

WWE legends pay visit to Belton



Above Left: Kane poses for a photo with two fans. Above Right: Kane signs a fan's mask at Battleground Collectibles in Belton on Saturday, February 15.

By Daniel Moctezuma
The Belton Journal

Fans of professional wrestling got the chance to meet WWE legends Kane and “Million Dollar Man” Ted DiBiase at Battleground Collectibles on Saturday. The meet-and-greet, held from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., drew wrestling enthusiasts from Belton and surrounding areas, with some traveling from cities like Houston and El Paso.

Kane, known for his towering presence in WWE and long-running storyline as The Undertaker’s brother, posed for photos wearing his signature red-and-black mask. He was a

key figure in the company’s “Attitude Era” and is a former WWE Champion. DiBiase, a legendary heel in the 1980s and early ‘90s, held multiple championships in WWE and is best remembered for his Million Dollar Championship and famous catchphrase, “Everybody’s got a price.”

Battleground Collectibles owner Brandon Crawford said the store has been working to bring in more wrestling legends for meet-and-greet events.

“We started booking these events back in November,” Crawford said. “After we brought in The Hardy Boys, the agency we worked with said they

could route Kane and Ted DiBiase here, so we set it all up.”

Crawford said hosting events like this in Belton makes it easier for local wrestling fans who would otherwise have to travel to larger cities.

“One of the biggest pieces of feedback I get is that people are tired of driving all the way to Dallas, Austin, or Houston for these events,” he said. “With us being in Belton, we’re able to cater to people from Killeen, Copperas Cove, Temple—even Waco.”

Christina and Elmer Sanchez made the trip from Houston with their son, Kane, who was named after

the former WWE Champion.

“I named him after Kane because he was my favorite wrestler growing up,” Christina Sanchez said. “We watched him all the time during the Attitude Era.”

The family brought a Raw Heavyweight Championship belt to get signed and said they were excited to meet the wrestlers in person.

Crawford said he hopes to continue bringing more well-known figures to Belton, including wrestlers and other pop culture icons.

For updates on future events, visit battlegroundcollectibles.com.



Belton Journal/David Tuma
The owners of Concierge Title have renovated the Buchanan Building, located at 112 N East St. in Belton.

Local title company remodeling Buchanan Building

By David Tuma
The Belton Journal

Concierge Title of Texas is remodeling the Buchanan Building at 112 N East Street in downtown Belton.

The original flooring has been restored and the building refurbished. The interior has been redesigned with large open windows, electrical, and new light fixtures. Some interior décor has been purchased locally. The inside is impressively done. The upstairs has been converted into a meeting room/training session area. There is even a bank vault inside the building.

One of the bathrooms has a zebra design.

“I love interior design. We wanted to give clients a unique experience during closings. I grew up in Belton. The City of Belton has been great to work with. People stop by to look at the changes inside. We want to help make downtown beautiful again,” said owner Mecca Dreisbach. The interior is unique more of a

See **CONCIERGE**,
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Belton High School seniors named National Merit Finalists



Melo Arantes and David Shelburne hold their certificates which recognize them as National Merit Finalists.

Courtesy photos

Special to the Journal

Belton ISD is proud to announce that Belton High School seniors Melo Arantes and David Shelburne, have officially been named National Merit Finalists, a recognition that places them among the nation’s most accomplished students. This prestigious designation is awarded to a select group of students nationwide who demonstrate outstanding academic achievement, leadership, and dedication to their

education.

Originally named Semi-finalists in September 2024, they advanced to Finalist status after meeting rigorous academic requirements and excelling in standardized testing. This achievement makes them eligible for competitive National Merit Scholarships.

Melo Arantes shared his excitement about the honor.

“Being named a National Merit Finalist is truly

See **FINALISTS**,
Page A2

Races set for May 3 local elections

By Lynette Sowell
The Belton Journal

The 2025 General Election is scheduled for Saturday, May 3.

Filing for positions on the Belton Independent School District board of trustees and the Belton City council ended Friday, Feb. 14.

For the Belton Independent School District board of trustees, there are three positions on the ballot.

The election will decide trustees for Areas 1,

3 and 5, with elected candidates serving three-year terms until May 2028.

Jeff Norwood, who currently represents Area 1, is running unopposed.

In the race for Area 3, Riley Beck filed for Trustee-Area 3, challenging incumbent Suzanne M. McDonald. Manuel Alcozer represents Area 5 and is running unopposed.

For the 2025 Belton City Council election, incumbent and former Mayor Wayne Carpenter announced he would not seek re-election, and five others filed for three expiring seats. Daniel Bu-

cher and Ty Taggart filed for Place 5, Luke Potts and Clinton Bailey filed for Place 6, and Stephanie O’Banion filed for Place 7.

Bucher and O’Banion are both incumbents on the City Council. Bucher, also a former member of the Belton Parks Board, is seeking a third term and O’Banion, a former member of the Planning and Zoning Commission (P&Z), is seeking a second term.

