



Courtesy photo

The fourth annual Merry Pawlidays bull-riding event will be in Belton on Dec. 6. Admission is free if you bring a bag of dog or cat food to benefit Belton and Temple animal rescues and shelters.

Merry Pawlidays Bull-Riding to benefit local animal shelters

By David Stone
The Belton Journal

Christmas is coming early for animal shelters in Belton and Temple.

The fourth annual Merry Pawlidays Bull Riding Competition will be held Saturday, Dec. 6, at the Cadence Bank Equine Center, on the grounds of the Expo Center in Belton.

Admission is free – with a donation of pet food.

“Bring a bag of dog or cat food, and you will get in free,” said Mike Seiler, owner and CEO of

Bullothon Promotions. “We have several animal shelters in need of food, including the Bell County Shelter in Belton, the Temple Animal Shelter and Tiny Hooves Rescue.”

“Temple Animal Shelter has 72 animals and needs food, so I’ve already delivered 500 pounds of dog food to help out, but they need more food,” Seiler said. “We’ve had a dog-food donation of 2,000 pounds from Travis Farr of Outlaw Feed. There’s a big

See PAWLIDAYS,
Page A2

Christmas on the Chisholm Trail set for Friday and Saturday



Courtesy photo

Free ice skating is part of the Christmas season in Belton, along with Friday and Saturday’s Christmas on the Chisholm Trail.

By David Tuma
The Belton Journal

Christmas on the Chisholm Trail will be December 5th and 6th this year.

At 6 p.m. on Friday, there will be a showing of The Santa Clause movie outdoors on the North side of the Bell County Courthouse. The Belton Youth Advisory Committee will be selling popcorn as a fundraiser to support local charities.

Hot cocoa will also be available for purchase. After the movie, there will be

a performance by the Sweet Adelines and the annual lighting of the Christmas Tree. The tree lighting will be around 8 p.m.

The ice-skating rink will be open, and there is a winter village just for kids. The ice rink is open from 6-9 p.m. on most days through December 13th. The ice rink has been expanded this year, with more room to skate and more skates to use.

On Saturday, there will be over 100 vendors set up downtown. The vendors will open at noon and close at 7 p.m. The

winter village and kid zone will be open with inflatables, face painting, interactive games, and the Lena Armstrong Library will be offering free books through the Friends of the Library donations.

Santa Claus will be on hand from noon until 5:30 p.m., and then he goes to feed his reindeer.

The annual Christmas Parade will start at 6 p.m. from Avenue C to East 5th, heading down Penelope Street. There are 60 lighted entries in this year’s pa-

See TRAIL,
Page A2



Courtesy Photo

Volunteers are all smiles as they pause for a photo during the Vista Real Estate Group’s Thanksgiving Meal giveaway last week.

Vista Real Estate Group holds Second Annual Thanksgiving Meal Giveaway

By Michele Weisman
The Belton Journal

Vista Real Estate Group’s second annual Thanksgiving meal giveaway more than tripled last years,

of 150 dinners, giving away 500 meals at Heritage Park in Belton last Monday.

At 10 a.m., they began handing out meals, 400 to the public and 100 to Fort Hood. Inspired by a personal experience of co-owner Emilio Perales, this legacy is gaining momentum.

Vista Real Estate staff, about half a dozen HEB employees, Belton City staff, and many sponsors came to serve the community, witnessing cars in line at 7 a.m. Occupants were asked to stay in their vehicles while the food was brought to them. No questions for qualifications were asked.

The first to be served was 1-8 CAV from 1st Cavalry Division.

Perales said about the 1st Cavalry Division, “We coordinated with 1-8 CAV, and they were actually redeploying back from the National Training Center in California. And so we gave 100 Turkey baskets for them...their leadership showed up to receive the turkey baskets.”

When in the military, Perales said, “I was a recipient of one of those baskets back in the 90s. I just said if I ever had the means that I would give back...so we started this company back in 2012, one of my requirements was, we’re going to give back to the community. And since 2012 we have each and every

See GIVEAWAY,
Page A7

Council OKs Belhouse easement for one-way pipeline linking lakes

By David Stone
The Belton Journal

The Belton City Council approved an agreement with the Brazos River Authority last week that secures an easement for the Belhouse Pipeline Project.

The pipeline will move water from Belton Lake to Stillhouse Hollow and will provide water to Austin’s northern suburbs.

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 Authority is moving forward with the long-planned Belhouse water transmission project.

“Construction is projected to begin in 2029, and it is anticipated to take about three years to complete,” Sam Listi, Belton’s city manager, said in a statement to Council. “BRA conducted a Feasibility Study on six alternate routes in 2020.”

The selected route begins in Belton west of the Corps of Engineers’ office

and Dead Fish Grill, near FM 439 and FM 2271, and extends southward crossing Sparta Road near Wheat Road.

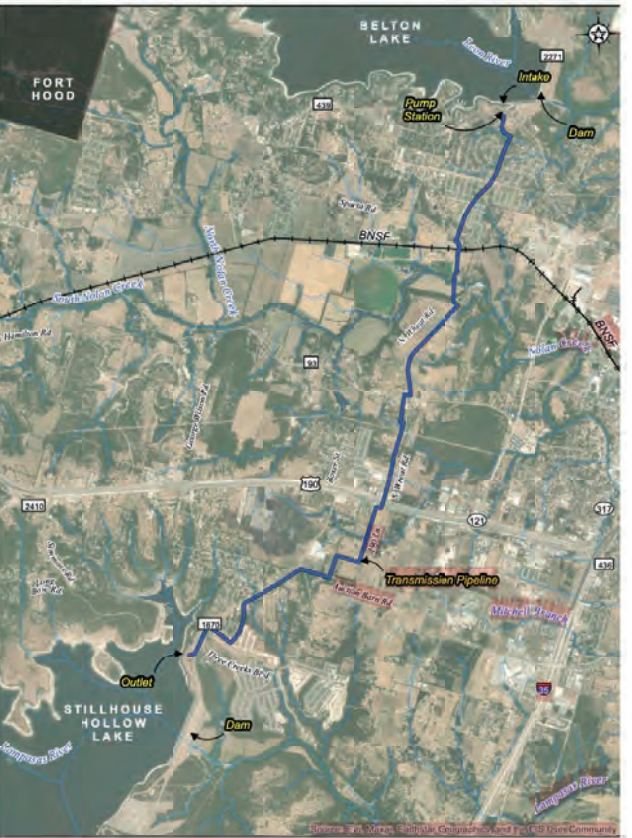
The Project is designed to improve future drought resilience by transferring water from Belton Lake to Stillhouse Hollow, then to

Lake Georgetown. A pipeline linking Stillhouse and Lake Georgetown is already operational.

The Belhouse Project will include a pump station near Belton Lake, and a six-mile pipeline extend-

See BELHOUSE,
Page A2

BELHOUSE PIPELINE PROJECT ROUTE



The Belhouse Pipelines (shown in blue) will move water from Belton Lake to Stillhouse Hollow. This project will allow more water to be pumped from Bell County Lakes to meet increasing water needs in Austin’s northern suburbs.



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Council allows smaller lots in River Farm subdivision

By David Stone
The Belton Journal

The City of Belton will allow Hunt Communities Belton to sell smaller lots than previously approved in the River Farm subdivision, located east of Toll Bridge Road and north of the Lampasas River.

River Farm consists of eight phases of residential lots, two amenity centers, a school site and supporting streets and open spaces.

According to Bob van Til, Belton’s director of planning, Hunt Communities Belton had requested a reduction in lot width from 50 feet to 45 feet for a portion of the development.

“The property owner and the City entered into a Development Agreement in 2021,” van Til said. “The River Farm Municipal Utility District was created to finance the construction of infrastructure in the subdivision. The district will also maintain the streets and drainage system in the subdivision.”

The Development Agreement stipu-

lated that the maximum number of homes at build-out will be 1,775, according to van Til.

The request approved last week by the City Council proposed 707 45-foot-wide lots and reduced the number of 50-foot-wide lots from 1,129 to 591.

Also last week, Council approved the purchase of water meters from Core & Main.

According to Scott Hodde, director of Public Works, Belton continues to replace water meters originally installed in 2015 through the Siemens system upgrade project, which transition water meters from self-read to network-read interfaces.

“As part of ongoing maintenance and system improvement efforts, Public Works is requesting a bulk order of 1,008 water meters to continue replacing aging meters that have reached the end of their useful life,” Hodde said.

“Currently, the City has approximately 8,538 water meters that are read daily through the network, with an estimated

See **SUBDIVISION,**
Page A9

Belhouse - From Page A1

ing through west Belton and crossing Interstate-14, ending at Stillhouse Hollow in the vicinity of FM 1670.

“The BRA requires a 50-feet of permanent easement for its 48-inch water transmission line, and the agency has the authority of eminent domain, meaning it could acquire the property for this public purpose even if a landowner objects,” Listi added. “While Belton is not leading or managing the project, we have worked to protect local interests through development of an agreement that will grant BRA an easement.”

In Belton, the pipeline will extend about 5,500 feet — just over one mile — between the south side of the Corps of Engineers’ Lakeview Park and Sparta Road. In this area the City owns 200 feet of future street right-of-way between Lakeview Park and Yturria, and 150 feet between Yturria and Sparta Road, according to Listi.

Earlier this month, the Brazos River Authority Board authorized the agreement between BRA and Belton.

“The permitting and design phase for the project began in May of this year,” Brad Brunnett, chief operations officer for the Authority, told the Belton Journal. “Design for both the intake structure and pipeline are under way by the Walker Partners engineering team and they are expected to be complete in early 2026.”

“Coordination with the US Army Corps of Engineers is also in progress,” Brunnett said. The Corps owns both Bell County lakes.

He said the pipeline route that was presented at a public hearing in 2023 will be pursued, with some minor deviations as a result of recent development.

The pipeline will allow water to flow from Belton Lake to Stillhouse to provide water for drought-related needs in Austin’s booming northern suburbs.

“As populations in the Georgetown and Round Rock areas grow, there won’t be enough water for Brazos River Authority customers served by Lake Georgetown,” Brunnett said.

“Lake Georgetown is small — Stillhouse is about 6 times larger than Georgetown, and Belton Lake is about 14 times larger,” he said. “During dry times, there simply is not enough water in Lake Georgetown to meet the needs.”

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Georgetown is one of the fastest growing cities in America, and its population of 104,000 is expected to double in less than seven years.

The Brazos River Authority has been pumping water from Stillhouse to Lake Georgetown for years, but the potential amount of water being moved will soon increase, Brunnett said.

