittenger, President/CEO of the Belton Chamber. "We look forward to seeing the nominations for this year."

Letters of nomination must include a summary of why the nominee should be selected and recognized. All letters must be received by Monday, November 30, 2026. The Board of Directors will select the award winner from the submitted nominations at its December meeting.

Nominations should be sent via email to randy@beltonchamber.com or mailed to:

Beltonian Award Nominee
Belton Area Chamber of Commerce
P.O. Box 659
Belton, Texas 76513

For more information about the Belton Area Chamber of Commerce, visit our website at www.beltonchamber.com, call 254-939-3551, or email us at info@beltonchamber.com.

Badges - From Page A4

at the time of their donation.

Residents interested in participating in the Nov. 3 blood drive are encouraged to schedule an appointment in advance, although information about donation opportunities is also available through Carter BloodCare.

Appointments can be scheduled online at greatpartners.org.

For additional information about the Belton drive, contact Tami Bliven at 254-933-5881.

Residents can also learn more about blood donation requirements, upcoming drives and Carter BloodCare's services by visiting CarterBloodCare.org or calling 800-366-2834.

BISD - From Page A5

to 1 year old will celebrate Baby Time, and on Nov. 4 it's Toddler Time for kids 1 to 3 years old. These events will start at 10 a.m. each day at the public library.

On Nov. 5, Creekside Stories for all ages will be at 10 at the Landing at Creekside Park. Back at the library, Tiny Explorers for ages 18 months to 3 years old will explore the young minds.

Belton will wrap up Children's Book Week on Saturday, Nov. 7 at 6 p.m. with Big Red Read at the Pittenger Fine Arts Center, 400 N Wall Street. Doors will open at 5:30 p.m. for the interactive family science show.

As the city's proclamation said, Children's Book Week is the annual celebration of books for young people and the joy of reading.

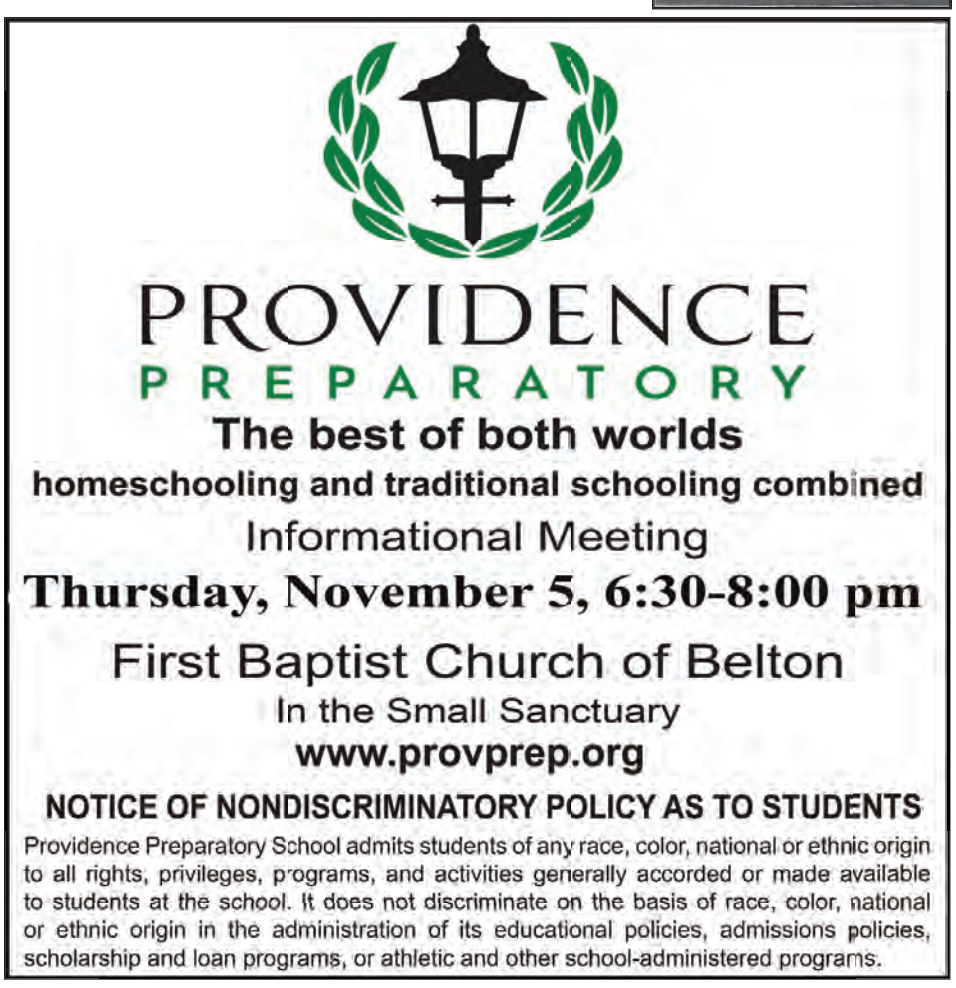
Established in 1919, Children's Book Week is the longest-running national literacy initiative in the country. Every year, young people across the country participate by attending events at schools, libraries, bookstores, celebrating at home, and engaging with book creators both online and in person.

Children's Book Week originated in the belief that children's books and literacy are life-changers. In 1913, Franklin K. Matthiews, the librarian of the Boy Scouts of America, began touring the country to promote higher standards in children's books. He proposed creating a Children's Book Week, which would be supported by all interested groups: publishers, booksellers, and librarians.

Matthiews enlisted two important allies: Frederic G. Melcher, the visionary editor of Publishers Weekly, who believed that "a great nation is a reading nation," and Anne Carroll Moore, the superintendent of Children's Works at the New York Public Library and a major figure in the library world.

With the help of Melcher and Moore, in 1916, the American Booksellers Association and the American Library Association sponsored a Good Book Week with the Boy Scouts of America.















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Belton Family Camp Out promises outdoor fun

By David Stone
The Belton Journal





Courtesy photos

ABOVE LEFT: A young archer takes aim during last year's Family Camp Out at Belton's Heritage Park. ABOVE RIGHT: Families are all smiles as they line up for burgers during last year's Family Camp Out. This year's event is Nov. 6-8

Get ready for scary stories around the campfire, sleeping in tents and, of course, s'mores. The eighth annual Belton Family Camp Out is just around the corner.

This year's all-ages camp out at Heritage Park is Nov. 6-8, and the event is $25 per family.

"The Family Camp Out offers families a weekend of outdoor adventure, connection and memory-making along the Leon River," said Joseph Dyer, Belton parks superintendent.

According to Dyer, activities will include kayaking, hiking, archery, outdoor games and a glowing night-time hayride through the park.

"Families share meals and gather around the campfires," he said. "On Saturday evening, we light a bon fire for families to enjoy — weather permitting."

"The annual event highlights Heritage Park's natural beauty and provides families an opportunity to unplug, enjoy the outdoors, and create lasting memories," Dyer added

James Grant, executive director of Belton Parks & Recreation, agrees.

"Family Camp Out is one of our staff's favorite events," Grant said. "After all, we are Parks & Recreation. Our staff enjoys the outdoors, and what a better way to spend time outside than to set up around a campfire and listen to the sounds of nature while looking up at a star-filled sky."

"This is a great way to unwind and destress," he continued. "And to top it off we all get to make s'mores with our friends and family. Doesn't get any better than this."

"I have many memories of our camp outs at Heritage Park — from seeing eyes light up when the bon fire consumes the night sky, to the sound of children laughing as they enjoy one of our many hayrides, to the mom who is bringing her children out to camp for the first time and being able to help them set up their tent and teach them how to build a campfire."

"Our kayaking is always a great time — the kids love it, especially when mom or dad take a spill trying to get into their kayak," Grant said. "Don't worry, everyone has to wear a life vest, so no one gets hurt — maybe their pride just a bit."

"I remember a 5-year-old who came with his mom. He had never gone fishing before. He got so excited when he pulled a small bluegill out of the water that he took off running — he dropped his pole, fish and all on the ground — to tell him mom what he had caught."

"Quiet time is 10 p.m.," Grant said. "That is when we retreat back to our small campfires, eat our s'mores and listen to the sounds of a coyote in the distance. I love every minute of this event; it takes me back to my own childhood and the great times I had camping with my family."

"I am 60 years old now and I still have great memories of camping as a child so I know that the memories made this weekend will live for many years to come with these young campers," he explained.

"Just maybe we can create in them a love for the outdoor like we have so when they grow old and find themselves getting all stressed out at work they know they can retreat to the woods where they will find peace and relaxation."

Families should bring their own tent and camping supplies.

Special Olympics Texas Bocce Competition brought to Salado





BELTON JOURNAL / Michele Weisman

ABOVE LEFT: The Olympic Torch, part of the opening ceremony. ABOVE RIGHT: Bocce games underway at the 2026 Special Olympics Texas.

By Michele Weisman
The Belton Journal

Special Olympics Texas held their Bocce Competition in Salado on Friday, Oct. 23 and Saturday, the 24. Heritage Country Church hosted the event in its Special Events Center. Entrance was free, and the public was invited. Opening ceremonies began at about on Saturday 10 a.m., with teams introduced and the Olympic torch presented.

Chris Bazar, constable precinct 2, was the master of ceremonies, welcomed everyone to the 2026 Special Olympics Central Region Bocce Invitational and introduced the teams from College Station, Conroe, Texas, Eastern Texas, Kimble, Texas, Coryell, Gatesville, Waco, Mexia, Austin, Temple, and Killeen.

Bill Lutz sang the National Anthem and Pastor Ricky Lindsay from Heritage Country Church led everyone in prayer.