Potts and Taggart currently serve on the P&Z

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Mercy House Assisted Living hosts pageant



Belton Journal/Michelle Rodriguez
Above are the three category winners at the 2025 Diamond and Diva Pageant held this past Valentine’s at Mercy House Assisted Living and Memory Care Facility. ABOVE LEFT: Aging at Home with Assistance category winner Ms. Emiko “Ami” Ogasawara ABOVE MIDDLE: Memory Care category winner Ms. Carolyn Parker ABOVE RIGHT: Skilled Nursing Care category winner Ms. Marlene Grammar.

By Michelle Rodriguez
The Belton Journal

Mercy House Assisted Living and Memory Care recently hosted their first Diamond and Divas Pageant at Redeemer Presbyterian Church located at 12 W. French Ave. in Temple.

“This was our very first year. Lord willing, we hope we can do it every year. We thought it would be nice for them on Valentine’s Day. We know that beauty doesn’t age. Pageant participants showed off the sparkle in their eye and shared their ‘philosophy of life’ stories and stories of their life experiences,” said Lisa Smith, Mercy House’s Administration and Marketing Manager.

Contestants were Bell County residents who live in an assisted living or memory care home.

“A lady that lives in Mercy House did a pageant in McKinnon County in Waco. We watched and tweaked it to make it ours and brought it to Bell County. I thought wouldn’t that be cool if we could bring that to Bell County? It’s not a beauty contest;

it’s a way to celebrate their lives and things they’ve done. Sometimes when you are in a nursing place the world forgets about you. It’s a way to show off our great ladies that have done great things for Bell County,” said Smith.

The event was formal. Contestants were required to have a fall risk escort throughout the pageant, also dressed in formal attire. The three categories of winners were: Aging at Home with Assistance, Memory Care, and Skilled Nursing Home with Assistance.

The participant for Aging at Home with Assistance was Emiko “Emi” Ogasawara and wore a purple, traditional Japanese kimono.

The participants for the Memory Care category were Joyce Bengé, escorted by Billy Azbell; Carolyn Parker, escorted by Anthony Ramps; and Mabel A. Mappus, escorted by Than Rodke. The category winner was Parker.

The participants for Skilled Nursing were Marlene Brammer, Tajaira Glaudin, Carmel McDaniel, and Hildona Messer.

They were asked, “What piece of advice would

you give to the upcoming generation,” by Emcee, Rod Henry. Category winner Marlene Brammer answered, “Go outside and play.”

“Temple ISD Wildcats at work with the CTE program did make-up and hair to showcase what they learned at school. Photographers helped, and the culinary kids provided a cookie tray. Paper Graphics Printing provided printing, fast signs, and posters. Precious Memories provided flowers,” said Smith.

Families and friends of contestants came to hear the ladies’ stories. Dresses were donated to the ladies.

“The community really came together to help celebrate,” said Smith.

The judges were Mayor Tim Davis, Dr. Green, a geriatric doctor for memory care, Doug Smith, a Rotarian district governor, Dr. Laura Novak with UMHB, and Beverly Luedke, business owner and Rotarian.

“The ladies spoke, walked down to music of their choice, and had fun and made new friends and met the people that were there. They had a blast!” said Smith.

Finalists - From Page A1

rewarding. The process—from preparing for the PSAT to writing college essays—was challenging but helped me grow. My advice to younger students is to start early, stay consistent, and apply yourself in every class.”

“It feels great to see my hard work pay off,” said Shelburne. “My family has been incredibly supportive, and this recognition opens

doors to scholarship opportunities.” He emphasized the importance of studying consistently, especially over the summer, to succeed on the PSAT.

Belton High School Principal Claudia Knox praised Arantes and Shelburne as exemplary student leaders.

“They balance academics, leadership, and athletics, proving

students can excel in all areas.”

She highlighted their well-rounded success, adding, “Their achievement shows that involvement in extracurriculars and academic excellence go hand in hand.”

Superintendent Dr. Malinda Golden also commended the students’ success.

“Steven Melo Arantes and David Shelburne exemplify the

academic excellence we strive for in Belton ISD. Their hard work and dedication are truly commendable, and we are proud to celebrate this achievement with them.”

Knox also emphasized Belton High School’s commitment to student success.

“With resources like Tiger Time tutoring, study groups, and clubs, our staff supports students in

reaching their full potential.”

As National Merit Finalists, Arantes and Shelburne are now in the running for prestigious scholarships, with final designations to be announced in April. The National Merit Scholarship Program awards approximately 7,500 scholarships annually, providing significant financial support for college-bound students.

Concierge - From Page A1

statement design than a remodel.

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The owners of Concierge Title of Texas, Mecca and Scott Dreisbach, are known as the creators of the

“no junk fee” title product in Texas.

Mecca has twenty years of escrow and title experience in the state of Texas. She grew up in Belton and graduated from Belton High School and then Texas A&M University. Mecca was a cheerleader at BHS. Her parents, Scotty and Mary Davis, still live in the area. Mecca started by taking a sales job at a title company.