A whopping 20 billion gallons of water every year could be piped from Stillhouse Hollow Reservoir to Lake Georgetown in the next few years, and up to 9.8 billion gallons could be moved annually from Belton Lake to Stillhouse by the Belhouse pipeline.

“We first started pumping in 2006, and we added multiple pumps in 2011,” Brunnett said. “We have four pumps capable of pumping 42 million gallons a day. We are replacing those with four higher-capacity pumps that can move 56 million gallons per day. There will still be one pipeline, but we will be able to move more water.”

“We are currently in the pump design phase, and it will be two or three years before

Trail - From Page A1

rade. Various local choirs will be performing from Noon to 5:30 p.m. on the North side of the courthouse.

“We are turning downtown Belton into a Hallmark center. This is a huge event for our downtown businesses and community. It is a time when the magic of Christmas happens in Belton,” said James Grant, Director of Parks and Recreation for the City of Belton.

“Christmas on the Chisholm Trail really is the epitome of that Hallmark Christmas vibe we all watch on TV except it’s actual real

life here in Downtown Belton,” said Charisse Bennett, Events & Marketing Coordinator for the City of Belton. “There is something for everyone! Plenty of shopping and great food from local vendors as well as our wonderful downtown businesses, free ice skating, a Christmas movie on the square, and great photo ops sprinkled throughout!”

“The movie & tree lighting on Friday night really kicks off the Christmas season in Downtown Belton.”

Pawlidays - From Page A1

need for feed at our local shelters.”

Merry Pawlidays will feature about 45 professional bull riders, some who are world champions.

“This area has never seen the level of bull riders that will be in Belton on Dec. 6,” Seiler added. “These are the guys you watch on TV, and they will be right here in Belton.”

The event will start with a Thank-You Dinner at 4 p.m.

“We put on several bull-riding events every year, and this is the last one for 2025,” the Belton resident said. “We want to thank the folks who come out to our competitions.”

Following the meal, there will be a Calcutta event at 5 p.m.

“People will have the chance to ‘buy’ a

bull rider in an auction, and if the rider wins, the person who ‘owns’ him will win money,” Seiler explained with a chuckle.

Bull riding starts at 6 p.m.

“This will be a top-level event,” he said. “There will be a lot going on — in addition to the bull riding, we will have lots of vendors selling a variety of items.”

Some of the champion riders expected to contend for this year’s Merry Pawlidays title include Noah Lee, Ralph Benson, Braden Richardson, Karsen Keen, Cutter Keylor, Avontis Williams, Lane Nobles, Rozen Robles, Lance Lara, Cimarron Rucker, Canyon Bass, TJ Jewell, Caeden Earl, Damien Krushall, Gavin Hauck, Clayden Jolly, Wesley Chisolm, Logan Bottoms and Kyle McDaniel.

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OBITUARIES



Nichols

Alma Lou Nichols
July 15, 1940 – November 15, 2025

Our beloved Alma Lou Nichols was a sweet, loving, and gentle Christian woman, known for her kindness and compassion. She was a faithful follower of Jesus who showed His love to everyone she met and is remembered for her generosity, joy, and humility. She was devoted to her family, friends, and to the gospel. Lou spent much of her time interceding for others through prayer. Her life was a testimony of worship glorifying our Lord Christ.

Lou is survived by her loving family, including B. J. her husband of 63 years, her daughter Sarah & husband Rickey Coulson and son Stan & wife Carol Nichols and she was preceded in death by her son Sidney Nichols. She also leaves behind 10 grandchildren and 5 great grandchildren. We know she is with Jesus now, which is just where she wanted to be, rejoicing in the presence of the Almighty.

A celebration of life service will be held on Tuesday, December 9th at 2:00 p.m. at First Baptist Church Belton, Texas. In lieu of flowers the family would like you to donate to your favorite Christian organization. Hewett-Arney Funeral Home of Temple is entrusted with these arrangements.



Pirtle

Lyndell Merle Pirtle
October 23, 1932 – November 19, 2025

Lyndell Merle Cospers Pirtle passed away November 19, 2025 in Arlington, TX at the age of 93. She was born October 23, 1932 to Leonard and Alta Merle Digby Cospers in Belton, TX where she grew up and graduated from Belton High School. She married Jamie Lynn Pirtle on July 1, 1951 and they were blessed

to celebrate 71 years of marriage. Lindy's home was the heart of her happiness, filled with her artistic talent, the warmth of country furniture, and the love and companionship of her family. Her ideal getaway was a day in the countryside browsing antique shops and homespun small towns along the way.

Lyndell is survived by her children: James Robert (Patricia) Pirtle of Arlington, TX; Carla Kay (Tom) Carmody of Lawrence, KS; Leonard Scott Pirtle of Cedaredge, CO; and Lyn Elizabeth (Jim) Williams of Dahlonaga, GA; grandchildren: Christian (Sarah) Pirtle; Matthew (Carrie) Pirtle; Tyler (Tori) Carmody; Jeffrey (Kristina) Carmody; Justin (Jessica) Williams; and Christopher Williams; Great-grandchildren: Cash Pirtle; Zara Pirtle; Charlotte Williams; and Zoe Carmody; sister, Betty Jean Cook; nieces, Kimberly Cook, Lisa Hicks; nephew, Christopher Cospers. Lyndell was preceded in death by her husband, her parents and her brother, Robert Leonard Cospers. No formal service is scheduled. The Family plans a memorial gathering at a later date. For those who choose to donate in Lyndell's memory, the family suggests North Belton Cemetery Association or Salado Cemetery Association or a charity of your choice



Wishert

Susan Ann Wishert
September 25, 1954 – November 24, 2025

Susan Ann Wishert was born on September 25, 1954, in Temple, Texas, to Johnny and Beatrice Sodek. She entered her eternal rest on November 24, 2025, at the age of 71, surrounded by her loving family, following a courageous year-long battle with colon cancer.

Funeral services were held on November 29, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. at First Baptist Church in Kames City, with Pastor Nate Ingle officiating. Burial followed at Kames City Cemetery, and all are welcome to return to the church afterward for a fellowship lunch. Family visitation took place prior to the service from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Susan spent most of her life in Temple, Texas, where

she attended Temple schools. She began her career with the United States Postal Service in 1982 at the Temple Post Office. Over nearly 30 years of service, she held many roles - sorting mail, delivering routes, assisting customers at the counter, and ultimately serving as Postmaster for the Evant, Hobson, and Falls City Post Offices.

She found the love of her life in Devasco Charles "D.C." Wishert, whom she married on January 24, 1992, in Belton, Texas. Together they built a beautiful blended family of four children, eight grandchildren, and ten great-grandchildren. Susan and D.C. later made their home in the Harmony community, where they lived for many years.

A woman of unwavering faith, Susan shared God's love daily, often through the devotional messages she faithfully sent to family and friends - continuing them until her final days. She enjoyed volunteering in church programs, especially those involving children and youth camps. Above all, Susan believed her purpose in life was serving her family and helping anyone in need. She cherished the large Sodek family gatherings, especially when everyone eagerly waited for the first bowls of the beloved noodle soup (a family tradition). She gave selflessly and wholeheartedly, often putting others before herself.

Susan was preceded in death by her parents, Johnny and Beatrice Sodek; her infant brother, Gerald Sodek; and two sisters, Donna Baird and Sharon "Sissy" Zeinert.

Left to honor her memory are her husband of nearly 34 years, D.C. Wishert of Kames City; daughters Jennifer Emerson (Darrell) of Troy, Stephanie Martignoni (Blue) of San Antonio, Sammie Taylor (Chuck) of Go-liad, and Stacie Kelley of Kames City; her sister Cindy Palatino (Tom) of Belton; and her brother Johnny "Bubba" Sodek (Kim) of Belton. She is also lovingly remembered by her eight grandchildren (Kendra Balod, Todd Emerson, Hannah Hons, Rhett Kelley, Tanner Kelley, Natalie Ingram, Tony Martignoni, and Chris Hillbrich, her ten cherished great-grandchildren, and a large, devoted family of nieces and nephews.

Arrangements are entrusted to Eckols Funeral Home of Kenedy.

Curotto

Edward Peter Curotto
November 16, 1943 – November 23, 2025

Edward Peter Curotto, affectionately known as Eddie, passed away on November 23, 2025, at the age of 82 in Belton. A funeral service

was held in his honor on December 1, 2025, at Dossman Funeral Home in Belton, Texas, beginning at 10:00 AM, followed by burial at North Belton Cemetery. This time offered an opportunity for friends and family to pay their respects and celebrate the life of a remarkable man who touched the hearts of many.

Eddie was known for his fun-loving spirit and wonderful sense of humor, attributes that made him a cherished family member and friend. His interests were vast, as he absolutely loved fishing and hunting, often traveling across the United States to enjoy these passions. Eddie was also a proud governor of the Moose Lodge and an active member of the Hunting and Fishing Clubs, and the Knights of Columbus where he forged friendships over shared interests. He was a referee for CYO Basketball for over 20 years sharing his love for basketball with the youth of the league.

He shared his life with his beloved wife, Nancy Curotto, and was a proud father to his daughters Janie Hinkson and husband Ralph and Karen Peters and husband Dale, his son Don Myers and wife Angela, and his son Andrew Curotto and wife Jessica. Eddie was also a devoted grandfather, leaving behind grandchildren Kyle Hinkson, Amber Hinkson, Paul Peters, Katie Rodrigues, Chad Myers, Shyanne Myers, Emma Curotto, Dominic Curotto, and Delilah Curotto, as well as great-grandchildren Dahlia Dunkin, Beatrix Dunkin, Karter Hinkson,

Kynsley Hinkson, and Robert Rodrigues. He was also survived by two sisters, Ida Cobo and husband Matthew, Barbara Jackson and husband Larry.

Eddie was predeceased by his parents, Edoardo and Virginia Curotto, and his granddaughter Marina Valencia. His life was one marked by love for his family, adventures in nature, and a community enriched by his laughter and dedication.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to Our Hospice House. <https://ourhospice-house.org/donate/> or you can send donations to 5235 Tollbridge Rd. Belton, TX. 76513.

Donnelly

Ron Donnelly

February 14, 1938 – November 28, 2025

Ron Donnelly was born on February 14, 1938, in Bloomfield, Iowa. He moved to Texas as a young boy, where he built a life rooted in family, faith, and hard work. Ron was blessed to share 64 beautiful years of marriage with his loving wife, Dee Donnelly, who remained faithfully by his side throughout his life. He is preceded in death by his parents and three of his

See OBITS,
Page A7



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5 fun gift exchange ideas

Gift-giving is a significant component of the holiday season. Families can embrace traditional gift-giving, but those who want to add a touch of whimsy to gatherings with loved ones can consider these five creative and fun ways to exchange gifts.