Bazar said, "Today, the torch will be passed from one end of our arena to the other. Welcome that flame of hope as it symbolizes the courage and sportsmanship of all of our Special Olympics athletes. These athletes have trained long and hard for today's competition. We wish them the best as they compete."

He then acknowledged and thanked Representative Hillary Hickland for coming to and supporting the event.

Hickland said, "Ladies and gentlemen, it is my pleasure to now officially declare the 2026 Central Region Bocce Invitational Open. Let the games begin."

As the torch was walked by players paired with a first responder, the audience applauded and cheered.

Many of the players sat in the stands with their family and friends until called to play their bocci match.

The Unified Champion School Specialist and LETR Coordinator, Liz Jones, said, "This is just such a rewarding experience anytime we do our competitions. Every competition we heat and division by age, ability, and gender. Every bracket is going to have first through fourth place. Everybody has the chance to compete to their best ability to get first place. But here it's going to be first through fourth place. Yesterday, we did all of our school-based teams."

Statewide Development Associate, Mary Berry shared about the bocce history for Special Olympics Texas with this being the first year for them to compete in Salado.

Berry said, "For years this is our favorite sport. Our athletes love it and we love to make them proud. It's kind of like bowling, but it's on grass, or on dirt. It's making the athletes more proud and explain the roles to volunteers."

Kasey Gilbert, part of the Heritage Country Church Special Events Center arena team, said, "It's our first year, so we're kind of following the Special Olympics team's lead. We offered this arena up for them and brought all our volunteers in, and it's been really fun."

Krissa Scott, from the team Incredibles, from Waco, has competed for nine years in the Special Olympics, starting in middle school.

Scott said, "It's big. Every time I do Special Olympics sports, I usually get gold."

Aunt Jena Eilers was supporting her nephew, Angelo Garcia, from Team Incredibles. "I love it. It gives him an opportunity to get out and have fun and really Some of these kids are really, really good. And he not only does bocce. He does golf, and he does bowling. Some of these kids are pretty impressive, so no matter what the disability, they can still get out there. But the best thing is they have fun, so it's not a lot of stress on them. Even if you don't have a kid, it's just fun to go and watch the smiles and watch the laughter."

Over 100 volunteers helped with the two day event including first responders. Next year the Special Olympics Texas Bocce Competition Bocce competition with be held in mid-Sep. likely at the Heritage Country Church Special Events Center. Special Olympics Texas is a 501c3 nonprofit.



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Not a Parlor Trick — A Miracle



John C. Perry

A while back, I was witnessing to a man who told me he had read the Bible from cover to cover but couldn't bring himself to believe in miracles. "Show me a miracle happening today," he challenged.

I didn't reach for ancient history; I reached for family. I told him about two of my grandsons. One survived a terrifying brain tumor; the other entered this world dangerously premature, fighting for every breath against steep odds. Both are alive today, healthy, thriving young men through what our family considers the unmistakable grace of God.

He didn't blink. "That's not a miracle," he shrugged. "That's just statistics. Some make it, some don't. Pure chance."

His dismissive reply stung at first, but over time, it got me thinking. The skeptic was demanding a theatrical parlor trick, a sudden, something which defied the laws of nature. But perhaps we who believe sometimes fall into a similar trap. When we reserve the word "miracle" only for rare, headlinegrabbing rescues, do we unintentionally paint God as an absentee landlord who only drops by on special occasions?

God's provision rarely looks like lightning across an empty sky; more often, it looks like daily faithfulness. Four years ago, about fifteen of us gathered in Salado with nothing more than a shared desire to plant a Biblebased congregation rooted in our Methodist heritage.

Today, our numbers have quadrupled. We worship in portable buildings on land owned free and clear. We have been gifted $500,000 toward a permanent sanctuary, along with a challenge grant that will match another $500,000 if we raise it. Is a milliondollar gift to a small church a miracle, or simply God working through His people?

We are watching generous hearts step forward, preparing the way for us to break ground next year. Is a Biblebased congregation taking root under the shade of Texas live oaks a parlor trick? Of course not. But it is God moving through ordinary hands, step by faithful step.

In Scripture, the writers rarely used our modern word "miracle." Instead, they spoke of "signs" and "wonders." When God provided manna in Exodus 16, He didn't drop a feast from the sky all at once; He provided just enough for each day, reminding His people to trust the Giver.

What I failed to tell that man is this: the parlor trick miracles he demanded aren't the ones God usually gives.

My grandsons taught me this: miracles don't always break the laws of nature; sometimes they simply reveal the God who wrote them and His plan for them. Each of them survived what should have taken them, one a brain tumor, the other a perilous, premature birth, and their lives today stand as quiet testimonies to the goodness of God.

They're reminders. Signs. Wonders. Evidence that the same God who fed His people in the wilderness is still feeding His people today, in hospital rooms, in small churches, in families like ours. If you're looking for a miracle, start with the young men who weren't supposed to be here and now stand tall as living proof of God's quiet, continual mercy!

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

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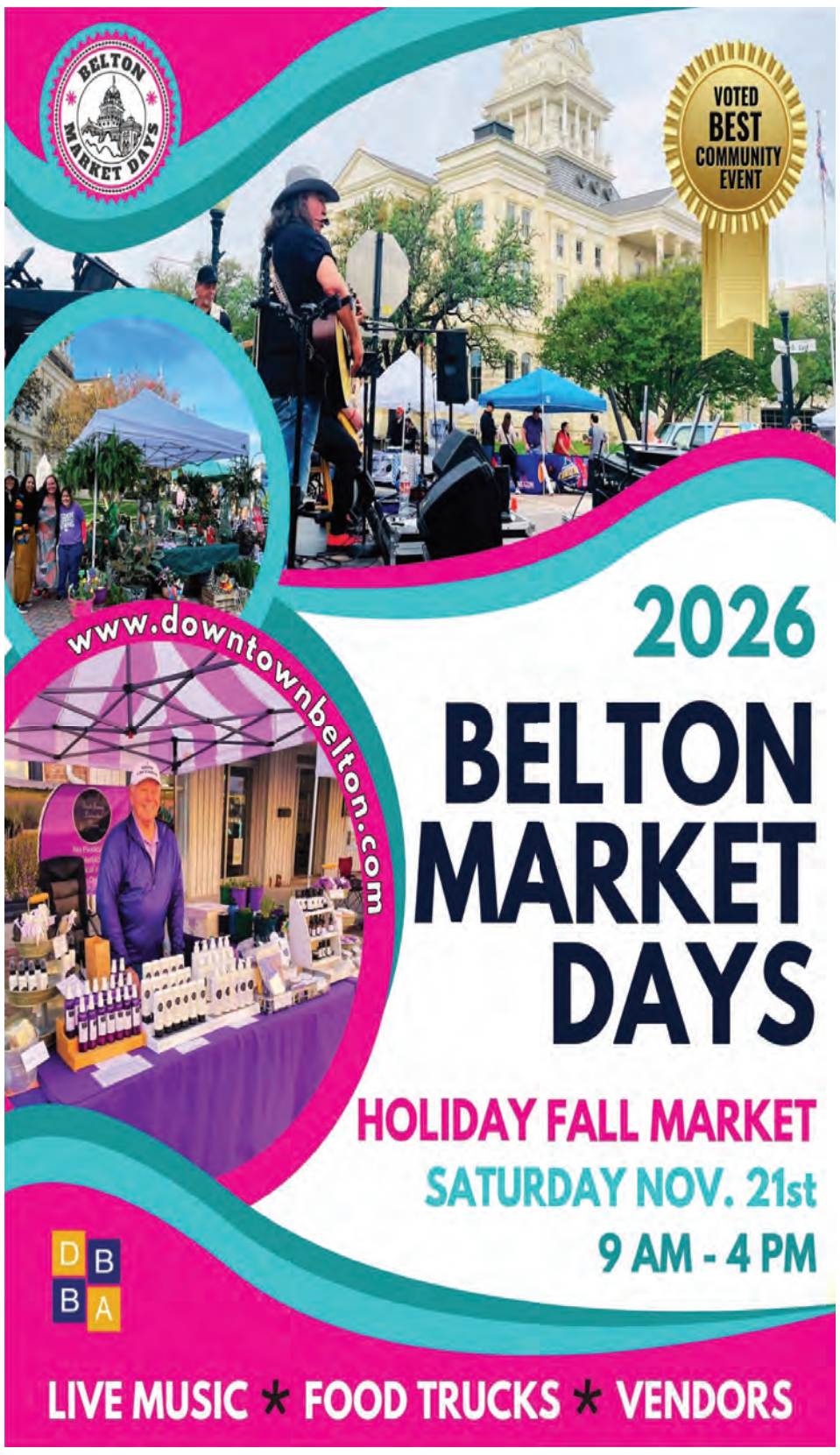