Scott brings great leadership skills to the company through his life experience. Scott is a former professional football player. He played in the NFL as a

quarterback for almost a decade. Originally from Indiana, he played college football as a quarterback for the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. Scott joined Mecca in the Real Estate Industry after retiring from the NFL. They have two children who attend Lake Travis schools and are very involved in the Texas Real Estate Market and local communities.

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OBITUARIES



Pratt
John Leonard Pratt
January 4, 1945 –
February 8, 2025

John Leonard Pratt of Belton, Texas, passed away on February 8th, 2025, at Baylor Scott and White Hospital, Temple Texas at 80 years of age. Graveside services will be held at 10am on Thursday, February 27th, 2025, at Central Texas State Veterans Cemetery, Killeen Texas with full Military Honors. John was born on January 4th, 1945, in Cohoctah, Michigan to Vernon Edward and Katherine Grace Leetch Pratt. John Joined the Army in July of 1965. John was sent to Vietnam. Where he served as a door gunner on Huey helicopter. After Vietnam John was transferred to the Armored Division where he worked his way up to Tank Commander. He was then selected for the Warrant Officer program, as a Warrant Officer he was then able to go to flight school and became a Huey Helicopter pilot. John retired with 22 years of service. John then went to work as a civil service employee.

John married Mary Ann Watkins Ross on September 6th, 1994, in Belton, Texas. John is survived by his wife Mary Ann Pratt of Belton, sons; Richard Pratt & wife Scheree of Troy, Texas, John Pratt & wife Leslie of Troy Texas, and Terry Pratt of Troy, Texas, daughter Shellie Downing of Troy, Texas, Brother Fred Pratt & wife Elaine of Owasso, Michigan, sister Nancy Schofield of Farwell, Michigan, 15 Grandchildren and 5 Great Grandchildren.

Pete
Rayford Pete
April 12, 1969 –
February 12, 2025

Rayford Pete of Belton Texas passed away at his home on February 12th, 2025. He was 55 years of age. His Funeral Service will be at 2 p.m, on Friday, Feb. 21, 2025 at Dossman Funeral Home, Belton, Texas with burial to follow at North Belton Cemetery, Belton, Texas. Rayford was born April 12th, 1969, in Jennings, Louisiana to Thomas and Mary Ann Beverly Pete. Rayford was a machinist for Wilsonart for most of his life. In 1992 he married Shalaunda Erika Carter in Temple Texas. While he enjoyed cooking, fishing, and playing golf. What brought the biggest joy was serenading his wife with his “beautiful” karaoke skills. Having family game nights (he would constantly rob the bank in Monopoly), and hosting parties

where friends became those he loved as family. Y’all know who you are. Rayford is survived by his wife Shalaunda of Belton, Texas, his son Rayford Pete II of Belton, Texas, daughters Ziamora Pete of Temple, Texas, Raylene & husband Arnold Dionglay of Temple, Texas, his father Thomas Pete of Lake Arthur, Louisiana, brothers Thomas Jr. & wife Valerie Pete of Youngsville, Louisiana, James Pete of Lake Arthur, Louisiana, Andrew Pete of Richmond, Texas, sister Stella Ann Pete of Lake Arthur, Louisiana, and grandchildren Mikaeyla, Myko “Kai” and Mykah Dionglay. Rayford is preceded in death by his mother Mary Ann Pete, brother Dennis Pete and sister Adele Pete.

“Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days”
Psalm 90:14

Election - From Page A1

Commission, and Bailey is serving as an alternate on the Building and Standards Commission. Councilmember terms are for three years. Early voting will take place in the conference room at Belton City Hall, 333 Water St., April 22-25 from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m., and April 28-29, 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. Election Day voting will take place at the Harris Community Center, 401 N. Alexander St., with polls open Election Day from 7 a.m. - 7 p.m. Registered voters in Belton are eligible to request

a ballot by mail if any of the following conditions prevents them from voting in person during the early voting period or on Election Day, to include: 65 years of age or older; disability; expected absence from the County on Election Day and the entire period of early voting; confinement in jail, but otherwise eligible to vote. Ballot by mail applications are available at the Bell County Elections Department at the Belton Courthouse Annex, 550 E. 2nd Avenue, Belton. Mail ballot by mail applications to: Bell County Elections

Department, P.O. Box 1629, Belton, TX 76513. Voter registration may be done online at: https://www.bellcountytexas.com/departments/elections/voter_registration.php, and it takes 30 days for a voter registration to take effect.

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EDITORIAL

Prejudice ain’t pretty

My Front Porch • Lynette Sowell

I was once the victim of prejudice. No, maybe not a victim. It is not something I’ve had to deal with throughout my life because of my race or ethnicity. My encounter with the ugly beast was brief, swift and later chalked up to a bit of life experience. I guess you could say prejudice and I cracked heads.

It was the whole M word that caused a bit of trouble, as in M for media. It was assumed that I was the enemy, I was prejudged that I’d get a quote wrong and was waved away because of previous encounters with someone who wasn’t me. Ouch. I never claimed to be perfect, but almost always I have good intentions.