1. Play the plastic wrap game. To exchange small stocking stuffer gifts, compile gift cards, cash, small toys, candy, and even some larger gifts (all participants can chip in and one person shops for the gifts). The designated person in charge begins rolling up the gifts in the plastic, adding one every few rolls. Turning the ball 90 degrees while wrapping helps make a more round, finished gift ball. To play, the person with the ball puts on oven mitts and tries to unwrap as much as they can to access the gifts, while the person to the left is attempting to roll doubles on dice. When doubles are made, that person passes the dice to the left and starts his or her own attempts to get at the gifts in

the plastic ball. The game ends when all the gifts are revealed, whether everyone has had a chance to unwrap or not.

2. Plan a white elephant gift exchange. A white elephant exchange is like a secret grab bag. Everyone brings a wrapped gift, and then takes turns choosing a gift based on the number they've been given. When the gift is chosen, the person opens it. The next player can select a fresh gift or steal one of the presents that's already been opened.

3. Host a make-and-take craft party. With this type of exchange, participants will engage in some form of crafting for the duration of the event, whether it's pottery, painting, epoxy resin pouring, or even knit crafts. At the end of the night everyone can swap their creations with another or keep their own crafts as gifts.

4. Give the gift of a group outing. Instead of exchanging material gifts, focus on sharing expe-

riences with friends and family. A trip to watch a sports game or a theater performance can be an excellent way to spend time together, and something a person may not be inclined to do on his or her own. Certain venues will offer discounts on group tickets, so everyone can pool their resources.

5. Host a DIY cookie and cocoa exchange. Cookies, cocoa and the holidays are a perfect combination. A gift exchange where participants supply ingredients for these sweet treats, share their favorite recipes and then put together the finished products can make for an entertaining and festive afternoon. Each person can fill a cookie tin with baked cookies to take home and mason jars filled with homemade hot cocoa mix and marshmallows can be an additional gift to enjoy later on a chilly evening.

There are plenty of fun ways to exchange gifts during the holiday season.



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A6
Thursday,
December 4, 2025

LIFESTYLES

THE BELTON JOURNAL

Candy's Beauty Lounge Salon & Suites makes space for independent stylists and beauty professionals

By Michelle Rodriguez
The Belton Journal

Candy's Beauty Lounge Salon & Suites is a newly established booth and suite rental salon located at 111 N. East St. in downtown Belton, founded by local stylist Candy Abreu.

"I opened my own salon to give other independent stylists and beauty professionals a home for their own brand and business," said Abreu. "First and foremost, I want to thank God for guiding me through this journey. Here's to this new chapter, and to all the beauty, creativity, and joy to come at my salon!"

Clients come in for a transformation by having their hair custom-colored, blonded, and even vividly colored like pink, blue, purple, rainbow, and personalized styling in a warm, welcoming environment.

"I've been in the industry since 2013. I did my schooling and then I studied business-management," said Abreu. She attended Central Texas Beauty College. She's originally from Hillsboro and lived in Temple for 20 years and in Belton for over 10 years.

"I created Candy's Beauty Lounge Salon & Suites to focus on community and creativity, and my mission is to empower both clients and professionals to look and feel their best," said Abreu.

Abreu brings more than ten years of management experience from corporate, franchise, and small business, from general manager to inventory, retail, and training and hiring manager. Abreu gets to combine that experience with her passion for building a supportive space for beauty professionals to grow and thrive. Abreu was a booth renter at the Haute Suite until she moved to her new downtown location.

"To accommodate my growing business needs, and be-



Courtesy Photo

Candy Abreu and her supporters celebrate her new business, Candy's Beauty Lounge Salon & Suites.

cause I am passionate about helping stylists and other beauty professionals grow, we've decided to relocate downtown," said Abreu.

At the ribbon-cutting, Ruby Tea Room provided tea and scones and Arusha's provided tacos. Laura G-Ford with Soulscapes Photography and Makeup Studios took photos.

The Belton downtown business community got together with door prizes for the ribbon cutting ceremony.

"We are excited to welcome Candy to downtown Belton

and encourage everyone to stop by to check out what she has to offer," said CEO/President of the Belton Chamber of Commerce Randy Pittenger.

Abreu thanked her husband for late nights getting the salon ready, her kids and family for believing in her and giving her purpose every single day, and for their love and encouragement. She thanked Ruby Tea Room and Arushas, the downtown business community, and the Belton Chamber of Commerce for guidance and support.

Holiday help arrives with Chisholm Trail's Elf Closet

Special to the Journal

Chisholm Trail Elementary is once again opening its beloved "Elf Closet," a tradition that has quietly supported families since the school opened in 2013.

The annual holiday shop provides parents with a dignified, joyful opportunity to choose new gifts for their children, completely free of charge, thanks to generous community donations and dedicated staff and volunteers. This year, more than 75 students are expected to benefit from the program.

To maintain privacy for families, a portable on campus is transformed into a festive storefront where parents can reserve a shopping time during the week of December 15.

Gifts are organized and labeled by a point system, allowing families

to shop based on the number of students they have.

While parents browse, they can enjoy cocoa and connect with staff members who will later wrap each gift and discreetly ensure it makes its way home in time for Christmas morning. A message has already been sent to families inviting them to donate much-needed items.

For Principal Sydnie Sewell, now in her second year leading Chisholm Trail Elementary, the Elf Closet represents the heart of the campus.

"As a relatively new principal at Chisholm Trail Elementary, our Elf Closet continues to show me the heart and soul of this school community," Sewell said. "It is more than just a charity; it is a living example of our commitment to the families we serve. It shows we do not just educate students; we sup-

port families, ensuring every child can experience the joy and magic of the holidays."

Sewell added that the dedication of staff and volunteers is "nothing short of extraordinary," noting the countless hours spent sorting donations, scouting for special items, transforming the portable into a store and wrapping every gift with care.

"I hope this experience communicates that families are seen, valued and supported by their Chisholm Trail Elementary family," she said. "By giving parents tickets to shop, they get the power to choose the perfect gift for their own child, that beautiful, essential parental experience of providing for their family."

School Counselor Angela Cavanaugh said the campus is especially in need of items that ran out

quickly last year, including bead kits, tween gifts such as makeup, nail kits and bath bombs, Legos, craft or STEM activity kits, pajamas in a variety of sizes and large gift bags to help with wrapping. She added that stuffed animals were also popular and having a few of the season's hot items would make a big difference for families. Cavanaugh, who coordinates the setup for the Elf Closet, said volunteers will assist with wrapping gifts, with additional support expected from the campus PTA.

The Elf Closet operates fully through donations from families, staff, businesses and community partners. Sewell said the impact of those contributions is felt immediately.

"When a family walks away with beautifully wrapped presents to place under their tree, it is a direct re-

sult of our community's generosity," she said. "When we come together, we ensure that joy is shared equally throughout our community."

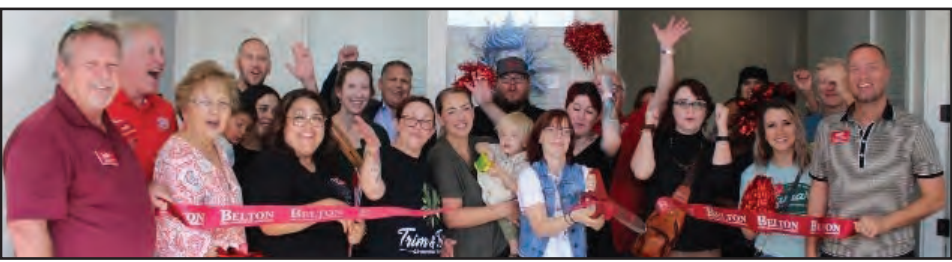
Community members interested in supporting the Elf Closet can purchase items through the Amazon Wish List at https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/3R1WZVIOYTI4M?ref=wl_share or drop off new, unwrapped items at Chisholm Trail Elementary, located at 1082 South Wheat Rd.



Trim and Tonic brings a fresh health-conscious approach to family grooming



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Courtesy Photo

The owners of Trim and Tonic celebrate the opening of their business with a ribbon-cutting.

By Michelle Rodriguez
The Belton Journal

Trim and Tonic, a new business in Belton,

had a grand opening/ribbon cutting recently.

They are located in the Gunther building at 204 N. Penelope St.,

Suite E1. Their hours are Wednesday thru Friday 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. They accept walk-ins. Appoint-

ments can be made on their website.

"I've been in the business coming up on 13 years. I started out in chain salons and worked at a couple barber shops. I just wanted to open this place because I want to bring health-conscious grooming," said founder Sara Sudlow.

Trim and Tonic was founded by Sudlow in June 2025 and brings a fresh health-conscious approach to family grooming. The shop focuses on a calm, chemical-free environment and features hand-curated, non-toxic products for hair and skin care. They are family friendly and community centered. They feature organic dye-free lollipops and fun prices for kids, making every visit enjoyable for all ages. Sudlow's mission is simple, to provide consistent quality grooming and make Belton look and feel its best, naturally.

"We make our own products. My husband

is making skin and hair products for my business like the all-natural deodorant that contains tallow. Tallow is very popular right now."

Their merchandise includes an all-natural deodorant with natural tallow and a clean scent that is not an anti-perspirant, activated charcoal tallow body wash, t-shirts, a high hold, matte-finish hair dressing, and whipped tallow balm. Coming soon is their nourishing face lotion.

Trim and Tonic offers men's haircuts, shampoo, razor add-on, senior cuts for men age 60 and up, buzz cuts, kids' haircuts age 12 and under, sides and back trim only, beard trims, face shave, head shave, and eyebrow/ear/nose wax. Gift cards are available for purchase on their website.

Sudlow baked cookies for her ribbon cutting and had free samples of tallow lotion and tallow deodorant.



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The Emperor, the Coin, and the Carpenter



John C. Perry

Every now and then, something small in your hand can make history feel close enough to touch. My wife, Sandra, gave me an early Christmas present this year, a ring set with a Ro-

piece of His world has found its way into mine.

Tiberius was the emperor during Jesus' ministry, the man whose authority stretched across the Roman Empire, including the dusty province of Judea. He never met Jesus, but early Christian writers tell a fascinating story about how news of Jesus may have reached him. Both Tertullian and Eusebius record a tradition that Pontius Pilate sent a report to Tiberius describing Jesus' miracles, His crucifixion, and even His resurrection.