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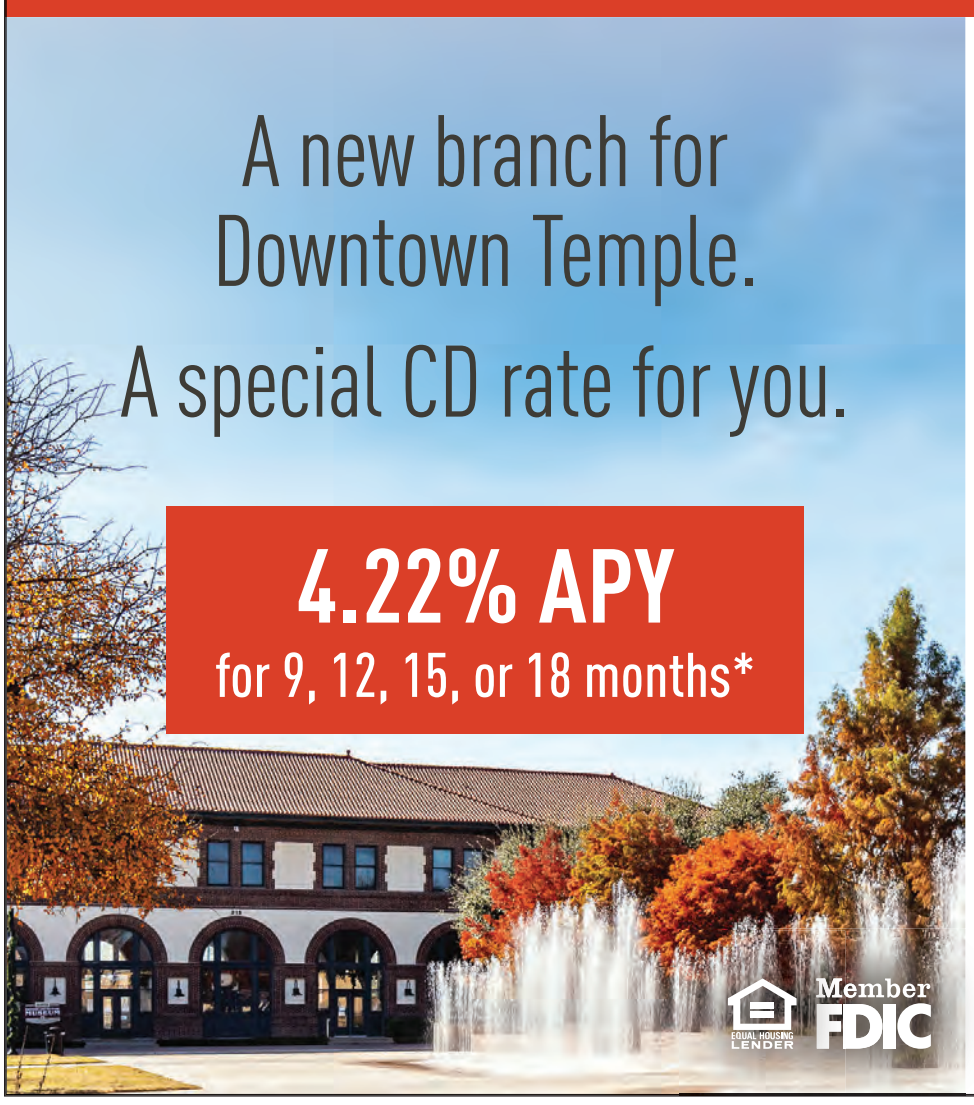
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SPORTS



Belton hosts University on Thursday in final home game of 2026





BELTON JOURNAL/Tony Adams

By Tony Adams
The Belton Journal

The Belton Tigers will host the University Trojans on Thursday in a critical District 8-5A-II battle at Tiger Field.

Kickoff is at 7 pm and will be broadcast on Dave Campbell's Texas Sports/NFHSNetwork.com (subscription required).

Belton (6-2 overall, 3-0 District 8-5A-II) is coming off a wild 57-48 win over Ellison last Friday at Tiger Field.

After having allowed an opening Ellison touchdown, the Tigers scored six of the next seven touchdowns to open a 27-point lead late in the third quarter, 41-14.

The Eagles began to put together a rally where they outscored Belton 34-16 over the final quarter and a half. Special teams came up with a point-after kick block, block return lateral from Graham Chambley to Anthony Garcia for a two-point conversion, and two-point conversion stop to aid the Tigers in holding off the Eagles.

Belton accumulated 418 passing yards and 141 rushing yards.

Will Shepard went 22-of-32 to 380 yards, tossed sev-

See **BELTON TIGERS**
Page B3





BELTON JOURNAL/Tony Adams

Lake Belton's six-year playoff streak ends with tiebreaker loss to Copperas Cove

By Aries Ramos
The Belton Journal

Lake Belton gave itself the perfect start, but Copperas Cove answered with three straight sets to end the Broncos' season Monday night at Tiger Gym. The Bulldawgs won 25-27, 25-12, 25-22, 25-20 to claim fourth place in District 12-6A and the district's final

See **LADY TIGERS**
Page B3

Lake Belton hosts Chaparral with playoff hopes on the line

By Aries Ramos
The Belton Journal

Fresh off one of their most complete performances of the season, the Lake Belton Broncos return home Friday night with a chance to keep their playoff hopes moving in the right direction. The Broncos (4-4, 1-3) host the Killeen Chaparral Bobcats (2-6, 1-3) in a District 12-6A matchup, with kickoff set for 7 p.m.

Both teams enter the game with identical district records. For Lake Belton, a win would keep its postseason push alive with the season winding down. For Chaparral, Friday is a chance to bounce back from a rough week and salvage something from the final stretch of the year.

Lake Belton is coming off a 52-21 win over Bryan, a game the Broncos controlled from the opening drive. Quarterback Jessiah James was nearly unstoppable, combining for multiple touchdowns as Lake Belton built a 38-14 halftime lead and never looked back. Zion Harness broke free for a long touchdown before the half, Justyce Hendricks found the end zone through the air, and Adrian Pippins carried the load on the ground.

The challenge now is carrying that momentum into the final weeks. The Broncos have shown they can put

See **BRONCOS**
Page B3

Lady Tigers' season ends at Region II-5A cross country meet

By Clay Whittington
The Belton Journal

The Lady Tigers placed 17th at Tuesday's Region II-5A cross country meet.

Led by junior Isabella Warner, who completed the five-kilometer course at Fort Worth's Rolling Hills Soccer Complex in 20 minutes, 54.10 seconds to place 71st individually, Belton tallied 454 points.

Warner's time was complemented by sophomore Ayla Wakershauser (84th, 21:15.20) and senior Nataly Valdez (88th, 21:21.00), who each landed among the first 90 finishers. The score was completed by sophomores Natalie Mott (128th, 22:50.50) and Markayla Allen (131st, 22:55.70).

While their times did not count toward the team total, the Lady Tigers were also represented by sophomore Leimya Palomares (140th, 23:21.80) and freshman Kate Jones (150th, 23:51.50).

Dallas Highland Park amassed 43 points en route to capturing the team title, edging out runner-up Lucas Lovejoy (2nd, 52) by a mere nine points, while Melissa (3rd, 111) and Grapevine (4th, 123) also earned berths to the upcoming University Interscholastic League Class 5A State Championship.

In addition to the top four teams, the top 10 individuals not on an advancing team qualified for state, and the group was highlighted by champion Amy Vazquez. The Tyler senior finished in 17:43.50.

She will be joined Birdville junior Sofia Phillips (5th, 18:06.40) and senior Kyrah Porter (28th, 19:27.40), Frisco Centennial seniors Nandini Vegesana (7th, 18:11.00) and Anastasia Usovich (24th, 19:12.30), McKinney North sophomore Avaya Perkins (8th, 18:18.20), Dallas Wilson freshman Annabelle Henderson (14th, 18:47.00), Nacogdoches sophomore Mia Perez (15th, 18:51.40), Midlothian Heritage senior Zoe Willoughby (18th, 18:56.60) and Frisco Liberty freshman Cecelia McCully (19th, 19:00.50).

The Class 5A state girls race will be run Nov. 7 at 8:15 a.m. at Round Rock's Old Settlers Park.

Lake Belton produce pair of top-21 showings at regionals

By Clay Whittington
The Belton Journal

The Broncos and Lady Broncos have run their last race.

After a season of dedicating themselves to the sport, Lake Belton's cross country season came to a close Monday at the Region II-6A meet — the final stop before the University Interscholastic League State Championships.

Competing at Fort Worth's Rolling Hills Soccer Complex, the Broncos placed 19th, amassing 472 points, while the Lady Broncos were 21st (538).

In the boys division, senior Wyatt Potts led Lake Belton, completing the five-kilometer course in 16 minutes, 11.20 seconds, while sophomore teammate Drew Houston (94th, 17:00.00) also cracked the top 100.

Rounding out the Broncos' score was senior Jack McCullagh (111th, 17:11.80), junior Cooper Schels (139th, 17:36.80) and senior Austin Adams (152nd, 17:54.30).

Additionally, junior Tyler Adkins-Beltran (158th, 18:01.20) and senior Josiah Briggs (161st, 18:08.70) also represented Lake Belton, but their times did not count toward the team total.

Conroe The Woodlands (1st, 49) claimed the team title behind a trio of top-10 finishers, including individual champion Elton Martin (1st, 14:25.00), while Conroe Woodlands College Park (2nd, 82), Conroe (3rd, 145) and Mansfield Lake Ridge (4th, 179) also earned state berths.

Along with the top four teams, the top 10 individuals not on a qualifying team advanced to state.

Garland Sachse senior Samuel Ledbetter (3rd, 14:58.30) and junior Dominic Richardson (9th, 15:23.50), Tomball juniors Liam Zimmerman (4th, 15:03.10) and Landon Lipasek (14th, 15:37.30), Cypress Woods junior Landon Deas (16th, 15:38.10), Wylie East senior Michael Price (21st, 15:44.90), Rockwall Heath sophomore Chance Anderson (13th, 15:27.10), Rockwall seniors Matthew Kinniburgh (8th, 15:18.50) and Jack Draper (12th, 15:26.30) and Bryan senior Diego Duran (7th, 15:14.80) occupied the spots.

The Woodlands (1st, 35) also won the girls team title thanks in part to four top-10 times, while Woodlands College Park (2nd, 90), Tomball Memorial (3rd, 146) and Wylie East (4th, 203) followed.