It rattled me a little, much like when you bonk your head on the door frame of a car. You stand there, shaking your head, not believing you’d walked right into it. And so I did. I stood there, dumbfounded.

I didn’t even get to say, “Give me a chance. Help me get it right.” Nope, I turned around and skulked away as my brain rattled inside my head.

I share this with you not because I’m looking

for sympathy. Being misunderstood has become part of the job. Most of us have to learn to deal with being misunderstood. That’s life. Plus, I don’t live with prejudice every day. Or if I have, I’m oblivious of the fact.

How many times, though, do we fall into the unpretty aspect of prejudice? Start filling in the ugly blanks for the following: Fat people are _____. People of a certain ethnic/racial background are _____. Preachers are _____.

We start assuming we know how someone is because of previous encounters or what we’ve seen or heard. People are pre-judged and judgment calls are made based on zero personal experience with that specific individual. There is an exception to every rule, and who made the rule anyway? Maybe we should throw out whatever unforgiving rule that we measure someone by.

Allow yourself to believe that a fat person can be neat, someone of a certain ethnic/racial background

can be hardworking, and a preacher can be a generous, honest person. No, they’re not perfect, but they all deserve to have the preconceived notions thrown out.

Perhaps someone has some preconceived notions about you. They’ve prejudged you based on your family, your friends, your occupation, your gender. Fill in your own blank. Turn the tables on yourself and imagine what it would be like if someone prejudged you. Or maybe you’ve been a real victim of prejudice, passed up for that job or promotion, having your motives doubted or your work ethic challenged wrongly.

What a perfect time to suspend those judgment calls. You might be surprised at the outcome when you do. I know I’ve had happy surprises from people that I, um, made an early judgment call on that I shouldn’t have. After that incident, I also know I’ll remember that knock to the head I felt when someone prejudged me and I’ll reserve any judgment calls until later.

SARW holding membership meeting

Special to the Journal

Salado Area Republican Women will host a membership meeting Thursday, February 27th at the Salado Civic Center. The meeting will start earlier than usual, at 11 a.m., to cover various topics.

Barb Swarthout will review all the aspects of the local club, which is part of Texas Federation of Republican Women, and how it fits in with the National Chapter. If you are a new member or have been a member for years, you will want to come to hear the interesting presentation.

President Brenda Howard will cover a few points of Parliamentary Procedure. Addie Baird, Chair of the Republican



Party of Bell County, will have an update on their activities.

In addition, Tony Canterino, of Harker Heights City Council, Bell County’s Legislative Committee Chair

will present an update on current issues affecting Texans.

The luncheon cost is \$20. Everyone is invited but reservations are requested for food and seat-

ing. Reservations need to be made by February 21 by contacting sherrilperhach@gmail.com.

On March 18, Salado Area Republican Women are having a field trip to the Texas Supreme Court where the attendees will hear oral arguments on a case. The trip will also include a visit with Jimmy Blacklock, the new Supreme Court Justice. Afterwards, the attendees will walk over to visit State Rep. Brad Buckley. The bus trip is sponsored by Americans for Property and includes breakfast and lunch. There are a few openings for those who would like to attend. Contact President of SARW Brenda Howard at brendaghoward@pm.me for more information.




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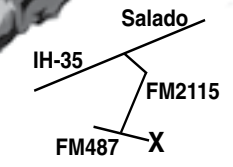
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Grace Gallery’s new exhibition features 15 artists

By Michelle Rodriguez
The Belton Journal

Grace Gallery invites the community to the opening of their new exhibit called Impactful by the Professional Artists of Central Texas group on Thursday, March 6 from 5 to 7 p.m., at 108 W. Central Ave.

The pieces were specifically chosen for its impact on the viewer, hence the theme.

“It’s going to be an exciting show. This exhibit is by 15 professional artists in the group. They are very selective about who gets into the group. They are very talented. They all have different styles,” said owner of Grace Gallery, Jo Mapel.

Some of the artists featured in the exhibit are Joe Barbieri with a western style oil on canvas; Daria Dega, an award-winning artist born in Russia; Hailey Herrera, born in Korea, who works with watercolor and mixed

media art; Kevin Malone from Waco; and Joanna Burch, who works with oils, watercolors, and oil on porcelain.

“As an artist with the soul and heart of a medical scientist, I have always loved to create something very complex that could convey the beauty of an artist object and reveal its inner world and character,” said Dega.

More artists showing at the upcoming exhibit are Linda Filgo, Dr. Carol Fox Hendrichs, Kevin Malon, who likes to paint biblical themes of people, animals, and the world; Judi Simmon who specializes in fine art oil; and Susan Sistrunk from Kempner.

There will also be pieces by Susan Sterle, Charles Wallis, and Barbara Fontaine White who was also shown in Grace Gallery’s last exhibit that opened in November.

There will be music by Frank Exum, guitarist, who will be playing the

classical guitar.

Grace Gallery’s last exhibit opened in November 2024 and featured local artists from UMHB.