According to these writers, Tiberius was so moved by the account

measures be taken against followers of Jesus.

Modern historians debate the accuracy of this tradition. No Roman records survive to confirm it, but we know Roman records are incomplete. For example, there is no record of the Apostle Paul's trial in Rome, yet we know it took place. Whether this story is literal or legendary, it reveals something important: within a very short time period of Jesus' resurrection, His influence was already reaching the highest levels of the ancient world.

And that brings me back to the coin on my hand.

very emperor whose image symbolized earthly power was the one Jesus used to teach a lesson about heavenly allegiance. Caesar may have minted the coin, but only God could mint a soul.

And maybe that's the deeper gift in this little coin. At Christmas, we celebrate that Jesus stepped into a world ruled by emperors and armies, taxes and tributes, and Caesars. He didn't wait for perfect conditions or peaceful times. He came right into the middle of real history, into the reign of Tiberius, into the politics and pressures of the first century, to bring

politics. His teachings weren't delivered in a vacuum; they were spoken into the heart of an empire. And yet, two thousand years later, it's not Tiberius who has shaped our world. It's the carpenter from Nazareth.

Maybe that's why this ring feels so meaningful. It's a reminder that faith is not abstract. It's rooted in history, dusty roads, Roman coins, emperors, governors, and a Savior who stepped into the middle of all of it. A small coin from Tiberius may connect me to the world Jesus lived in, but it's Jesus who connects me to the world which truly matters.



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Traffic signal timing updates coming to Main Street

Special to the Journal

As of Tuesday, Dec. 2, drivers in Belton may have noticed smoother traffic flow along Main Street (SH 317), thanks to updated signal timing from the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT).

TxDOT is optimizing traffic signals at eight intersections, Central Avenue to Lake Road, to better match current traffic patterns.

The timing changes will be done remotely and are designed to reduce delays on Main Street during peak travel times—morning, midday, and afternoon—by adjusting signal cycle lengths and coordination.

While the changes aim to improve overall traffic flow, drivers on side streets may experience slightly longer wait times during busy hours.

In a scientific survey conducted earlier this year, only 27 percent of Belton residents reported satisfaction with traffic flow on Main Street.

While Main Street historical buildings prevent

addressing traffic concerns through roadway expansion, the planned signal changes address resident concerns.

TxDOT says it will continue to fine-tune the system after implementation to ensure the best results.



The timing of traffic lights at the MLK intersection with Main Street as well as other Main Street intersections in Belton have had adjustments by the Texas Department of Transportation.

– Courtesy Photo

Santa coming to MPR

By David Stone
The Belton Journal

Ho! Ho! Ho! Santa and his little lady are coming to Morgan’s Point Resort.

Santa and Mrs. Claus will be at the Garrett & Mic Hill Event Center from 6 to 8 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 5. Be sure to bring

the kids for photographs with Santa.

There also will be kids’ activities, cookies and cocoa and caroling hayrides with Mrs. Claus.

And, of course, the evening event will be the perfect time for kids to have that “discussion” with the Jolly One.



Subdvision - From Page A2

1,800 meters now at the end-of-life stage and requiring replacement,” he added.

“Meters that were five years old or less when retrofitted in 2015 are now approximately 15 years old and have reached the point where full replacement is necessary to maintain accuracy and system reliability,” Hodde said.

The city budget includes \$327,600 for the water-meter-replacement project.

The City Council has approved the purchase of five vehicles for the Public Works Department and the Parks & Recreation Department.

The vehicles include two 2026 4x4 Chevrolet Silverado 2500HD work trucks, two 2026 4x4 Silverado 2500HD service trucks, and a 2027 Freightliner 12-yard dump truck.

The \$375,760.65 deal has already been budgeted by Council. The pickups are being purchased from Don Ringler Chevrolet and the dump truck is being bought from Doggett Freightliner of South Texas.

The City of Belton will again join the Belton Area Chamber of Commerce in supporting the operation of the Convention & Visitor Center in 2026. The center assists visitors with information about the city.

The City will spend \$17,500 for CVB support.

The CVB includes office and display space, along with common areas such as the foyer, hallways, a conference room, a break area, and other areas.

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Miller Springs trails see improvements

By David Tuma
The Belton Journal

Miller Springs Nature Center has recently had trail improvements done to the trail system. The City of Temple and the City of Belton work together to maintain the park.

Miller Springs Nature Center is a 260-acre scenic natural area in the historic Tennessee Valley, which is located in or near the cities of Belton and Temple.

The nature preserve is open to the public, at no charge, each day of the year. Visitors enjoy hiking and biking in this parkland, which has more than 10 miles of trails divided into several loops.

“Our part of the deal is to co-ordinate the volunteer maintenance of Miller Springs. Volunteers come a couple of times a month to maintain the park. Trash cleanup is four times a year by the City of Belton.

There are Eagle Scout projects, and several Scout Troop groups have projects throughout the year,” said James Grant, director of Parks and Recreation for the City of Belton.

The trail system has been widened, improving access to the trail system, and a scenic overlook.

Native grass is used throughout the park. Railings have been added to the park where there is an overlook. A pavilion was added to the overlook. The trail leading to the trails that drop to the bottom is now cement and 6 feet wide.

Miller Springs opened as a park after the construction of Belton Dam and Lake in 1954. Owned by the US Army Corps of Engineers, camping and fishing were popular activities on both sides of the dam. The area was left open to the public with no controls from the 1960’s-1980’s, and vandalism problems subsequently occurred during that time. From

December 1991 to March of 1992, some 22 inches of rainfall in the area caused the lake elevation to rise 40 feet. Water overflowed the spillway for 42 days, reaching a peak depth of nearly 4 feet. The water flows down into Miller Springs, creating new canyons and exposing geological formations. In 1993, the Miller Springs Alliance took over the lease and maintained the area, with a desire to protect it and see it used for educational and environmentally sustainable activities. The alliance operated using volunteers until 2018, when the City of Belton & City of Temple took over the lease to maintain the area.

Near the base of the dam, the trees are hundreds of years old.

“Our biggest battle is erosion,” said Grant. There are also 25 acres of wetlands in the park and picnic areas.



Courtesy Graphic

A map shows the extent of Miller Springs Nature Center, which also contains a trail system maintained by the cities of Belton and Temple.

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Bronco football shines in All-District listings

By Clay Whittington
The Belton Journal

The Broncos' future on the football field is bright, and they have the young talent to prove it.

Through the course of its first four years, like all other programs, Lake Belton has seen plenty of productive players graduate, leaving it left to fill voids in order to extend the successful start. Next season will be no different as multiple critical seniors depart.

Successors, however, are apparent.

After returning to the playoffs once again, numerous Broncos were recently rewarded for their efforts in the process by being placed on the 8-5A,

Division I All-District list, and several underclassmen were included.

Zyien Dupree, a sophomore running back, received the team's most prestigious recognition by being named co-offensive newcomer of the year.

In his debut, Dupree led Lake Belton (5-6, 4-3) in rushing, accounting for 736 yards on 92 carries to average eight yards per carry. Additionally, he crossed the goal line nine times and had three 100-yard games.

Dupree was the only member of the Broncos' roster to receive a superlative, but other players made their presence felt and several are not done yet.

Offensively, four standouts — receivers Da-

vion Peters, a senior, and junior Zion Harness along with linemen Hunter Lora, a senior, and Colton Crocker, a junior — were selected to the first team, while senior receiver Christian Onchweri, junior linemen Colton Colvin and Isaiah Fulk and sophomore quarterback Jessiah James landed on the second team.

En route to averaging 401.1 yards and 34.5 points per game as a team, Harness caught 52 passes for 906 yards and seven scores, Peters had 751 yards and 10 touchdowns on 10 receptions, and Onchweri turned 14 catches into 223 yards and a score.

In eight games, James completed 78 of 139 passes for 1,398 yards and 11

touchdowns.

Lake Belton's defensive representatives were senior tackles Evan Lazott and Caleb Chandler, senior linebacker Gavin Owens and senior safety Gavin Stewart. Owens and Stewart led the squad in tackles with 137 and 110, respectively, while Lazott had 52 and Chandler finished with 40.

Stewart also intercepted four passes, recovered a pair of fumbles and caused another.

The Broncos second-team selections were senior end Nick Basak, senior linebacker Jonathan Russell, senior safety Braxtan Cope and Onchweri as a cornerback.

Basak recorded 46

tackles, including 14 solo, to go with three sacks, Russell had 81 tackles, four sacks and a fumble recovery and Cope posted 80 tackles and four interceptions. Onchweri had 30 tackles, an interception, a fumble recovery and a caused fumble.

Georgetown senior running back Jett Walker was named most valuable player, and Cedar Park senior running back Trae Hill was named offensive player of the year after the Eagles and Timberwolves finished tied atop the standings with identical 6-1 records.

Georgetown East View senior linebacker Tieson Ejiawoko and Cedar Park senior linebacker Jahiem Porter were named co-de-

fensive players of the year, while Cedar Park senior Jacob Slaughter was named of-fensive lineman of the year. Georgetown senior Tension Dean and Cedar Park junior Olujimi Aluko shared the defensive lineman of the year award.

East View junior Jayvion Clayter split the offensive newcomer of the year award with Dupree, while Leander Rouse sophomore Liam Mongold and Cedar Park sophomore C.J. Rogers were named defensive newcomers of the year.

Rounding out the superlatives, East View senior Cormyc Guerrero was named utility player of the year, and Cedar Park head coach Michael Quintero was named coach of the year.

Tigers earn win with last second basket over Consolidated

By Aries Ramos
The Belton Journal

The Belton Tigers boys basketball team delivered one of their most dramatic weeks of the early season, following up a last-second win over A&M Consolidated with an overtime victory against Georgetown East View on Monday night. The Tigers' resilience, late-game composure, and ability to finish under pressure were once again on display as they outlasted the Patriots 66-60 in extra time.

Belton spent most of the night playing from behind. East View controlled the early tempo, jumping out to an 18-12 lead after the first quarter and stretching the margin to 37-28 at halftime. The Tigers briefly trimmed the deficit to three before the break, but East View responded with six quick points to regain control. The Patriots continued to hold the edge through the third quarter, taking a 49-43 lead into the final period.