Wylie freshman Eliana Williams won the individual championship in 17:49.30, and she will be joined at state by Conroe Grand Oaks sophomore Sophia Domosiaris (11th, 18:26.40), Waxahachie junior Reese Bartos (13th, 18:37.10), Lake Ridge junior Emily Matsler (14th, 18:38.00), Rockwall junior Kenedy Card (16th, 18:39.30), Klein Cain freshman Shae Little (7th, 18:16.00), Magnolia sophomore Cheyenne Jones (10th, 18:19.50), Conroe Oak Ridge sophomore Presley Aviles (12th, 18:32.50), Bryan senior Ava Braden (15th, 18:38.20) and Heath junior Savannah McDonald (17th, 18:39.80).

The Lady Broncos were paced by sophomore Keira Dzenowski (114th, 20:41.10), and the squad's four remaining scorers each crossed the finish line within the next 40 seconds.

Lucy Loa, a junior, was 123rd (20:56.00), senior Shreya Muni was 124th (21:03.90), junior Elizabeth Sandlin was 129th (21:11.40), and senior Madelyn Rivas was 132nd (21:18.80).

Also racing for Lake Belton was freshman Amara Bodeman (135th, 21:20.70) and senior Sarah Gray (146th, 21:56.00).

The Class 6A state meet is set for Nov. 6 at Round Rock's Old Settlers Park.



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Sports Briefs

By Clay Whittington
The Belton Journal

Belton hosted a quad meet last week and delivered a swell of impressive performances.

Competing against Lake Belton, New Tech and Leander Rouse, Jamie Hall emerged with a pair of gold medals, winning the 200-yard individual medley in 2 minutes, 20.27 seconds and the 500 freestyle in 5:34.39.

The showing was complemented by teammates Kirra Martin, who was second (2:10.69) in the 200 freestyle, and Ema Whitzel, who was second (28.79) in the 50 freestyle and third (1:16.86) the 100 backstroke.

Lillie Pasco joined the trio to win the 200 medley relay with a time of 2:07.19.

In the boys division, Adrien Oros won the 100 butterfly in 59.70 and was second (2:13.70) in the 200 medley.

Additionally, Matias Arevalo Pinzon (2nd, 2:22.74) and Luke Brunsting (3rd, 2:23.81) placed consecutively in the 200 freestyle, and Brunsting added a fifth-place showing in the 100 breaststroke. Wyatt Nelson and Micah Rodriguez were seventh and eighth, respectively, in the event.

Brunsting, Rodriguez, Nelson and Oros combined to finish second in the 200 freestyle relay (1:45.43) and the 400 freestyle relay (3:50.35).

The showings helped the Lady Tigers defeat New Tech 118-31, while the Tigers beat Lake Belton 101-92 and New Tech 106-45.

BASKETBALL

Practice for the upcoming girls basketball season is underway with scrimmages beginning Saturday.

The first day for interschool competition is Nov. 6.

Boys teams are also practicing after starting Wednesday.

The Broncos will hold tryouts beginning Nov. 9.

The two-day process will run from 7:45 a.m. to 9:20 a.m. each day for freshmen and from 4:30 p.m. to 5:45 p.m. each day for sophomores, juniors and seniors.

All participants must be academically eligible, have a current physical on file with the school and submit all necessary paperwork in advance.

BELTON ISD ATHLETICS

Varsity football players will be permitted to tryout after the football season concludes.

A preseason parent meeting for potential players at Lake Belton will be held Nov. 12 at 6:15 p.m. inside the school's gymnasium.

All parents and guardians are encouraged to attend.

Among the topics being discussed will be program expectations and guidelines, schedules and tournaments along with being introduced to the coaching staff.

For more information, contact Broncos head coach Jason Fossett at Jason.Fossett@BISD.net.

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.

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Lady Tigers - From Page B1

playoff spot.

Both teams came in at 5-7 in district play with a postseason berth on the line, and neither was short on motivation. The teams had split their two regular season meetings, each winning on the opponent's home floor setting up a 4th place tie breaker that had everyone on the edge of their seat.

Cove looked like it would take the first set. After a tight start, the Bulldawgs scored four straight points to go up 14-9, and later stretched the lead to 18-12.

Lake Belton refused to fold. Kills from Ava Wood and Madi Jackman, along with an ace from Haylee Kasner, cut the deficit to 20-18 and swung the energy back to the Broncos' side. The set went past 25, and Lake Belton came up with the final two points. Kylie Morgenroth served an ace, and Gracie Lott finished it with a kill to give the Broncos a 27-25 win and a 1-0 lead.

That comeback didn't carry over. Cove scored seven straight points early in the second set to jump out 8-2, and the Broncos never found their footing. The Bulldawgs pushed the lead to 18-9 and closed it out 25-12, with Kaitlyn Urquidez putting down back to back kills to finish the set and tie the match.

The third set was the most competitive of the night. Cove held an 18-16 edge before Lake Belton surged ahead 21-19, putting the Broncos four points away from a 2-1 lead. Cove responded, retaking the lead at 23-22 and then closing out a 25-22 win to move one set away from the postseason.

The Bulldawgs carried that energy into the fourth set and jumped ahead 12-6. Lake Belton kept fighting and stayed within reach at 19-15, but Cove held on down the stretch to take the set 25-20 and the match.

The loss brings Lake Belton's season to a close and ends a run of six straight playoff appearances for a program that has made a habit of playing into November. The Broncos showed plenty of fight, especially in a first set comeback that had them in control early, but Cove's run in the second set changed the match. Lake Belton's chance to tie it up slipped away in the closing points of the third.

For Copperas Cove, the win keeps alive a playoff streak that now reaches back two decades. The Bulldawgs will carry that momentum into the postseason.

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Belton Tigers- From Page B1

en touchdowns and three interceptions. Sawyer Harbin added 3-of-4 completions for 38 yards and an interception.

Four different Tigers had touchdown receptions and eight players caught passes. Gavin Ross caught 10 passes for 135 yards and three scores. Josh Brown caught three passes for 58 yards and two touchdowns. Javid Nua Planz rushed for 87 yards, caught two passes for 91 yards and a 54-yard touchdown pass. Cason Morton caught two passes, and the 29-yard touchdown pass to open the Tigers' scoring in the game.

Laboris Creagh had 189 rushing yards and 30 receiving yards, having accounted for four touchdowns. Marlyn Smith ran for 114 yards and two touchdowns and threw for 181 yards, two touchdowns and two interceptions. Tyler Reed had 133 receiving yards and two touchdowns.

The Tigers' defense got stops when they needed them, which included a huge three-and-out late in the fourth quarter.

Azian Wilkinson and Oakley Torres each ten tackles, Kainyn Smith had three sacks, Rowdy Watson added two sacks, and Chambley and Garcia each had an interception and fumble recovery.

"I am proud of our effort against an excellent coached team in the Eagles," Belton head coach Joshua Mann said. "We had some big plays in all three facets."

Belton will shift their focus to University (3-5 overall, 1-2 District 8-5A-II), who held off Rudder 28-21 for their first district win at the season at Waco ISD Stadium.

Kash Konowal was 11-of-24 passing for 146 yards passing and added 60 yards on the ground. Eric Anthony Monrial Gutierrez had 82 yards rushing, and Montrell Phenix added 80 receiving yards and two touchdowns.

Josiah Watson had 18 tackles, which included four tackles for loss. Davontrae Kirkland added ten tackles and three TFL, and Jayden Navarro had two interceptions.

Through eight games, the Tigers average 241.1 yards passing, 188.4 yards rushing, and 457.9 all-purpose yards per game.

Shepard (124-of-178, 1,770 passing yards, 23 TDs, 8 INTs, 37-151 rushing yards, 4 TDs) will get the call at quarterback. The Tigers' running back committee features Brody Lee (87-502, 3 TDs), Nash Jordan (86-470, 2 TDs), and Planz (47-322, 2 TDs).

Ross (63-905, 13 TD receptions, 4 TD runs), Morton (14-217, 3 TDs), Evan Echipare (11-193, TD), Josh Brown (10-191, 3 TDs), and Braxton Adcock (18-183, TD) are all reliable pieces of the Tigers' receiving corps.

The offensive line has given the passing and receiving facets excellent blocking to move the Big Red O, as the team averages 36.7 points per game, and defense allots 24.6 per contest.

Belton had 49 tackles for loss, 35 quarterback hurries, 29 pass defenses, 19 interceptions, 17 sacks, 7 forced fumbles, and 4 fumble recoveries.

Wilkinson (89 tackles, 51 solos), Torres (62 tackles, 11 TFLs, 4 sacks), Garcia (31 tackles, 5 INTs, fumble recovery), Chambley (29 tackles, 13 pass defended, 4 INTs, 3 forced fumbles), and Kainyn Smith (24 tackles, 17 solos, 11 TFL, eight sacks) are among the primary stoppers on the Tigers' defense.

University averages 191.1 rushing yards and 90.6 yards passing, The Trojans allotted 33.1 points and scored 17.6 per contest.

Ray Brown, Jr. (131-743, 8 TDs) is the primary running back for the Trojans. Phenix (20-314, 4 TDs) and Kahron Betters (14-207, 2 TDs) are two of the receivers that the Trojans lean on.

Watson (68 tackles, 48 solos, 12 TFL), LaQuan Hughes (66 tackles, 38 solos), and Khylan Estelle (56 tackles, 41 solos) are the key three defenders for the Trojans.

"In a short week, we got back to work early," Mann said. "We need to install a schematic to plan for University, which is a different look than Ellison."

Broncos - From Page B1

up points in bunches, and another strong offensive showing at home could go a long way toward strengthening their playoff case.