The exhibit following the new exhibit in March will be in May for two months and will feature cowboys of color and will be a photo exhibit.



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A6
Thursday,
February 20, 2025

LIFESTYLES

THE BELTON JOURNAL

Anime Sunika convention draws crowd

By Michelle Rodriguez
The Belton Journal

Anime enthusiasts gathered at the Anime Sunika, a Central Texas anime convention, this past weekend at the Cadence Bank Center.

The special guest headliner was actor, martial artist, and stuntman Taimak Guarriello, known for his lead role as Leroy Green in Berry Gordy's the Last Dragon. There were also appearances made by celebrities, voice actors, and actresses Stephanie Nadolny, Linda Young, Michelle Rojas, Alex Organ, Cynthia Cranz, Natalie Van Sistine, Scott Dreier, William Corkery, and David Humphrey. Attendees could purchase autographs, pictures, and selfies from them.

The musical guests were Sheilava, the Texas Dragon/Lion Dance Team, and the headliner on Sun. All-4-One. Sheliava and the Texas Dragon/Lion Dance teams both performed on Sat. and Sun while on Sun. only, there was a Valentine's special live concert by All-4-One at 3 p.m.

Tickets were pre-sold and available for purchase the day of the event. Attendees were encouraged to dress up as their favorite anime character. There was an adult cosplay judging contest on Sat. at 2 p.m. and a child cosplay judging contest on Sun. at 2 p.m. The Bell County Cosplayers were there showing their costumes.

"We do a lot of events like parades, comic cons, our discord community is growing. We help each other with making cosplay, we taught a 3-D printing class, and cosplay on the budget," said Ian Wise with Bell County Cosplayers.

There was a child activity zone hosted by Stewart C. Meyer Harker Heights Public Library.

"We are with the kid zone. We work

all kinds of comic con to provide free activities like STEM, where kids work on building using a variety of materials. There's a Scooby Doo investigation where kids play i-spy, seek, and find. There's active play for large body movements, free coloring and stickers, gross motor skill activities, and fine motor skill activities by making puff pals and gem stickers," said library director Lisa Youngblood.

Tabletoppers board game group had a vendor booth. When you subscribed to their group online you were given a chance to spin the wheel to win a prize. Some of the prizes were BitBar game passes, pens, a tote bag, a koozie, or a t-shirt.

"We have boardgame night every Tuesday and the first Friday of every month at BitBar Temple from 7 p.m. till midnight," said Nicholas Bailey board-game player with BitBar Temple.

There were 150-plus vendors selling anime collectables like Pokémon cards, sports memorabilia, Funko Pops, J.S.A. certifications, chibi/kawaii, hats, t-shirts, anime drawings and art, and sneakers.

There was an Asian food festival at the event. Dynasty Chinese Restaurant and Pizza Hut were among more than 30 vendors. There were vendors serving rice, noodles, kebabs, egg rolls, sushi, chicken curry, dumplings, spam rolls, fried catfish and seafood, and pizza. Pecos Pete's sold drinks in a refillable commemorative cup. Vendors had water, sodas, lemonade, iced tea, and boba tea for drinks.

There was a car meet Sunday morning. JDM Legends, Import Tuners, and anime themed vehicles were featured in the Import Tuner Garage.

There was dedicated areas to TGC card gaming tournaments, console tournaments, a board game area, and retro arcade games like PacMan.



Michelle Rodriguez/Belton Journal

Appearing from left to right are Lance Turner, Ian Wise, Gabrielle Heggie, and Cori Torres with Bell County Cosplayers group wearing their favorite cosplay.



Michelle Rodriguez/Belton Journal

Texas Dragon/Lion Dance Team performing at Anime Sunika this past weekend at the Cadence Bank Center.

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Benefit to be held for Laverne Dach

By Michelle Rodriguez
The Belton Journal

A cancer benefit will be held for Laverne Dach on Saturday, March 8 starting at 10 a.m. at the Belton V.F.W. located at 2311 S. Pearl St. There will be a silent auction, live music, car show, cornhole tournament, t-shirt sale, and BBQ plate sale.

In October 2024, Dach, 63, received a diagnosis of stage four pancreatic cancer. She has three sons and one grandchild. She worked as an administrator at McLane and worked for Head Start for more than 20 years. She is now unable

to work.

"Dach faces this formidable challenge with unwavering courage. She endures weekly chemotherapy treatments while striving to maintain a strong faith and a positive spirit. Her family is rallying around her, providing love and support," said Dach's daughter-in law, Randi Lusty.

The silent auction starts at 11 a.m. All items will need to be paid by 1 p.m. All proceeds go to the family. If you would like to donate an item for the auction, please contact Jacy Juergens at 512-870-7887. All items need to be available for pickup by March 1.

"We are trying to raise as much money as we can to help with bills, cemetery plot, and funeral expenses. She doesn't have much time. So far, we have received a bunch of baskets and gift cer-

tificates for businesses in Belton and Temple," said Juergens. Juergens' husband, Brandon Juergens, is best friends with Dach's son, Edwin Lusty.