Despite the uphill climb, Belton stayed within striking distance. Noah Childers, who had seven points in the first half, remained steady and helped fuel the late push. A pair of free throws from Childers tied the game at 53-53 with just over three minutes remaining marking the first time Belton had pulled even since the opening moments. From there, the Tigers traded baskets and defensive stops, forcing

overtime when regulation ended knotted at 57-57.

In the extra period, Belton finally seized momentum. Strong defensive possessions and confident shot-making allowed the Tigers to outscore East View 9-3 in overtime, securing the 66-60 win and adding another comeback to their early season résumé.

The finish echoed Belton's thrilling 65-64 victory over A&M Consolidated just days earlier. In that game, the Tigers erased a nine point fourth quarter deficit before Childers delivered the decisive basket in the final seconds. It was a night defined by toughness, poise, and contributions from across the roster. Ty Johnson anchored the offense with 13 points, while Luke Munden and Jay'dn Loggins added valuable scoring of their own. Inside, Daniel Briscoe and Abran Knight controlled the glass and created second-chance opportunities that helped swing momentum when Belton needed it most.

Together, the two games showcased the Tigers' growing identity, a team that battles, trusts its depth, and plays its best basketball when the moments grow tight. With back to back wins secured in the final seconds or beyond regulation, Belton heads into its next stretch carrying confidence and the belief that no deficit is too large to overcome.

Lake Belton improves to 4-1 with win over Elgin

By Clay Whittington
The Belton Journal

The Broncos improved to 4-1 Tuesday evening, when they hosted Elgin in a 70-61 contest.

Lake Belton entered halftime with a six-point deficit, 32-26, but responded with a pair of 22-point quarters, allowing it to remain undefeated at home this season.

Along the way, four Broncos produced double digits offensively.

Jackson Striegler, a junior center, contributed a team-high 20 points to go with 10 rebounds, while senior guard Dezmin Ravizee had 15 points and four rebounds. Additionally, junior guard Mikey Lockett (5 rebounds, 5 assists) and sophomore guard Ameer Williams scored 12 and 11 points, respectively.

Allen Machunu, a junior, fell just short of joining the group, finishing with nine points and five rebounds.

Ravizee connected on a trio of 3-pointers in the first quarter before adding his fourth in the

second period. Striegler accounted for a dozen of his points after halftime.

Prior to the Thanksgiving holiday, Lake Belton split a pair of games on the road.

Playing at Little River-Academy, the Broncos fell by four points, 58-54, in a neutral-site contest against Burnet.

Lake Belton held a 21-12 lead following the first quarter but could not maintain the momentum as its advantage was trimmed to a point at 29-28 by halftime. Then, the Bulldogs won the fourth quarter 14-7.

Lockett led the Broncos in defeat with a 16-point, 10-rebound double-double, while Striegler had 15 points and five rebounds. Ravizee finished with eight points and four rebounds.

There were no such issues the following day at Jarrell, where Lake Belton cruised to a 63-30 win.

The Broncos immediately established a 15-6 lead, and after limiting the Cougars to just two

points in the second period, Lake Belton led 35-18 at halftime.

Now, the Broncos turn their attention toward the season's first tournament.

Beginning today, Lake Belton takes part in the three-day Salado tournament, where it will play at least five games during the event.

The Broncos open with a contest against Rockdale today at 10:30 a.m. before playing Austin LASA at 1:30 p.m. Then, on Friday, Lake Belton encounters Gatesville and the host Eagles at 1:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., respectively.

The outcomes will determine the Broncos' schedule on Saturday.

Regardless of how things unfold, Lake Belton will have to move on quickly with another busy week awaiting.

The Broncos host Austin Eastside on Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. with the hopes of pushing their home record to 4-0 before taking part in the three-day Robinson tournament beginning Dec. 11.

Lady Tigers hit the road to face Copperas Cove

By Clay Whittington
The Belton Journal

The Lady Tigers will attempt to defeat Copperas Cove for the first time more than three years Friday, when they travel to face the Lady Bulldawgs.

Belton's three-game winning streak against Copperas Cove was snapped on Nov. 7, 2023 with a 58-11 loss, and last year, the Lady Tigers narrowly fell by three points, 51-48.

The squads were district foes last time Belton beat the

Lady Bulldawgs in a 46-32 outcome on Feb. 1, 2022.

So far, the Lady Tigers have endured an up-and-down start to their schedule.

After splitting its first four games, Belton continued the trend prior to the Thanksgiving holiday at the San Antonio Cornerstone Warrior Classic, sandwiching a pair of wins around two losses.

In pool play, the Lady Tigers dominated Lockhart, winning 76-15 before suffering a 63-45 loss to Montgomery.

The following day, Dripping Springs emerged with a 71-65 overtime victory in advance of beating Pace 49-36 in their final game.

Belton sophomore guard Isabella Warner was placed on the all-tournament team.

Then, on Tuesday, the Lady Tigers returned to the road, traveling to play Leander Rouse in advance of their trip to Copperas Cove, and they returned home without a win.

The Lady Raiders immediately overwhelmed Belton,

connecting on six 3-points in the opening period en route to a 59-38 victory.

Rouse's long-range accuracy allowed it to carry a 26-8 advantage into the second quarter, and after making just two field goals, the Lady Tigers bounced back with a 14-point period behind Warner's 10-point outburst, but it was not enough to spark a comeback.

Rouse held a 37-22 halftime lead, and Belton (4-5) only trimmed a point off the deficit, 46-32, through three quarters.

Warner finished with 19 points, while sophomore teammate Emma Harvey scored nine points, and senior Ke'Ara Shanks scored six points.

Following their contest at Copperas Cove, the Lady Tigers remain on the road, playing at Waco Connally on Tuesday.

Belton will also take part in the three-day Jarrell tournament (Dec. 11-13) and make the drive to Caldwell (Dec. 16) before playing their next home game on Dec. 19, when Nava-sota comes to town.

Lady Broncos basketball string together 11 wins, remain undefeated

By Aries Ramos
The Belton Journal

The Lake Belton Lady Broncos kept their undefeated season alive Monday night, overcoming a slow start to defeat Shoemaker 55-46 on the road.

The win pushes Lake

Belton to 11-0, continuing what has been one of the strongest beginnings to a season in recent program history.

Shoemaker struck first, using an aggressive opening stretch to take a seven-point lead after the first quarter. Lake Belton

struggled to find its rhythm early, but that changed as the Broncos settled in defensively and began to control the pace of the game.

By halftime, the momentum had shifted, and the second half belonged almost entirely to Lake Belton.

The Broncos' turnaround was driven by their defense. Shoemaker's early success faded as Lake Belton disrupted passing lanes, pressured the ball, and turned mistakes into fast break opportunities.

The Broncos finished the night with 17 deflec-

tions, 11 steals, and five blocks, producing 20 points off turnovers. Their presence inside also made a difference, with 30 points scored in the paint and 30 rebounds collected, including 10 on the offensive end.

Offensively, the Broncos received strong perfor-

mances across the board.


Aniya Taylor led the team with 20 points and contributed several key plays defensively that helped spark the comeback. Alexa King added 16 points, attacking the

See **UNDEFEATED**,
Page B3



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Sports Briefs

By Clay Whittington
The Belton Journal

The Tigers and Lady Tigers will host the B-Town Beatdown on Saturday at Mary Hardin-Baylor. Following the meet, Belton returns to action Wednesday, when it travels to Pflugerville Weiss. Lake Belton will also be in attendance at UMHB on Saturday before competing at the Waco Midway meet Wednesday.

Belton Lake

FAIR. Water stained; 76 degrees; 0.26 feet above pool. White bass fishing is good and getting stronger with each passing cold front as the water cools through the 70s. Fish are gathering in large schools and using bottom features in 32-42 feet of water most of the morning and in the late afternoons after feeding briefly in shallow water right around sunrise. The MAL Lure, original or heavy, and with either a white tail or chartreuse tail is a good lure to have on the rods right now. Once a school of fish is found on sonar use your trolling motor to stay on top of them, then drop the lure to bottom and crank it up fast enough to ensure the blade starts spinning and stays spinning. Observe fish reaction using live imaging sonar or 2D sonar. Once the fish settle down and no longer chase, move on and look for the next school. No bird activity, and very limited topwater activity typically with cloud cover just after sunrise. Report by Bob Maindelle, Holding the Line Guide Service. Unseasonably warm conditions have bass holding in a summer pattern. The most consistent bite is coming from nomadic schools chasing shad, best located with forward-facing sonar. Weightless soft plastic jerkbaits and mid-strolling presentations are producing steady action. A few scattered fish can still be caught around submerged vegetation and shoreline cover, but those bites have been less consistent.

Stillhouse

FAIR. Water stained; 70 degrees; 0.59 feet above pool. We are at peak fall fishing conditions now for white bass and hybrid striped bass. The fishing is excellent and will likely stay this way until the water temperature a below 60 degrees in a few weeks. The only thing that could make this better is the arrival of our migratory, fish-eating birds like gulls and terns. A few are present, but so far have been unhelpful locating fish. Sonar remains the staple for finding fish in 30-35 feet around sunrise and sunset, then 35-52 feet the rest of the day. The MAL Dense worked vertically by cranking it upward through the lower third of the water column assisted by viewing this on Garmin LiveScope is my go-to tactic. Report by Bob Maindelle, Holding the Line Guide Service. Fall conditions have bass scattered, making it difficult to find big groups or consistent patterns. Large schools of nomadic bass are roaming the main lake chasing shad. Bass fishing is fair utilizing forward-facing sonar and mid-strolling small minnow-style soft plastics. For bigger bites, fish a football jig along steeper rocky shorelines. Report by Ander Meine, Bassquatch Fishing.


Fishing REPORT

BELTON BOYS SOCCER
The Tigers will be holding a preseason parent meeting today inside the Belton High School library from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.
During the session, program rules and guidelines will be discussed, practice and game schedules will be revealed and holiday procedures will be outlined. Any other questions will also be addressed. If unable to attend, a recap of the meeting will be emailed.
For more information, visit BeltonTigers.com.

SWIMMING
Belton and Lake Belton will both travel to Killeen for a meet versus multiple opponents on Dec. 13. The competition will serve as the final action for

both programs until combining with New Tech to host a meet Jan. 5. The District 22-5A meet is set for Jan. 23.

LAKE BELTON SOFTBALL
The Lady Broncos will be holding an informative meeting regarding tryouts for the upcoming season Dec. 18 at 5:30 p.m.
Coaches will be on hand to share information with players and parents regarding guidelines for how the tryout process will work later in January.
The meeting is for all potential players of any grade.
For more information, contact Lady Broncos head coach Kelsie McEachern at Kelsie.McEachern@BISD.net.