Chaparral, meanwhile, is looking to regroup after a 65-6 loss to Harker Heights last week. With just two games left on the schedule, the Bobcats are hoping to turn things around, and they have a player capable of making that happen.

Senior quarterback Bryson Coleman is the engine of the Chaparral offense. Coleman has thrown for more than 1,200 yards and 11 touchdowns this season, but his legs may be the bigger concern for the Lake Belton defense. He has added more than 500 rushing yards and eight rushing touchdowns, making him a dual threat who can extend plays and pick up yards when a play breaks down.

Containing Coleman will likely be the top priority for the Broncos' defense. Keeping him in the pocket and limiting his scrambles could force Chaparral into longer down and distance situations, which plays into Lake Belton's hands.

Coleman's top target is sophomore La'Daevion Moore, who has emerged as one of the Bobcats' most versatile players. Moore leads the receiving corps with 400 yards and four touchdowns, and he also lines up in the secondary as a defensive back. His two way role means he could spend plenty of time on the field Friday, both catching passes and trying to slow down the Lake Belton passing game.

On the defensive side, junior defensive back Tyrus Wilson leads Chaparral with 43 tackles. Wilson will be tasked with helping contain a Broncos offense that showed off its big play ability against Bryan. Up front, senior defensive lineman Shaun Fuller has been a disruptive presence, recording 30 total tackles and eight tackles for loss. Fuller's ability to get into the backfield could test the Lake Belton offensive line and put pressure on James.

For Chaparral, an upset would require a big night from Coleman and a defense that can find a way to slow down one of the more explosive offenses it has seen this season.

Belton Chamber Better Together Spur Classic Golf Tournament

Special to Journal

The Belton Area Chamber of Commerce announced the winners of the Better Together Spur Classic Golf Tournament presented by Fairway Independent Mortgage (The Wood Group and Fairway 365) held Friday, October 23 at Mill Creek Country Club. Proceeds from the golf tournament are used annually to fund scholarships for Belton ISD students.

The Champions of the 4-person scramble, finishing with an impressive team score of 52, were from First Texas Bank and included Jordan Samfield, Jack Folsom, Thomas Cooper, and Chris Wetherby. The winning team members were awarded championship spurs and cash prizes.

Cash prizes were also awarded to random placed teams, including the 5th place team from UMHB, and the 9th place team from Horizon Bank. Vista Real Estate won the scorecard draw for green fee and cart vouchers at Mill Creek.

Thomas Cooper won the Closest to the Pin contest with a great shot landing within three feet on Creek 1, Hole #7; and Jake Dragoo won the Longest Drive contest on Creek 1, Hole #1.

Several participants won prizes in special drawings for a variety of items including a Ninja Woodfire Grill, Yeti coolers, totes and jugs provided by Keith Ace Hardware; golf bag, umbrella and other assorted items donated by Jack Hilliard Distributing; Wine Basket from Twin Liquors; and Texas Lottery tickets sponsored by Express Employment Professionals.

"We had a very successful experience with this golf tournament and were excited to have beautiful weather for golf," stated Teri Champlin, Chamber Board Past Chair and member of the Golf Tournament Planning Committee. "We appreciate all the sponsors who helped make it successful, and the enthusiasm of our participants," added Champlin.

Participants and sponsors enjoyed a beautiful day at Mill Creek, including Chick-fil-A breakfast provided by Chamber Board Secretary Rebecca Briggs with Imperium Real Estate, Schoepf's BBQ sausage wraps, and beverages from Jack Hilliard Distributing.

In addition to the Presenting Sponsors: The Wood Group of Fairway Independent Mortgage and Fairway 365; Gold Spur Hole Sponsors included: Crossroads Church, First Texas Bank, Horizon Bank, and Scot Hrbacek, CFP with Edward Jones. Silver Spur Sponsors included Anchor Bay Packaging, Extraco Banks, Grandview Bank, KPA Engineers, UMHB, and Vista Real Estate.

"We are excited to provide these great opportunities for our members, businesses, and community to come together," stated Randy Pittenger, Chamber President/CEO. "We are especially thankful for the leadership of our Board of Directors in planning activities for our community. Our goal is always to support our business community in making the Belton area a great place to

See GOLF Page B6



Debunking five common Social Security myth

Scot Hrbacek, CFP® *Financial Advisor*

Social Security is often a cornerstone of retirement income, but it's often misunderstood, leading to confusion, worry and poor planning decisions. Here's the truth behind five of the most common misconceptions.

First, it's not going broke: if no action is taken, benefits could drop around 2032, but policymakers have options to strengthen it.
Second, it won't replace everything. It covers roughly 40% of your income, so retirement savings are still critical.
Third, claiming early and working won't permanently reduce benefits; payments are later increased for reductions that occurred before full retirement age.
Fourth, if an ex-spouse claims benefits based on your earnings record it doesn't reduce your benefit.
And fifth, benefits are still taxable if your combined income exceeds certain thresholds, though some temporary deductions exist.
The more you understand Social Security, the more control you have over your retirement outcome. Grounding your decisions in facts rather than assumptions can make a meaningful difference in your long-term financial security.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Edward Jones, Member SIPC

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THE BELTON JOURNAL

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LEGALS

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF COBB COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA
JUSTIN WHEELER, Plaintiff, V.
BRITTANY MORRIS, Defendant CIVIL ACTION FILE NO. 25CV08246

NOTICE OF SUMMONS - SERVICE BY PUBLICATION
TO: BRITTANY MORRIS, Defendant Named Above:
You are hereby notified that the above-styled action for Legitimation and custody was filed against you in said court on October 23, 2025, and that by reason of an Order for service of
summons by publication entered by the Court on June 1, 2026, you are hereby commanded and
required to file with the Clerk of said Court and serve upon Justin Wheeler, Plaintiff, by and
through his counsel of record, W. Henry Clerke, IV, whose address is 630 Village Trace, Building
15, Suite E, Marietta, Georgia 30067, an Answer within sixty (60) days of the date of the Order
for Service by Publication. If you fail to do so, Judgment by Default will be taken against you for
the relief demanded in the Petition.
Witness the Honorable Ann B. Harris, Judge of said Court.
This the 8th day of June 2026.
Miya Rivers , Clerk of Cobb County Superior Court
10.08,10.15.10.22,10.29 pd

CITATION BY PUBLICATION
THE STATE OF TEXAS COUNTY OF BELL
NOTICE TO DEFENDANT: "You have been sued. You may employ an attorney. If you or your attorney do not file written answer with the clerk who issued this citation by 10:00 am on the Monday next following the expiration of 42 days after the date this citation was issued, default judgment may be taken against you."

To: UNKNOWN HEIRS AT LAW OF DAVID VANHORN A/K/A DAVID VAN HORN, DECEASED

YOU ARE HEREBY COMMANDED to appear before the 169"" Judicial District Court of Bell County, Texas in the Courthouse in the City of Belton, Texas at or before 10:00 o'clock A.M. Monday, the 21st day of DECEMBER 2026, being the Monday next after the expiration of forty-two days after this citation is issued, and you are hereby required then and there to appear and file written answer to the First Amended

LEGALS

Petition, filed in said Court on September 15, 2026, in suit numbered 25DCV357042 on the docket of said court, wherein Mill City Mortgage Loan Trust 2019-GS1, Plaintiff, v. David Vanhorn a/k/a David Van Horn and Rosa Vanhorn a/ k/a Rosa Van Horn and The Heirs at Law of Rosa Vanhorn a/k/a Rosa Van Horn, Deceased, Defendants.

The Petition seeks an order to foreclose the lien on the property and assert claim to the property located at 4457 West Drive, Belton, TX 76513 and legally described as: Being All That Certain Tract Of Land Containing 0.435 Acre, Being The East One-Half (E 1/2) Of Lots And 4, Block 3, Lakewood Terrace, Subdivision In Bell County, Texas, According To The Map Or Plat Of Record In Cabinet A, Slide 135-C, Plat Records Of Bell County, Texas, And Being The Same Tract Of Land Conveyed To David And Rosa Van Horn In Deed Recorded In Volume 3202, Page 350, Official Public Records Of Real Property, Bell County, Texas, And Being More Particularly Described As Follows:

Beginning At 3/4 Inch Iron Pipe Found At The Northeast Corner Of Said Lot 4, Being On The South Right-Of-Way Line Of West Drive And On The West Right-Of-Way Line Of Lakewood Lane, Gravel Road, For The Northeast Corner Of The Herein Described Tract;

Thence South 19 Degrees 12 Minutes West 160.06 Feet (Bearing Base) Along The West Right-Of-Way Line Of Said Lakewood Lane, To 1/2 Inch Iron Rod Found At The Northeast Corner Of Lot 2;

Thence North 70 Degrees 57 Minutes 15 Seconds West -118.45 Feet Along The North Line Of Said Lot 2, To 1/2 Inch Iron Rod Set At The Southeast Corner Of Tract Of Land Conveyed As The Fourth Tract To li Properties In Deed Recorded In Volume 3049, Page 196, Official Public Records of Real Property, Bell County, Texas;

Thence North 19 Degrees 13 Minutes East 160.19 Feet (Record 159.95 Feet) Along The East Line Of Said Properties Tract, To 1/2 Inch Iron Rod Set On The South Right-Of-Way Line Of Said West Drive, Being The North Line Of Said Lot 4, For The Northwest Corner Of The Herein Described Tract;

Thence South 70 Degrees 53 Minutes 24 Seconds East 118.40 Feet (Record South 71 Degrees East) Along The South Line Of Said Right-Of-Way, To The Point Of Beginning And Containing 0.435 Acre Of Land

Note: The Company Does Not Represent That The Above Acreage Or Square Footage Calculations Are Correct.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL OF SAID COURT at Belton, Texas this 20th day of OCTOBER 2026.