The car show begins at 10:30 a.m. Check in starts at 9:45 a.m. There's a \$25 entry fee for each vehicle. There are trophies for first and second place winners. Votes will be done by patrons of the show. There is one vote allowed per person. Awards will be announced at noon.

There will be live music from 12-3 p.m. by Southern Junction Band. The cornhole tournament begins at 1 p.m. and costs \$50 per team. Contact Corey Jackson at 254-216-0277 to register. Registrations must be completed by March 1.

Sandra Garza is making and selling t-shirts for the cancer benefit. They cost \$30 and are being

pre-sold online on Facebook.

"I'm friends with Dach's son Edwin Lusty and his fiancée. We all want to help the family help raise money for them while they are dealing with all of this. Hopefully, this can eliminate some financial stress. Our friends are like our family, and we do whatever we can to help," said Garza.

Brock and Tia Brockington with Brock's Que is providing the BBQ plates. They will be served starting at 11 a.m., until sold out, and cost \$15 per person. The plates will have brisket, sausage, beans, potato salad, and all the fixings!

Alcohol will be available for purchase at the VFW. No coolers allowed. Cash and Venmo will be accepted for payment for all events throughout the day and for donations.



Courtesy photos

From left to right: Justin Lusty, Kevin Dach, Laverne Dach, Scott Lusty, and Edwin Lusty. The Lustys are Laverne's sons.

Why hiring a painter is the right choice

Few home improvements can change the look of a room faster and more affordably than a painting makeover. In fact, homeowners often turn to paint before they make any other renovations. Home Light, a real estate technology company, says painting a home's interior can net a return on investment as high as 107 percent.

Although painting is a project that can be tackled by do-it-yourselfers, there are various advantages to calling in a professional to handle painting projects. Here is a look at some of the benefits to working with a professional painter.

Cut down on the job time
A professional painter can reduce the project timeline. Painters have the skill set and experience to complete a project in a timely manner. This means the job will be streamlined from preparation to clean-up.

Pay attention to details
Professional painters are likely to do a job that is nearly flawless, especially after homeowners exercise their due diligence and vet painters carefully. Professionals will pay attention to the small details that less experienced painters wouldn't think about.

Reduce your workload
Painting can be a time-consuming job, and most of it occurs even before you pick up a brush. It can take hours to prep walls, patch holes, remove moldings, and apply painter's tape. Homeowners who do not have much time are better off leaving trusting the project to a professional.

Painters already have equipment

Do-it-yourselfers may need to buy new tools before beginning the job. This means brushes, rollers, tape, tarps, trays, and much more. Unless you plan to paint multiple times, this can make stocking up a considerable investment. Professionals already have all the right gear and tools of the trade.

Lasting results
Professional painters understand which products will produce the desired results, depending on the wear and tear of the space. Paints are not all created equal, and certain walls, floors and trim may require unique priming and preparation that novices are not familiar with. Professional painters can help ensure durability and save homeowners from having to do the job again in a few months or years.

A safer experience
Painting can be a challenging job when it involves painting hard-to-reach spaces and/or climbing and balancing on tall ladders. Homeowners are not at risk of injury when hiring a professional painter. In addition, professional painters should be licensed and insured. This means if an injury or incident occurs, the homeowner will not be on the hook for the cost.

A fresh coat of paint can produce amazing results. Leaving the work to a professional can ensure a job is done correctly and beautifully and completed on time.



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Senate committee advances property tax cut

By Richard Lee
Special to the Journal

The Senate Committee on Local Government last Tuesday unanimously approved measures that would further increase the homestead exemption, the amount of property value a homeowner can write off before assessment. Houston Senator and committee chair Paul Bettencourt, who authored SJR 2, and its enabling legislation SB 4, told members the measures will offer real sav-

ings to Texas homeowners at a time when everything seems to be more expensive. “When you’ve got inflation baked in everywhere, the one place it’s not baked into is Texas’ ISD property tax bill,” said Bettencourt. “That’s a big, big advantage for homeowners. With the passage of this bill, additional help is on the way.” The homestead exemption stood at \$15,000 in 2015. Since then, the legislature has approved bills to raise it first to \$25,000, then

\$40,000, and finally up to \$100,000 last session. The measures passed onto the full Senate Tuesday would raise the exemption up to \$140,000. Bettencourt’s office projects the bill – added to additional compression of school property tax rates in the Senate version of the state budget– will save the average homeowner nearly \$500 on their annual property tax bill, bringing the total amount of tax relief passed by the legislature since 2019 to \$51 billion, he said. Bettencourt

in the past has said that the homestead exemption is one of the most efficient ways to deliver tax relief to homeowners, a point reiterated by committee vice-chair and Galveston Senator Mayes Middleton. “It’s the most direct way,” he said. “It eliminates a portion of your school [maintenance and operations] tax bill.”