Managing risk at different stages of life

Scot Hrbacek, CFP® Financial Advisor

As an investor, risk is always part of the journey – but how you manage it can depend on where you are in life.

Early in your career, you can invest for growth and take on more risk, knowing you have time to recover from market downturns.

In midlife, with goals like retirement and college savings, it's generally time to balance growth with stability.

Near retirement, preserving wealth becomes key – though growth still matters to help keep up with inflation.

And in retirement, you

may want to reduce risk, but not eliminate it entirely. A balanced mix in your portfolio and a smart income withdrawal strategy can help your money last.

And while you'll seek balance based on your life stage, even a diversified portfolio doesn't fully protect against loss.

Risk tolerance changes over time, and your strategy should too. Staying informed and flexible can help you better navigate market volatility and stay on track toward maintaining long-term financial success.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor.
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Belton native elected to Figure Skating Hall of Fame


Special to the Journal

Joseph L. Inman has been elected to the United States Figure Skating Hall of Fame, Class of 2026. Inman graduated from Belton High School in 1964, where he was voted its most outstanding student. After graduation, he left Belton to pursue a formal education in music, specifically a double major in piano and percussion.

Music later became his profession as a member of the U.S. Army Band (retired) and a teacher in the Washington, DC area. During college, Inman took up figure skating seriously, competing as a pair skater. After injury forced his retirement from competitive skating, he decided to judge, working his way

See FAME, Page B3

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BISD soccer programs preparing for new season

By **Aries Ramos**
The Belton Journal

With the start of the 2025 soccer season approaching, both Belton ISD programs are preparing for another competitive run through District 16, a lineup that includes Belton, Lake Belton, Ellison, Chaparral, Waco University, and defending boys champion Waco High.

After a tightly contested 2024 campaign across both the boys’ and girls’ divisions, all four Belton ISD teams enter the new season with renewed expectations and key matchups circled on their calendars.

On the boys’ side, Lake Belton looks to build on last year’s fourth-place district finish. The Broncos showed promise in 2024 but struggled against a dominant Waco team that went a perfect 10–0 in district play. In their two meetings with the Lions last season, Lake Belton fell 6–2

and 5–0, results the Broncos aim to flip as they continue to mature and gain experience. Their showdowns with Waco, scheduled for February 17 and March 6, are to be major tests as the Broncos push for a higher finish and another postseason berth.

Belton’s boys’ team, which finished fifth a year ago, also has its sights set on climbing the standings. The Tigers showed flashes of competitiveness but, like Lake Belton, ran into trouble against the district champions, dropping their matchups with Waco 4–2 and 4–0. This season offers a fresh opportunity for Belton to tighten the gap and challenge the teams ahead of them in the table. Their meetings with Waco once again loom large as potential momentum shifters.

In the girls’ division, Lake Belton comes off a strong season in which the Lady Broncos secured third place. Despite the solid finish, their toughest games came against their cross-town rivals. Lake Belton fell to Belton twice 2–1 and 3–0. The

Lady Broncos return motivated to close that gap in 2025. With experience returning and a more seasoned roster, Lake Belton is expected to remain firmly in the playoff hunt and challenge for a higher position.

Meanwhile, Belton’s girls’ program enters the campaign as the reigning district champion after finishing atop the standings last season. The Lady Tigers set the standard in District 16 with consistent play on both ends of the field and strong performances in key rivalry matches. With a target on their backs this season, Belton looks to defend its crown in a district that continues to grow more competitive. Their matchups against Lake Belton will once again carry playoff implications and district title weight.

As the season begins, all four Belton ISD teams find themselves in meaningful positions. The district features a blend of rising programs, experienced contenders, and established rivals, setting the stage for a highly competitive slate of matches.

Undefeated - From Page B1

rim with consistency and providing timely stops on the other end. Olivia Dann supplied 10 points and seven rebounds, giving Lake Belton valuable strength in the post.

Lake Belton turned its attention to a Tuesday matchup with Temple, which enters at 5–5. Despite the Wildcats’ even record, they have shown the ability to play teams close, and the Broncos will need another steady defensive showing to protect their

unbeaten mark. Results were not available as of press time. After Temple, Lake Belton will prepare for a December 9 contest against Copperas Cove, another opponent known for its physical style of play.

With double digit wins behind them and confidence growing each night, the Lady Broncos head into their next stretch of games with an opportunity to continue building on their perfect start.

Fame - From Page B2

up to become one of the most respected officials in the world of figure skating.

After the 2002 Salt Lake City Olympic judging scandal, the International Olympic Committee requested that a new system of judging be developed to replace the 6.0 system.

Inman was chosen as a member of a small ad hoc group of top figure skating experts charged with designing a system that would be more objective, fairer and less prone to bias.

Combining his expertise in music performance and theory with his elite level of knowledge and experience as an Olympic-level judge, Joseph Inman brought an unique perspective to evaluating artistry in a figure skating program more objectively.

In 2017, Inman was awarded the International Skating Union’s Gold Award of Merit, the highest award that the international governing body can bestow on a judge. He is one of only 22 two recipients ever to have been so honored.

With his election to the U.S. Figure Skating Hall of Fame, Joseph Inman will now receive the United States Figure Skating Association’s highest honor when he is inducted into the U.S. Figure Skating Hall of Fame on January 9, 2026, at the National Championships in St. Louis, Missouri.

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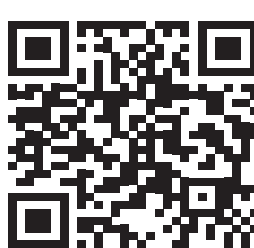
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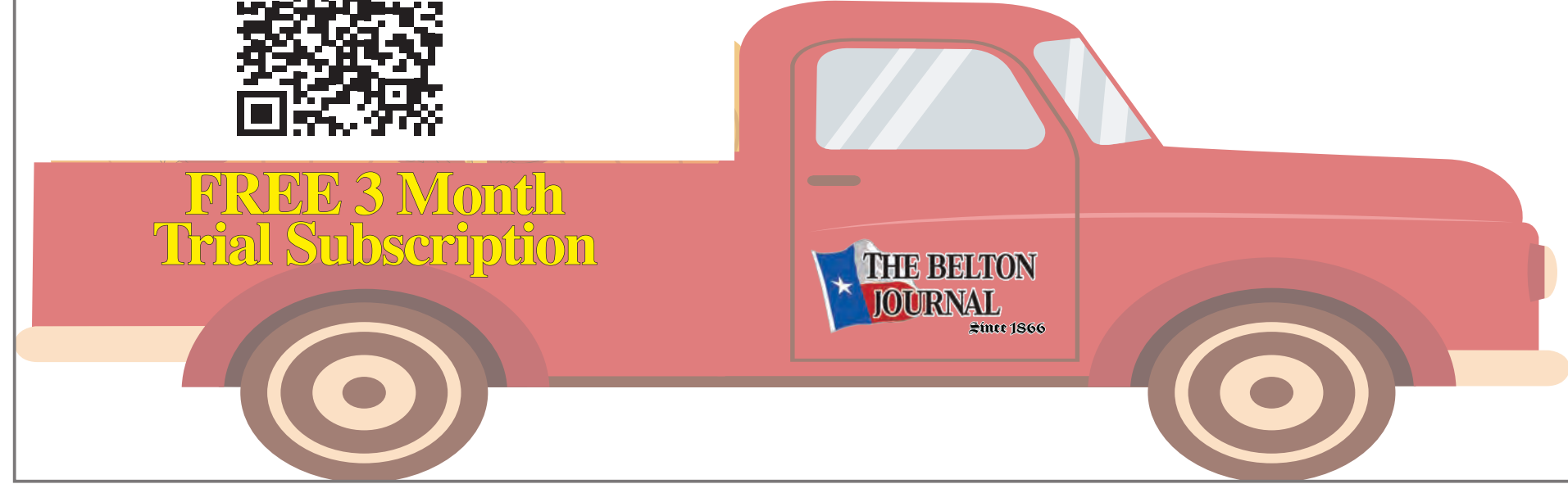
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EDITORIAL

Thanksgiving Resolutions

Pleasant Ramblings • Mark Magnan

Well Thanksgiving is well behind us now. You probably can't remember everything that was on the menu. I am sure that every year there are a lot of promises made on that Thursday in November. Some akin to swearing they will not cook that much food again next year, or perhaps committing to never eating that much food again. Of course, there is a little less than 12 months before the next one rolls around, plenty of time to forget.

I have known some folks that really enjoy cooking on Thanksgiving and near the completion of the preparation of the meal they are mumbling something about never cooking again. And of course, a couple of hours later folks sitting around moaning and promising to never eat "like that" next year. By the time the holiday rolls around again, the cooks are back in the kitchen, and the diners

are skipping breakfast so they will be extra hungry.

Now I really do get this, I am a mashed potato fanatic, I can eat a surprising amount of mashed potatoes, even more with something to go with it, like gravy. I have had some afternoons where I felt like I never wanted to see another mashed potato (if there is such a thing as a single mashed potato), yet the very next time I am offered mashed potatoes I will take more than I should, even if it is a few weeks after Thanksgiving. And it is not just the great home-cooked type, I am fine with several varieties from various restaurants, although potatoes with skins in them usually slows me down a bit.

The day after Thanksgiving officially starts the Christmas shopping season, although you couldn't tell it since we have had "black Friday" sales since July, or earlier. There are ads with seem-

ingly incredible buys, until you look a little closer. There are no stores that are truly losing money just to make you happy.

Quite a few years ago, when I worked in broadcasting and a holiday was just another day, I made the mistake of going to the mall (and that should tell you it has been a while), to get a nice shirt for an upcoming event, on the Friday after Thanksgiving. It was wild, I got what I needed, which at the time was the most I had ever paid for a shirt in my life, and got out of there as fast as I could. I don't recall making a formal promise, but I made a mental note to never shop on that Friday again. Well as it often goes, I did go shopping on that Friday some years later. My daughter wanted a specific gift, so I found a store that had that item on sale, since I am an early riser I thought I would do well. I made my way to this store

and was amazed that I couldn't even park in their parking lot, I had to park up the street and walk. Of course the item that I wanted wasn't a hot "gift" for the season so I thought I was still in good shape. I was just a little early, before the store opened, but there was a fairly long line already, filled with people that unlike me, had not seen the dark of morning for probably the last twelve months. I didn't get the specific item that I was looking for, apparently it was a bit more popular than I thought. I made another stop and ended up with a suitable substitute, so all was good. That was the one that did me in, I made a firm promise that year to never shop on that Friday again. Most years I don't even leave the house the day after Thanksgiving, since I don't work in broadcasting, working for a newspaper is way less demanding on holidays than

broadcast journalism.