Misty Cortez District clerk signature & Seal

Issued at the request of: LOGS Legal Group LLP Counsel for Plaintiff Address: 14150 Huffmeister Road, Suite 106, Cypress, TX 77429, Mailing Address: 8520 Cliff Cameron Drive, Suite 330 Charlotte, NC 28269 (Clerk info)

This document not prepared by the Bell County District Clerk.
10.29, 11.05,11.12,11.19

LEGALS

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of JAMES HENRY VAUGH, JR., Deceased, were issued on October 22, 2026, in Cause No. 26CPB00565, pending in the County Court at Law No. 1 of Bell County, Texas, to: GEORGIA H. VAUGHN.
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. ESTATE OF JAMES HENRY VAUGHN, JR., c/o: GEORGIA H. VAUGHN, 4121 Sunflower Ln., Temple, Texas 76502
DATED the 23rd day of October 2026.
KAREN M. VILLANUEVA, State Bar No.: 24102608, Telephone: (254) 771-1855, Facsimile: (254) 771-2082, E-mail: karen@templelawoffice.com
10.29

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of DIANNE W. STAUB, Deceased, were issued on October 22, 2026, in Cause No. 26CPB00560, pending in the County Court at Law No. 1 of Bell County, Texas, to: DAVID L. STAUB.
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. ESTATE OF DIANNE W. STAUB, c/o: DAVID L. STAUB, 4014 Valley View Dr., Temple, Texas 76502
DATED the 23rd day of October, 2026.
KAREN M. VILLANUEVA, State Bar No.: 24102608, Telephone: (254) 771-1855, Facsimile: (254) 771-2082, E-mail: karen@templelawoffice.com
10.29

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of SHARRON M. MORROW, Deceased, were issued on October 22, 2026, in Cause No. 26CPB00548, pending in the County Court at Law No. 1 of Bell County, Texas, to: WENDY KATHLEEN LEVELL.
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. ESTATE OF SHARRON M. MORROW, c/o: WENDY KATHLEEN LEVELL, 1726 County Road 225, Hico, Texas 76457 DATED the 23rd day of October, 2026.
KAREN M. VILLANUEVA, State Bar No.: 24102608, Telephone: (254) 771-1855, Facsimile: (254) 771-2082, E-mail: karen@templelawoffice.com
10.29

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1/4 page 4.94 × 4.82 in.	**$115**	**3 columns** 4.9375 × 5 in.	**$89**
1/2 page 10 × 4.82 in.	**$215**	**6 columns** 10 × 5 in.	**$175**
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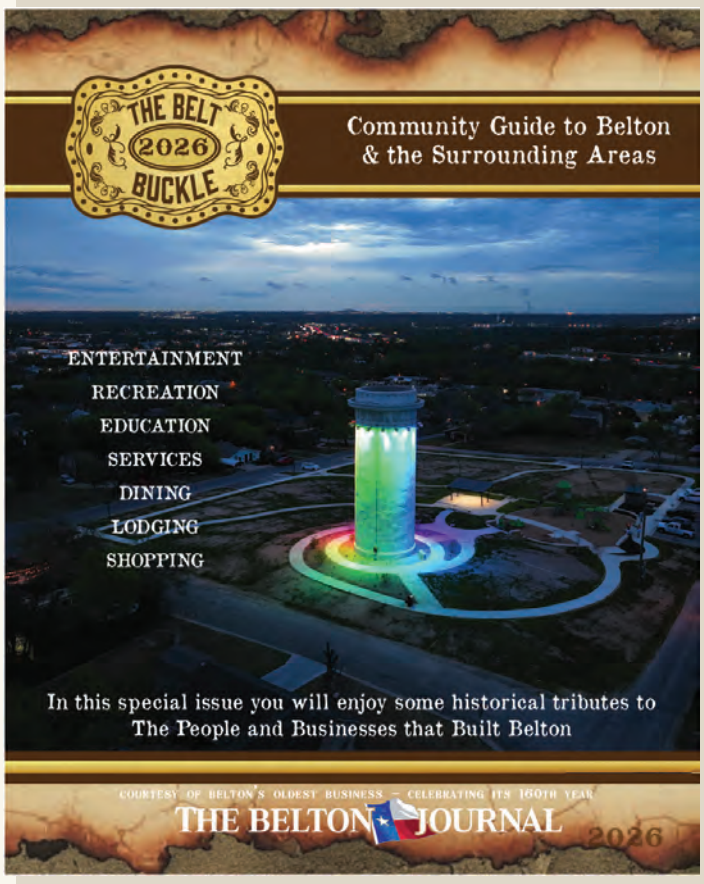


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November 14, 2026
Meal: 5:30 - 7:00 P.M.
Drive Thru
Take Out Available
All Major
Credit Cards
Accepted
Menu:
Sausage, Noodles, Pinto
Beans, Cole Slaw, Bread,
Beverages, Trimmings
and Dessert
Adult Plate: $20.00
Children's Plate
(10 & Under): $10.00

Belton ISD culinary students learn business side of food service

Special to the Journal

Culinary arts students at Belton High School and Lake Belton High School are gaining hands-on experience with the same type of point-of-sale technology used in restaurants and hospitality businesses across the industry.

Belton ISD has introduced Clover point-of-sale systems into its culinary programs, giving students experience that extends beyond preparing food to include customer service, payment processing, inventory management, and other front- and back-of-house restaurant operations.

"The goal is to make sure that we're aligning the learning happening inside our classrooms and career-aligned workspaces with the experiences students are going to have in the workforce," said Denise Ayres, Belton ISD PK-12 Director. "If they're already practicing and learning by doing what they're going to have to do on a job, they're going to be more ready for that job."

Unlike educational simulations, Clover is an industry-standard system designed for businesses. Students use the technology to take orders, process payments, input menus, manage inventory, and balance their tills. Individual employee codes also allow students to experience procedures like those they could encounter working in a restaurant.

The system connects both sides of restaurant operations. On the front end, students practice interacting with customers, taking orders, and handling transactions. Behind the scenes, they learn how menus, inventory, and preparation must work together to keep a food service operation running efficiently.

Those experiences also reinforce skills that reach beyond culinary arts, including math, customer service, budgeting, accounting, inventory management and entrepreneurship.

"It really is a complete, comprehensive industry experience," Ayres said. "Our goal is to train our students on industry-aligned equipment and practices, so they are prepared for what comes next."

Students are also putting those skills into practice with real customers. At Belton High School, culinary students regularly provide catering services, giving them direct experience serving customers and managing transactions. At Lake Belton High School, students primarily use the system to sell items to staff members, based on the structure of the culinary space and program.

By incorporating technology already used in the workforce, Belton ISD's culinary programs are giving students an opportunity to learn the business of food service alongside the craft of preparing it.

The experience is another way Career and Technical Education programs are connecting classroom learning to careers, allowing students to build practical skills and confidence before they ever step into their first industry job.





Courtesy photos

A market with a mission!
ST. NICHOLAS
MARKET
Proceeds support local ministries
of Christ Episcopal Church
Friday, November 6 | 9-4
Saturday, November 7 | 9-4
300 N. Main St. | Downtown Temple
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Shop over 75+ local vendors
FREE ENTRY
BREAKFAST WITH SANTA!
Saturday, November 7 | 9 AM
Enjoy breakfast, a special gift, and
photos with Santa and Mrs. Claus!
We are collecting non-perishable goods
for CTLC's Holiday Food Drive.
Bring a canned good to share!
stnicholasmarket.org

Golf - From Page B3

live, work, shop, play, and raise a family. Events like these provide opportunities for our community to celebrate together, as well as business exposure to potential customers."

For more information about the Belton Area Chamber of Commerce, visit our website at www.beltonchamber.com, call 254-939-3551, or email us at info@beltonchamber.com.



The Belton Journal

READERS' CHOICE 2026

Deadline: noon Friday, November 20, 2026

The Belton Journal is conducting a straw ballot of our readers to recognize the best of 2026. One winner per category will be announced in an upcoming special edition.

3 READERS • $50 CASH EACH

Three readers' entries will be selected at random.

VOTING RULES

1. All nominees must be in the Belton area.
2. Drop off ballots in the ballot box at The Belton Journal office, or mail to **210 N. Penelope, Belton, TX 76513.** Call **254-939-5754** for more information.
3. Ballots must be legible and received by **noon Friday, November 20, 2026.**
4. Complete at least **50% of the 2026 ballot** to be eligible for cash prize drawings.
5. For a category not listed, write the category and your selection at the bottom of the ballot.