Homeowners aged 65 years or older would qualify for an additional \$10,000, for a total exemption of \$150,000. Bettencourt says the actions of the legislature over the past few years have significantly reduced the tax burden of Texas senior citizens. “We have many over-65s in the state that are now paying zero tax as a result, and their bills that are not at zero are coming down each year,” he said. Prior to 2022, senior citizens had their property tax rates frozen, meaning they couldn’t rise, but also that they couldn’t go down in the event of a tax cut. “The best they could ex-

pect was that they weren’t going to pay more on that school tax bill every year,” said Bettencourt. That changed when the voters approved a measure in 2022 that would allow the reduction of frozen tax rates for senior and disabled homeowners when the legislature cuts property tax rates. “As either the tax rate goes down or the exemption goes up, that frozen value is un-frozen, and then the new lower result is then re-frozen, and the over-65 tax bills go down,” Bettencourt explained.

As with previous measures that cut school property tax rates, the bill includes a harmless provision that promises the state will make up any revenue lost by school districts. The measure would add to the ongoing costs of previous sessions’ tax relief efforts, which Bettencourt says is around \$32 billion coming into the 89th Session. “When you commit to property tax relief, you have to commit, and you

have to keep committing, you have to keep doing it every year,” he said. “Whether that money comes in for rate compression, or it comes in for homestead exemption, it has to go into the budget to work.”

Abbott named property tax cuts as an emergency issue in his State of the State Address on February 2, clearing the way for passage of the measure within the first 60 days of the regular session. With 28 of 30 senators signed on as co-authors, the bill should sail through the full Senate when it comes up on the floor later this week or next. If the bill and joint resolution pass both chambers, voters must still approve the increased exemption. This proposal would appear as a question on the general election ballot in November. Previous ballot questions on the issue proved overwhelmingly popular, passing with greater than 80 percent support in 2015, 2022, and 2023.



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BISD returns to track for meet in China Spring

By Clay Whittington
The Belton Journal

The Tigers and Lady Tigers opened their seasons in style last week. Belton returned to the track Friday and dominated, cruising to championships in both the boys and girls divisions at the annual China Spring Cougar Relays. Paced by eight gold medalists, the Tigers amassed 217 points to easily beat out the host Cougars (2nd, 135), Waco Connally (3rd, 103) and Waco La Vega (4th, 94). Junior sprinter Christian Porter was responsible for a pair of first-place finishes, winning the 100-meter dash in 11.23 second and the 400 in 50.67. The production matched the showing from teammate John Zachary Moehlenbrock. He won the 800 (2:10.37) and 3,200 (11:02.48) to go along with a second-place outing in the 1,600 (5:16.56). Belton's remaining gold medals were

yielded by seniors David Shelburne (1,600, 5:02.31), Logan Lamberte (pole vault, 13 feet, 0 inches), Damien Tiumalu (discus, 134-3) and sophomore Graham Chambley (110 hurdles, 15.98), who was also second (46.96) in the 300 hurdles and fourth (7-6) in the pole vault. Additionally, individual medals were earned by senior Miguel Manners (2nd, triple jump, 40-6), senior Joshua Roberts (2nd, pole vault, 12-0), senior Marlon Bluntson (2nd, shot put, 42-5), sophomore Jose Perez Diaz (2nd, 3,200, 11:56.07), junior Vincent Gigger (3rd, 800, 2:24.73), junior Paul Muringathuparambil (3rd, 3,200, 12:12.65) and sophomore Gavin Ross (3rd, discus, 117-1). Collectively, the Tigers were third in both the 400 relay (43.40) and 1,600 relay (3:49.25). Thanks in part to standout performances from junior Laila Page and sophomores Damauria Nolan-Hemphill and

Roxanna Delgado, the Lady Tigers scored 244 points — 88 more than their closest competition. Nolan-Hemphill emerged with three championships, winning the 100 (12.78), 200 (26.49) and long jump (17-2½), while Page was first in the 400 (1:00.42), triple jump (34-0½) and pole vault (8-0) to go along with a silver medal in the 200 (27.31). Delgado won two long distance races, placing first in the 1,600 (6:23.0) and 3,200 (14:02.46), and freshman teammate Isabella Warner's career debut culminated with a win in the 800 (2:31.29) and a runner-up showing in the 400 (1:04.09). The Lady Tigers' 1,600 relay quartet was also first, finishing in 4:18.24. Also placing among the top three was senior Jane Gauntt (2nd, pole vault, 7-0), senior Annabella Pula (2nd, discus, 84-8½), junior Delilah Hoffman (2nd, 300 hurdles, 52.12), sophomore Temperance Numm

(2nd, 1,600, 6:25.70), sophomore Nataly Valdez (2nd, 3,200, 14:04.35; 3rd, 1,600, 6:36.74), sophomore Melissa Farmer (2nd, shot put, 34-10½), sophomore Gabrielle Lewis (3rd, 400, 1:05.12), sophomore Saniya Huston (3rd, 100 hurdles, 18.57; 3rd, 300 hurdles, 54.66) and freshman Jada Gage (2nd, long jump, 15-10 ½; 2nd, high jump, 4-8; 3rd, triple jump, 30-11½). Rounding out the standings, China Spring placed second (160) with Connally (3rd, 75) and La Vega (4th, 47) following. Lake Belton also opened its season's schedule over the weekend, traveling to College Station for the A&M Consolidated Relays, where the Lady Broncos were third (149) and the Broncos placed fifth (59). The Lady Broncos' top showings were produced by senior Abigail Rydberg, who won the high jump (4-10) and pole vault (11-0), and sophomore Audrey Mughelli,