Times have changed. Now you can put in an order for a "hot deal" weeks before Thanksgiving and click a button. Some time later the UPS man, which coincidentally has a bushy beard, brings it to your door. If you are a savvy shopper you can search for your desired "gift" and within seconds find a place to buy it for the absolute best price. No more fighting crowds or arguing with store clerks about the clarity of a newspaper flyer.

All of that sounds good, but I miss the days when I was a kid and we went to some big department stores. Of course, seeing Santa was a big deal, but I remember the feeling, the displays, the fun of looking at signs that Christmas was coming soon. Add in a little cold weather and it seemed like the perfect season. Yes, I miss that.

A Christmas Memory

Coffee Talk • Renae Brumbaugh Green

I miss the Christmases of yesteryear... the ones with shopping malls laden with twinkling lights, luscious trees covered with shiny ornaments, festively wrapped gifts with voluptuous bows, Christmas carols playing over the buzz of shoppers . . . I'm sure those things still exist somewhere. But for me, the sights and sounds of Christmas are now confined to whichever delivery truck can get my orders here the fastest.

I know. First world problem.

Many years ago, however, I was confronted with a different picture of Christmas.

It was the early 1990s, and my Sunday School class had decided to provide Christmas gifts for a needy family. I asked the nurse at the Houston school where I taught to refer us to someone, and we were saddened and shocked at the family we found.

A single mother struggled to support ten children. She worked two jobs, but it was barely enough. They lived in a tiny, one-bedroom house with no heat. The

boys slept on the living room floor; the girls slept with Mama in the bedroom.

These children often went for days without bathing, because to them being dirty was better than bathing in ice-cold water.

The mother carefully wrote down the name, age and size of each child. Her request for help was a humbling one, I'm sure. Yet she swallowed her pride in hopes that her children would experience a decent Christmas.

Each couple in our class shopped for a different child. On the Sunday before Christmas, there was hardly room for people in our classroom—we had to maneuver our way around all the gifts. We each entered the room, eyes twinkling, exclaiming over how much fun it had been to shop for "our" child.

Since one of these children was a student at my school, I was elected to deliver the gifts. On Christmas Eve, I pulled into the driveway, and I'll never forget

seeing those ten young faces pressed against the window of the small house. "She's here, Mama!"

As the tired mother came out to greet me, gratitude poured from her eyes. "Thank you so much," she whispered.

When I opened the back of our mini-van, her eyes widened. "Timmy, Joseph! Come out here and help!" Soon all ten children formed an assembly line, passing gift after gift and placing them under the modest tree.

"I think we need to open these tonight, Mama—we won't have any room to sleep!" the boys urged.

"You'll find room. You can wait until Christmas," exclaimed their mother.

I received a hug and a thank-you from each child, and I left.

As I drove home, I was reminded of a similar Christmas, more than 2,000 years ago, when a young expectant mother and a hard-working father had no place to go. A Christmas when a kind innkeeper had no room in his inn, so he offered what he had—a barn.

A Christmas when a tiny baby was born in that rugged stable and lay sleeping in a lowly manger. There were no twinkling lights, sparkling trees, or festively wrapped gifts.

Oh, there were carols, but they weren't playing over the loudspeakers in the shopping mall.

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Proverbs 19:17 “He who is kind to the poor lends to the Lord.”

This author penned a poem that is typically recited each year at Christmas.

Answer: Clement Clarke Moore

Local

Activities & Events

Newcomers Club Activities

DECEMBER

12/03: Monthly Luncheon, Popcorn Bridge	12/16: Bunco
12/08: Bookworms	12/17: Popcorn Bridge, Fun Lunch
12/11: Couples Night Out, Mexican Train Dominoes	12/18: Meet & Greet, Nonfiction Book Club
12/12: TGIF Lunch	12/19: Trailblazers Walking Group
12/15: Snack Time Mah Jongg, Well Read Women	12/22: Monday Canasta
	12/27: Jimmy's Egg
	12/31: Crochet & Knit

**"To join or for more information, please call:
Mary Pringle (760)265-5035 or email at: pringlem@msn.com.
Visit the website: www.bellcountynewcomers.com."**

CAC announces 2025 concert lineups

SHINYRIBS - Dec. 6

Shinyribs, a regular visitor to the CAC, defies genres as a melting pot of Texas blues, New Orleans funk, horn-driven Memphis soul, country twang, border music, big band swing and roots-rock. The 2025 CTOS Classic Music Series includes four big shows.

Hoop Shoot Contest - Dec 13

Temple Elks Lodge #138 Hoop Shoot Coordinator, and have attached a flier below regarding the free local Hoop Shoot Contest beginning at 10 a.m. on 12/13/25 at the Belton Christian Youth Center (BCYC), 505 Avenue C, Belton, Texas 76513. You can pre-register at <http://www.bcyosports.com/home> or day of the event registration begins at 9 a.m. at BCYC. The Elks Hoop Shoot Contest is a national free throw contest for boys and girls ages 8-13 as of April 1, 2026. The boys and girls compete in three age groups, 8-9, 10-11, and 12-13, with girls and boys competing separately. Winners advance through the Lodge #138 contest to district, state, regional, and the National Finals in Chicago. Please see the Elks Hoop Shoot website for full contest rules and details: <https://www.elks.org/hoopshoot/compete/playbook.cfm>. Please feel free to provide the attached flier to those interested in participating. Contact me with your mailing address if you would like me to send you copies of the attached flier and/or send you a poster about the contest. You can reach me at zammax@aol.com or 254-217-0070.

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

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

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

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

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

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. Majong 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.

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

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

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

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

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.

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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LEGALS

THE STATE OF TEXAS
CITATION BY PUBLICATION
CASE NUMBER 25CPB00674

To: UNKNOWN HEIRS
DANIEL MUNGIA, Applicant, on December 01, 2025, filed an Amended Application for Independent Administration, for Letters of Administration and Application to Determine Heirship in a proceeding styled: ENRIQUETA MUNGIA, Deceased, and bearing the number 25CPB00674 in the County Court of Bell County, Texas.
The court will hear the aforesaid Application after the expiration of ten days, exclusive of the day of publication, from the date this citation is published which will be December 04, 2025, in the County Court at Law #1 Courtroom, at the Bell County Justice Complex, 1201 Huey Road, in Belton, Texas.
All persons interested in the aforesaid estate are commanded to appear at or before the time set for said hearing by filing a written contest or answer to said application should they desire to oppose or contest it.
Said written contest or answer shall be filed in the office of Shelley Coston, County Clerk, Bell County, Texas, PO Box 480, Belton, Texas 76513.
The name and address of the attorney for applicant is: JEFFREY THIGPEN, PO BOX 428, TEMPLE TX 76503
The officer serving this Citation shall, in compliance with the Law, serve it by publication once in a newspaper of the general circulation in this, the County in which the decedent last resided as required by Section 202.052 of the Texas Estate Code, for not less than ten days before the return day hereof, exclusive of the day of publication, and the date of publication said newspaper bears shall be the day of publication.
Issued and given under my hand and seal of said Court at office on December 01, 2025.
Shelley Coston County Clerk of Bell County, Texas, PO Box 480, 1201 Huey Road, Belton, TX 76513
By: Lillian Phillips Deputy
12.04

THE STATE OF TEXAS
CITATION BY PUBLICATION – DIVORCE
CAUSE NO. 25DFAM351874
To: Thuy Kieu Phan
Greetings:
You are hereby commanded to appear before the 426th Judicial District Court, Bell County, Texas to be held at the Bell County District Courts Building in Belton, Texas, by filing a written

LEGALS

answer to the original petition for divorce at or before 10:00 A.M. of the Monday next after the expiration of 20 days after the date of service hereof, a copy of which accompanies this citation, in cause number 25DFAM351874, styled In the Matter of the Marriage of QUOC CUONG VO and Thuy Kieu Phan
filed in said court on February 19, 2025, and the nature of which suit is a request to Divorce: Children.
The Court has authority in this suit to enter any judgement or decree in the child’s/children’s interest which will be upon you, including the termination of the parent-child relationship, the determination of paternity and the appointment of a conservator with authority to consent to the child’s/children’s adoption.
The Court has authority in this suit to enter any judgement or decree dissolving the marriage and providing for the division of property which will be binding on you.
This was issued at the request of attorney: QUOC CUONG VO- PRO SE 6100 E RANCIER AVE LOT 371 KILLEEN TX 76543.
NOTICE TO Defendant: You have been sued. You may employ an attorney. If you or your attorney do not file a written answer with the clerk who issued this citation by 10:00 AM on Monday next following the expiration of twenty days after you were served this citation and petition, a default judgment may be taken against you. In addition to filing a written answer with the clerk, you may be required to make initial disclosures to the other parties of this suit. These disclosures generally must be made no later than 30 days after you file your answer with the clerk. Find out more at TexasLawHelp.org.
Witness, Joanna Staton, District Clerk of Bell County, Texas.
Issued and given under my hand and the seal of said Court at office in Belton, Texas on November 25, 2025.
Joanna Staton District Clerk, P. O. Box 909, 1201 West Huey Road, Belton, Texas 76513
By: Misty Cortez Deputy
12.04

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of KEIKO BANRES were issued on November 14, 2025, in Cause No. 25CPB00515, pending in the Statutory Probate Court Number 1 of Bell County, Texas, to MARCUS BARNES.
All persons having claims against the estate, which is presently being administered, are required to submit them, within the time and manner prescribed by law, and before the estate is closed, addressed as follows: c/o MARCUS BARNES ,1900 Genesse Street, #301, Houston, Texas 77006 D
Dated December 2nd ,2025
R Talmadge Hammock w/permission, BRETT H. PRITCHARD, Attorney for Executor of the Estate of KEIKO BARNES
12.04

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of MARGARATHA MABRY were issued on October 22, 2025, in Cause No. 25CPB00520, pending in the Statutory Probate Court Number 1 of Bell County, Texas, to MICHAEL MABRY.
All persons having claims against the estate, which is presently being administered, are required to submit them, within the time and manner prescribed by law, and before the estate is closed, addressed as follows: c/o MICHAEL G. MABRY, 3311 Lake Belton Ave. Killeen, Texas 76543
Dated December 2nd 2025
R Talmadge Hammock w/permission, BRETT H. PRITCHARD, Attorney for Executor of the Estate of MARGARATHA MABRY
12.04