BEST IN THE COUNTY

College _____
Elementary School _____
Middle School _____
High School _____
Community Event _____
County's Attraction _____
Church _____
Place to Meet People _____
Entertainment _____
Service Organization _____

SHOPPING

Flooring _____
Movie Theater _____
Wine Shop _____
Swimming Pool _____
Firearms _____
New Car Dealership _____
Used Car Dealership _____
Truck Dealership _____
Supermarket _____
Sporting Goods _____
Appliances _____
Pharmacy _____
Women's Wear _____
Children's Wear _____
Men's Wear _____
Shoes _____
Furniture _____
Tires _____
Chevy Dealership _____
Ford Dealership _____
Dodge Dealership _____
Nissan Dealership _____
Toyota Dealership _____
Florist _____
Bank _____
Office Supply _____
Convenience Store _____
Feed Store _____
Western Wear _____
Auto Parts _____
Farm Equipment _____
Wedding Cake _____
Print Shop _____
Building Supplies _____
Gift Shop _____
Lawn & Garden _____
Mattress Store _____
Antiques & Collectibles _____
Eyeglasses _____
Consignment Shop _____
Jewelry _____
Barber _____
Beauty Shop _____
Home Décor _____
Book Store _____

DINING

Meat Market _____
Chicken _____
Pizza _____
Salad Bar _____
Steaks _____
Hamburger _____
French Fries _____
Ice Cream/Yogurt _____
Seafood _____
Hot Dogs _____
BBQ _____
Desserts _____
Catfish _____
First Date Dining _____
Mexican _____
Hot Sauce _____
Chicken-Fried Steak _____
Fajitas _____
Enchiladas _____
Margaritas _____
Italian _____
Business Lunch _____
Oriental _____
Dining Atmosphere _____
Breakfast Taco _____
Buffet _____
Meet for Coffee _____
Catering _____

DINING continued from left

Liquor Store _____
Sushi _____
Take Guests To _____
Deli _____
Donuts _____
Sandwiches _____
Grill _____
Appetizers _____
Special Occasion _____
Take Out _____
Bakery _____

SERVICES

Clinic _____
Shipping Center _____
Chiropractor _____
Veterinarian _____
Oil Change _____
Air Conditioning _____
Insurance Agency _____
Gym _____
Spa _____
Limo _____
Car Rental _____
Real Estate Agency _____
Pest Control _____
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Assisted Living _____
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Title Company _____
Pawn Shop _____
Auto Repair _____
Day Care _____
Shoe Repair _____
Landscaping _____
Mortgage _____
Tax Service _____
Window Cleaning _____
Employment Agency _____
Counseling _____
Funeral Home _____
Property Management _____
Pet Grooming _____
Signs/Banners _____
Financial Advisor _____
Carpet Cleaning _____
Dental Office _____
Window Treatment _____
Alarm/Security _____
Credit Union _____
Orthodontist _____
Dermatology _____
Law Firm _____
Hearing Aids _____
House Leveling _____

PEOPLE

Please include where each individual works.

Waiter/Waitress _____
School Teacher _____
Nurse/Dental Assistant _____
Dentist _____
Bank Teller _____
Accountant _____
Local Band _____
Chiropractor _____
Barber _____
Beautician _____
Veterinarian _____
City Employee _____
Secretary _____
County Employee _____
Insurance Agent _____
Attorney _____
Mechanic _____
Electrician _____
Salesperson _____
Grocery Store Clerk _____
Boss _____
Radio News Anchor _____
Travel Agent _____
Unsung Hero _____

ONE ENTRY PER PERSON, PLEASE

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

MY VOTE FOR A CATEGORY NOT LISTED

Category: _____

My vote: _____

EDITORIAL

Pardon me, but your bias is showing

My Front Porch • Lynette Sowell

The more I see the news, whether it's real, #fakenews, #alternativenews, the more I believe that most of us really don't want new information at all.

I think most of us are full of it.

Bias, that is. It's called confirmation bias.

We've already made up our minds on an issue and we home in on whatever supports our opinions, whether we be right or wrong.

We look for what backs us up, because we can't be wrong. Or, can we?

One example of confirmation bias is dealing with teenagers. There's an age when some teenagers think their parents' ideas are lame at best, or their parents' ideas stupid beyond belief, at worst.

Anyone who has parented a teen knows that you can suggest a great idea to them, but because it comes from you, they ignore it. However, if their best friend or another adult of whom they are a fan comes out with the same idea, the teen thinks it's the best thing they've ever heard and should do it right away. Or, if they ask someone for advice, they keep going until they hear exactly what they want to hear.

Another example is election time. When candidates debated, I found it amusing to hear reactions from people I knew on both sides. Whoever they were, they believed their candidate had the best "showing" and therefore was truly the best candidate. Same debate!

Confirmation bias goes beyond elections and how teenagers filter information.

Confirmation bias pops up in how we do business, how we solve problems, how we make decisions and how we treat other people.

We might hear of what we think is a great idea proposed by an individual or group locally, but as soon as we learn who came up with the idea, does it lose its value?

The brain wants to hear what it already believes to be true and magnify that, but it discounts what goes against those beliefs.

This leads us to often ridicule those who believe differently than we do, on another side of an issue.

We want to be right about how we see the world, so we shy away from anything that goes against that.

I read an interesting quote about how this bias causes problems.

"If one were to attempt to identify a single problematic aspect of human reasoning that deserves attention above all others, the confirmation bias would have to be among the candidates for consideration. Many have written about this bias, and it appears to be sufficiently strong and pervasive that one is led to wonder whether the bias, by itself, might account for a significant fraction of the disputes, altercations, and misunderstandings that occur among individuals, groups, and nations,"

said a guy by the name of Raymond S. Nickerson.

Short version: our biases could be the reason that people get into disputes and misunderstandings in the first place.

It is a challenge to turn off that bias filter and truly listen to each other, but it can be done.

What problems could we solve, if we were to do that? What if we were willing to listen and maybe even change our minds on an issue?

Or maybe, at least, we wouldn't agree 100 percent, but there would be a lot less animosity going around.

X'd Out

Coffee Talk • Renae Brumbaugh Green

My daughter Charis teaches first grade. One of the benefits to me is that I get to hear some great stories, and yesterday was no exception. She called me multiple times, and I couldn't answer because I was teaching my own class. After several calls, I worried it might be an emergency. I excused myself (I can do that with college students) and called her back.

The emergency? A great story.

Charis doesn't use worksheets a lot. But when she does, she often chooses only certain questions for the students to answer. She walks them through the worksheet and has them place a big "X" through the questions they won't do. "We're not choosing to do this question, so let's mark it out so we don't get confused," she says. Pretty smart.

Yesterday, she gave a math test. As she was grading the completed tests, she noticed one girl's paper—we'll call her Emma—had several problems marked through with big X's. Charis called Emma to her desk to ask about those problems.

"I didn't want to do those."

Charis worked hard to keep a straight face. "This is a test. You have to do all of them."

"No. I put X's. I chose not to do those."

With some smooth talking and gentle coaxing from her teacher, Emma finally completed the X'd out math problems. But I'm on Team Emma. I think the X's count.

I've decided to apply the X system in my own life. I'm going to X out some of my bills this month and see what happens.

Though the X system may not be a practical—or reasonable—way to handle all of life's unpleasantries, I think it has some merit. What if I X'd out all the negative self-talk that floats through my mind? "Nope. I choose not to think this thought today."

What if I used this method when tempted to gossip? Big X. I choose not to do that.

I could X out all my worries, fears and anxieties.

I could X out *dusting*. (Okay... I'll probably dust again at some point in the future. But I reserve the right to X at will.)

The Bible tells us about the X method. It's actually the *toss* method, but it's the same principle. Christ tells us that when it comes to stressful things, we're supposed to wind up our pitcher's arm and throw those problems at Him. We don't have to keep up with them or carry them around. He loves us more than we can imagine, and He'll take care of it all. Trusting Him with our cares is called *faith,* and He loves it when we exercise that faith.

Interestingly, the letter X is the Greek letter Chi, which is the first letter in *Christ*. This symbol is often used as a shortened version of *Christ,* as in Xmas. So when we toss our cares to Christ, we can put a big mental X over them. *I choose not to worry about this. I've given it to Christ. It's His to handle.*

From now on, I'm going to focus on whatever is good and pure and noble and right. I'll set my mind on my blessings instead of my problems. I'll X out—Christ out—those things that are beyond my ability to handle, and leave it all with Him.

I just wish I'd known about this method when I took Algebra 2.

"Cast all your care on him, for he cares for you." 1 Peter 5:7

Toy-Buying Guide

Shop the Insanity • Darren Blair

No folks, this is not me looking at, rating, and reviewing toys. This is me sounding a warning about things to look for when purchasing toys this Christmas.

"Eco-Friendly" Packaging – In the summer of 2021, toy collectors across the United States noted an alarming trend going on. For several years at that point toy companies had been using so-called "eco-friendly" packaging that consisted of the toy itself being at least partially exposed and out in the open, both to minimize the amount of packaging material used and to allow buyers to experiment with the toy, especially any "try me" features. Well, this came to a head when people, myself included, noted that the larger LeBron James figures from the "Space Jam 2" toy line were losing theirs.

Yes, folks, someone was going around and decapitating the LeBron James figures. There was a ball joint on the neck that the head rested on, and people were taking advantage of this to pop the heads off. Past a certain point, decapitated LeBron figures greatly outnumbered figures that were still intact. Stores were left clueless as to what to do, and this time no one could deny there was a problem.

What To Look For: If you're looking to buy a toy in this "eco-friendly" packaging, inspect it carefully. Are parts or accessories missing? Does the "try me" gimmick still work? Does the toy itself appear damaged in any fashion? If you see anything wrong, report it to a store worker and have them inspect the product.

100% Cardboard – If this "eco-friendly" packaging doesn't protect anything, surely the best solution is to completely encase the product in a liner and stuff it all in a cardboard box, right? Not really. If it's something like a model kit or board game where the box is shrink-wrapped at the factory, then you can tell pretty quickly if it's been breached. But many companies simply trust a bit of factory-applied tape across the flaps to get the job done. Thus, people can often cut the tape, pull out what they want, put back something they don't, and the store is none the wiser.

What To Look For: If the item is in shrink wrap, check to see if it's a professional-looking wrap job of or if someone clearly tried to re-wrap it. If not, examine the tape on the box closely to see if the box has been opened and re-sealed. Some companies have enough sense to put their logo on the factory tape, making it obvious that it's been cut if the replacement tape is blank.