LEGALS

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of WALLACE RICHARD HEADRICK were issued on November 20, 2025, in Cause No. 25CPB00638, pending in the Statutory Probate Court Number 1 of Bell County, Texas, to SUNNIE CHANG HEADRICK
. All persons having claims against the estate, which is presently being administered, are required to submit them, within the time and manner prescribed by law, and before the estate is closed, addressed as follows: c/o SUNNIE CHANG HEADRICK ,4713 Ronald Drive Killeen, Texas 76542
Dated December 2nd ,2005
R Talmadge Hammock w/permission, BRETT H. PRITCHARD, Attorney for Executor of the Estate of WALLACE RICHARD HEADRICK
12.04

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of PAULINE REYNAGA were issued on November 3, 2025, in Cause No. 25CPB00557, pending in the County Court at Law Number 1 of Bell County, Texas, to ISSAC REYNAGA.
All persons having claims against the estate, which is presently being administered, are required to submit them, within the time and manner prescribed by law, and before the estate is closed, addressed as follows: c/o ISSAC REYNAGA ,512 S. 50th Street Killeen, Texas 76543
Dated December 2nd,2025
R Talmadge Hammock w/permission, BRETT H. PRITCHARD Attorney for Executor of the Estate of PAULINE REYNAGA
12.04

THE STATE OF TEXAS
CITATION BY PUBLICATION-PARENT
AND CHILD

To: Tara Holloway, any Unknown Father and All Whom It May Concern, Respondents, in the hereinafter-styled and numbered cause:
You have been sued. You may employ an attorney. If you or your attorney do not file a written answer with the clerk who issued this citation by 10 a.m. on the Monday next following the expiration of 20 days after you were served this citation and petition, a default judgment may be taken against you. The Original Petition of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Petitioner, was filed in the 146th Judicial District Court of Bell County, Texas, on August 21, 2025, against Tara Holloway and Terrin Jones, Respondent(s), numbered 25DFAM355725, and entitled “In the Interest of MIRACLE HOLLOWAY, also known as BABY GIRL HOLLOWAY, minor child.” The suit requests to terminate the parent-child relationships and/or to appoint a managing conservator of the child. The date and place of birth of the child who is the subject of the suit is: MIRACLE HOLLOWAY, also known as BABY GIRL HOLLOWAY, DOB: July 30, 2025, Place of birth: Texas
The court has authority in this suit to render an order in the child’s interest that will be binding on you, including the termination of the parent-child relationship, the determination of paternity, and the appointment of a conservator with authority to consent to the child’s adoption.
The name and address of the attorney for plaintiff is Susan Parker, Bell County Attorney’s Office, P.O. Box 1127, Belton, TX 76513
Issued and given under my hand and seal of the Court at Belton, Texas, this the 23rd day of October
2025
Joanna Staton, District Clerk of Bell County, Texas, 1201 Huey Road, P.O. Box 909, Belton, TX 76513
By: C. Rodriguez Deputy.
12.04

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Craft an entire day around tree shopping

Though retailers may begin playing holiday tunes shortly after Halloween, for many people, no date on the calendar marks the beginning of the holiday season better than the day they pick up their Christmas tree.

There are many different ways to acquire a Christmas tree. Some people prefer artificial Christmas trees that can be stored and taken out each year. Others make a yearly expedition to a tree lot or a Christmas tree farm to find the perfect fir or spruce. Historians believe a man named W.V. McGallard planted 25,000 Norway spruce seedlings at his Mercer County, New Jersey farm in 1901, essentially establishing the first commercial Christmas tree farm. By 1908, customers could visit the farm and choose trees for \$1 each. McGallard helped create an entirely new industry that now accounts for 350 million trees being grown and sold in the United States every year.

Selecting a Christmas tree may not take more than an hour or two, but there are ways for families and other tree shoppers to maximize their time spent looking for a tree.

- Bring refreshments. Couple Christmas tree shopping with picnicking if the weather is amenable. Pack some foldable chairs into the vehicle (sitting on the ground on a blanket may be too cold) and bring along thermoses of coffee or hot cocoa. Snacks like granola bars, Christmas cookies or other filling treats can keep everyone satisfied and energized while they shop for a tree.

- Pair tree shopping with a trip to see lighting displays. Find the tree lot or tree farm and then scope out potentially scenic spots to view holiday lighting dis-

plays nearby. Neighborhood Facebook or other social media groups often tout homes that put up eye-catching displays. Ask around for addresses and plan your own tours.

- Plan a night out. Everyone may be tired and hungry after a long day of Christmas tree hunting. Plus, it's typically a good idea to wait some time for boughs to open before decorating. Use this opportunity to dine out and return home ready to decorate. Make it a regular occurrence that Christmas tree shopping is followed by a family meal at a favorite restaurant.


- Watch a classic film. Many different holiday movies are broadcast this time of year and each enhances the Christmas spirit. While putting up the tree, play a favorite film in the background. What better way to enjoy decorating your own tree than by watching Charlie Brown adorn his meager evergreen at the same time?

Make a day of selecting and putting up the Christmas tree each year. Doing so can enhance the holidays and make for an entertaining way to spend time together as a couple or family.



Did You Know?

LED CHRISTMAS LIGHTS BURN COOLER THAN INCANDESCENT BULBS, MAKING THEM SAFER CHOICES FOR DECORATING CHRISTMAS TREES AND OTHER AREAS OF A HOME.





Christmas
is all about
Jesus

Welcome to Belton, Texas

EDITORIAL

Canceling Christmas

My Front Porch • Lynette Sowell

You probably heard the story that came out a few years ago about the Hendersons of Hurricane, Utah. They’re the parents who decided to cancel Christmas for their three boys, aged 11, 8 and 5 at the time.

Why would they decide to do something so Grinch-like? I mean, after all, Christmas is for children, isn’t it? Well, it’s a simple case of what my husband and I call brat-itis.

The mom, Lisa Henderson, shared in a blog post about she and her husband’s decision.

“John and I feel like we are fighting a very hard uphill battle with our kids when it comes to entitlement. It is one of the biggest struggles as a parent these days in middle class America. Our kids have been acting so ungrateful lately,” she wrote. “They expect so much even when their behavior is disrespectful. We gave them good warning, either it was time for their behavior to change or there would be consequences. We patiently worked with them for several months and guess what, very little changed. One day after a particularly bad display of entitlement John said,

‘we should just cancel Christmas.’ And, so that’s what we did.”

She was quick to say at the beginning that the family hasn’t canceled putting up decorations, celebrating the birth of Christ or any of their other traditions. But, they’ve canceled presents, Santa, and stockings.

Instead of spending hundreds of dollars on Christmas presents for the three boys, the family is putting that money toward service projects instead. One project was a clothing drive in which they gathered clothes for a village in the Philippines hit by a typhoon. The family is also doing an “adopt a grandparent” program and inviting older widows and couples without children to Christmas dinner.

The story spread nationwide and the Hendersons received a lot of backlash for their decision. So much so, that Lisa added some updates to her original blog post, which received 1,364 comments, and not all of them good.

Some people called them “just plain mean” and that any lesson would be “lost” on the children by not giving them Christmas gifts because of the bitter disappointment.

“First, my kids are in no way hurting for things. It’s not like I took Christmas away from Tiny Tim here, folks. They have good clothes, shoes, and so many toys they can’t keep their playroom clean.” She said one way here children have reacted is by making homemade gifts for each other and sneaking them into stockings.

I say bravo for them, choosing to take a stand in that way. Kids having a gimme, gimme attitude isn’t new with this generation, not at all. But how many times do kids get “threatened” by Santa or the Elf on the Shelf, and no consequences happen?

Also, what other consequences happen during the year, without having to play the Santa or Elf card to get children to behave?

A lifestyle of giving and service shouldn’t be limited to the Christmas holidays. But it sure is a good time to start, and remember, that having a “good” Christmas isn’t about the stuff we get that will end up broken and forgotten amid the piles of other things we might have.

On Further Review...

Shop the Insanity • Darren Blair

I think most all of us can agree that 2025 was a very challenging, at times very troubling year. Many of us dealt with a variety of personal matters, some of which may have, at least initially, eclipsed the good fortunes of the year. Then of course there are the national and international stories of the year, many of which revolved around grief and tragedy.

I honestly don’t know how this year will end. In fact, in less than a week after I write this column I’ll be seeing a podiatrist (a type of medical specialist) as part of ongoing efforts to treat a health issue I’ve been facing for a few years now. Even though I’ve already got a road map in place and have made so much progress that a different specialist has said I no longer need their care, something else has popped up; it’s most likely just a minor (yet annoying) secondary effect of what I’ve been trying to deal with, but past experience with a similar issue has told me I’d do well to let a competent expert handle this instead of trying to take care of it on my own.

In times of uncertainty like this, there’s a penchant for the people who serve as figureheads to spout off various platitudes about hope, cheer, and optimism. For obvious reasons, these platitudes have a tendency to ring hollow, especially if the figurehead spouting them clearly doesn’t believe them or is visibly unaffected by the situation causing the uncertainty. As such, I’m not going to do that.

Instead, I’m going to say this –

We’re all human. We’re flawed, imperfect creatures living on a hunk of rock in the middle of what may or may not be Cosmic Podunkville. We have each been given intellect and free will, but when a person fails to use these gifts or chooses to use them in a way that is unwise then harm can readily befall themselves or others. In such situations, we find ourselves reminded of how fragile mind, body, and spirit can be. This is on top of the various natural forces which exist in our world (such as the weather and the terrain), plus the overall, inevitable effects of time passing by us.

There is not a single person on this planet at this time who is fully capable of handling every single thing they will face without eventually stumbling or being overwhelmed, especially if they’re trying to handle it alone. To be brutally honest, it’s those who do try to handle it all alone who generally burn out the hardest and fastest. We’re just not made for it.

So then, what can we do? For starters, we can have more grace, both with ourselves and with others; even when a person sincerely tries their best they can still fall short. We can work to keep mind, body, and spirit fit & healthy. We can lend a hand to others as we see the need and are able to assist with it. We can strive to better ourselves while also encouraging others to do the same. We can reach out in love to others who are struggling, lifting them up without seeking to lecture them or coerce change. Et cetera.

There’s nothing inherently wrong with falling down so long as you get back up. There’s nothing inherently wrong with failing so long as you keep trying. There’s nothing inherently wrong with admitting you’re lost so long as you keep checking the map. It just simply means you’re alive.

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