Cardboard With Plastic Window – Yes folks, this one isn't entirely safe either. It's happened before where people have purchased an item, slipped an unwanted or less valuable item back inside the box, and returned it to the store. Most workers who get such items are too busy to pay much attention, so the compromised item goes right back on the shelf. In extreme instances, the product will have parts harvested from it before being returned.

What To Look For: Does the item in the box match the artwork or product photo on the box itself? Has the tape been breached? Is anything missing that should clearly be there? You may not always be able to tell if a part or accessory has been harvested, but simply keeping an eye out should help keep you from being swindled. If nothing else, text someone a photo of the item to be sure.

I hate that I have to write a column like this, but I do…

Blue Jean Blues

Pleasant Ramblings • Mark Magnan

Some may recognize the title this week as a song. I am sure that blue jeans have been the subject of many a song over the years. I guess what had me thinking about blue jeans is that I purchased a pair of jeans recently. Now I am sure everyone is saying something to the effect of; hey big deal. Yes, it is not a big deal especially in Texas. I have been wearing jeans since I was old enough to walk. For most of my adult life, and even back a bit further, I have worn either Levis or Wrangler jeans. Those are staples in this state. When I was young I was a skinny lad, Wrangler jeans fit me like a trash bag on a stick. Levi Strauss actually had a jean that fit me rather well, so I started wearing them. When I finally did fill out a bit I was able to wear Wranglers, it is funny about that same time I had to change the style of Levis that I was wearing. From time to time there was a jean brand that I would try, but mostly it was limited to those two name brands. I did purchase and wear some other colors beside blue. For anyone not familiar with fashion in Texas, it is considered formal if you wear jeans and a dress jacket, and having another color of jeans makes it even fancier, specifically black.

Back to the recently acquired blue jeans that started this escapade. I was at a rather stylish store, not the place I would normally shop for blue jeans. There was a fancy pair of trousers of the blue jean style on sale, for what I considered a reasonable price, especially given the original cost. The salesperson told me that they should fit like my Levis jeans, so I tried them on. They did in fact fit well. I thought that I might make the step up to fancier denims. What I did notice was that they were made of a lot thinner cloth than either of my standard jeans. Of course I was not thinking of using these new jeans for work, so it didn't seem to matter. What did amaze me was that the list price of jeans was a lot more than my Levis, which I consider to be a bit overpriced. My Wrangler jeans are typically my "work" jeans, they wear well and hold up. Usually there is a spot that is clean worn through and I get a significant tear in the pants long before all the "blue jean" is used up. Levis on the other hand have typically worn well, but don't seem to last near as long. Some years ago I noticed that the Levis were using thinner denim cloth. My new "name brand" fashion jeans have even thinner fabric, somewhat like the feel of linen compared to my substantial jeans. I can't imagine them suitable for anything more demanding than sitting at a desk typing out a weekly newspaper column.

Jeans have had a long and colored (pun intended) history in Texas. They are a mainstay of cowboy clothing. You can buy them in other more modern stores, however if you go to a small town that is void of fancy "cowboy dud" stores, you can find some very interesting places that sell jeans. (I get mine right here in town at a store that has been around for a long time) Usually those places are near the city square, some of the less updated stores will have posters on the wall dating back to the days when "western wear" was all the rage. I can remember when there was a town just a bit north east of here that had a world famous western wear store. The heyday of country music was here and everyone wanted to dress like a "cowboy", there was even a "yankee" that played a cowboy in a popular movie. For those of us that grew up in Texas it seemed strange that all of a sudden our normal clothes were something so "pop-culture" that folks nationwide wanted to dress like we did.

Personally I am glad that I grew up in jeans and can feel comfortable in them. I might add at this point that I wear jeans that fit, not the ones that seem to be umpteen sizes too large. I can't think of an event in Texas where jeans, of appropriate quality, would not be suitable. When jeans are new they can go for any social gathering from a wedding to a funeral, as they age a bit then they are suitable for work. At the point where they seem almost worn out then they can be used for yard work. With any luck the worn jeans can then be trimmed for shorts and used for swimming or washing the truck. As clothing innovations go, the blue jean probably is one of the most durable and long lasting of all fashion items. I consider myself lucky to be on the cutting edge of style and have worn jeans all my life. If you do see me in khakis or some other form of trousers, know that I am probably on the way to the wedding of some yankee friend. Otherwise I am rarely separated from my jeans, much like a turtle and his shell.

OCTOBER B-TOWN BULLETIN

Local Activities & Events

Foster Love Fall Classic Pickleball tournament - Nov 7
We're so excited to have you at the Foster Love Fall Classic Pickleball Tournament! This is a fun day to bring our community together at the UMHB Pickleball Courts while making a meaningful impact. All proceeds from this event will directly benefit foster children and caregivers in Bell and Coryell counties. Your registration helps us purchase essential items and ensuring more children have safe, loving homes. This exciting event will be Saturday, Nov, 7, at the YMHB Pickleball courts. For more information visit fosterlovebellcounty.org

8th Annual Library Art Show - Nov 14
Mary Ruth Briggs Library will hold our 8th Annual Library Art Show on Saturday, November 14th, from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. at the Garrett and Mic Hill Event Center located at 60 Morgan's Point Blvd in MPR. Drop off times for art pieces are as follows: Friday November 13th 9:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. and Saturday, November 14th, 9:00 a.m. to Noon. Art entries are limited to 3 per artist and should not include previous entries. Artwork that can be hung must have a hanger on the back that can be suspended on wires to be hung on a wall and all should be matted. Include a 3 x 5 white index card with a short description of your work. Questions? Contact at library@mprtx.gov. Cash prizes and ribbons will be awarded for Children and Adults(16 and up) For online applications see the website at morganspointresorttx.gov or paper applications are available at MPR City Hall at 8 Morgan's Point Blvd, Morgan's Point Resort Texas 76513. We look forward to seeing you for a night of music, drinks, food and fun while overlooking Lake Belton! Free to all artists and patrons!

Irreverent Warriors Silkies Hike - Nov 14
On November 14 at Miller Park, 1919 N. 1 st St, Temple, veterans and military service members will take to the streets of Temple for the annual Irreverent Warriors Silkies Hike. During the 2026 season, IW events will bring thousands of veterans together across the United States. For more inforamtion visit irreverentwarriors.com.

Belton Market Days - Nov 21
Join us for Belton Market Days, the Holiday Fall Market brings together local crafters, artisans, food vendors, live music, and seasonal shopping in the heart of downtown Belton. With streets closed to traffic, it's a perfect, family-friendly day to stroll, shop, and enjoy the festive fall atmosphere. Spend the day exploring Beautiful Downtown Belton. Shop unique local stores and street vendors. Find early holiday gifts and fall favorites. Enjoy delicious food, live music, and community fun. Interested in becoming a vendor?
Learn more at www.downtownbelton.com. Saturday Nov. 21, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Downtown Belton.

Amputee Support Group
ASG meetings will be held the first Tuesday of every month from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. at Unity Church of Temple, 318 N. 2nd Street, Temple.

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.

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.

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.

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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LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR DAN PATRICK IS FIGHTING TO KEEP RURAL TEXAS STRONG



"We cannot let 3 Austin Democrats turn Texas into a High Tax, Defund the Police, Extremist Travis County."

- Lt. Governor Dan Patrick

Protecting Communities:
Two years ago, Dan Patrick sounded the alarm on rural data centers. They should not get any tax incentives and, if built, must follow strong guardrails and get local community approval.

Halting 765-kv Power Lines:
Dan Patrick has made clear that massive 765-kv power lines should go over roadway easements wherever possible, not over homes, ranches, and farms. He will form a commission to oversee the routing process, including current maps.

Cutting Property Taxes:
Dan Patrick increased the homestead exemption from $15,000 to $200,000, virtually eliminating school property taxes for the average senior, and will eliminate school property taxes for all homeowners by increasing the homestead exemption again.

Stopping Hostile Foreign Ownership of Texas Lands:
Dan Patrick led the effort to stop hostile foreign interests from buying Texas land, including agricultural land, water rights, and land near military bases.

No Boys in Girls Sports:
Dan Patrick wrote the bill stopping boys from playing girls' sports and men from going into ladies' restrooms.

Funding Rural Law Enforcement:
Dan Patrick wrote the bill to create the first-ever state fund to pay competitive salaries for rural law enforcement. He funded new ambulances and invested a historic $2.5 billion to build five new rural mental healthcare hospitals.

We need a historic rural voter turnout to stop the socialists and keep Texas Red. Without a strong rural Texas vote, Republicans cannot defeat the big blue counties. Every single vote counts in 2026.

Early Voting: October 19-30 ★ Election Day: November 3

Pd Pol Ad - Texans For Dan Patrick

CENTRAL TEXAS COLLEGE

JOIN CTC'S SALUTE TO VETERANS

UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, November 7, 2026
Copperas Cove VFW
Veterans Parade, 10 a.m.

Monday, November 9, 2026
CTC Hoof Beats for Heroes Horse Therapy Experience, CTC Agriculture Complex, 1 p.m.

Wednesday, November 11, 2026
Killeen Veterans Parade, 11 a.m.

Thursday, November 12, 2026
CTC Veterans Fellowship Breakfast
Anderson Campus Center, 8 a.m.

Thursday, November 12, 2026
Salute to Veterans Ceremony & Movie, *Apache Blues* Mayborn Science Theater, 1 p.m.

Friday, November 13, 2026
Mounted Warfare Museum Clay Shoot
CTC Main Campus, 8 a.m.

Friday, November 13, 2026
CTC Fine Arts Guitar and Jazz Ensemble Performance, Mayborn Science Theater 11 a.m.



Contact CTC Veteran Services for more information.

Phone: 254-526-1160 or 254-526-1684
Email: veteran.services@ctcd.edu