See **TRACK**,
Page B3

Tigers place third in Temple Invitational

By Clay Whittington
The Belton Journal

The Tigers traveled for the Temple Invitational last week and delivered an impressive outing, placing third among the eight teams in attendance. Daniel Arana, who was named most outstanding lifter in the 181 pounds and under category, helped pace Belton to 28 points, earning gold in the 123 weight class. He had a 420-pound squat, 280 bench press and 440 deadlift to total 1,140. Tigers standout Corbin Whitman was his closest competitor with a 345-185-250-780 total to place second in the division. Belton's only other medal was earned by 165-pounder Logan Ricks, who delivered a 1,300 total (500-315-485). Rounding out the Tigers' score was Owen Rivera (4th, 132, 305-200-300-805), Gino Zecca (4th, 165, 405-240-420-1,065), Thomas Morten (4th, 181, 450-305-420-1,175), Hayden Holman (4th, 220, 400-305-435-1,140) and Anthony Anderson (5th, 132, 300-190-300-790). Waco captured the team title with 35 points, edging out second-place Waco Midway (33) by two points, while Killeen

(4th, 28) and Lake Belton (5th, 23) followed in the final standings. Leonel Castillo (132, 355-210-320-885) and Freddie Westbrook (242, 520-300-500-1,320) won their weight classes for the Broncos, while teammates Jax Holleman (165, 405-280-390-1,075) and Evan Lazott (275, 425-360-475-1,260) were each third. Also scoring for Lake Belton was Isaiah Faulk (4th, 242, 405-195-405-1,005), Ayden Boyer (5th, 148, 280-180-320-780) and Colton Crocker (5th, 275, 425-235-475-1,135). In the girls division, the Lady Broncos were sixth with 17 points thanks in part to 97-pounders Catalina Esquivel (170-100-190-460) and Kaitlyn Mays (150-85-185-420) placing second and third, respectively. The team's remaining points were generated by Haein Lee (4th, 114, 140-140-160-440), Analicia Diaz (4th, 148, 260-155-285-700), Anna Huffman (4th, 165, 275-155-235-665), Lorelei Scallorn (4th, 220, 265-170-250-685) and Baylie Anderson (5th, 242, 185-90-220-495). Belton was eighth (6) with Julie He (3rd, 123, 215-140-270-625), Katelyn

See **POWERLIFTING**,
Page B3



Waco University freezes out Lake Belton, 4-1

By Tony Adams
The Belton Journal

Following an 8-0 win at Waco High, the Lake Belton Broncos girls' soccer team had a bit of a schedule shift, as their Tuesday game was shifted from 7:15 pm to 5:30 pm. When the teams arrived at Bronco

Field, the Broncos and Waco University Lady Trojans girls' soccer teams began warmups as usual. Fifteen minutes from the 5 pm start time, the winds began to howl from the north, and 55 degrees became 40 de-

See **SOCCER**,
Page B3

Belton ISD softball teams make the best of weather-affected NFCA Classic

By Tony Adams
The Belton Journal

The Belton Tigers and Lake Belton Broncos softball teams had two uniquely different starts to their National Fastpitch Coaches Association Leadoff Classic Tournament starts last Thursday. It started with bad weather early in the week that forced the tournament directors to scramble for turf fields. Lake Belton pitched in and hosted a pod that included the Broncos, Academy, and Temple in Thursday afternoon action. The Broncos first game was against the Lady Bees, coached by legendary Belton standout Bekah Alcozer. The Bees gave the Broncos all they could and fought the ball early on with some four defensive miscues. Down 8-2, Lake rallied for five runs in the fourth inning, two runs in the fifth, and held the Bees off the board in the sixth to win to win 9-8. Alaysha Williams hit a home run and drove home two hits, Maddison Ruiz added two hits, and Alexis Ortiz and Madison Perkins each scored twice. Natalie Hosch picked up the win and picked up the save. Later Thursday, the Broncos took on the TemCats. Lake busted open a 1-1 tie with seven runs in the third and coasted past Temple, 10-2. Williams crushed her second homer of the day and added two RBI. Addison Sims hit her first homer of the season and drove home three. The Broncos combined for 15 hits, with Ortiz, Williams, Sims, Analicia Diaz, and Madison Naser all logging multi-hit performances. Ruiz pitched a one-hitter with two runs allowed (none

earned) on one hit and struck out ten. Hosch went an inning for the save. Belton stayed on Thursday's schedule, as they had just a single game against Alpine Travis Field No. 1 at Midtown Park in Bryan. The Lady Bucks scored the go-ahead run in the top of the fourth to defeat the Tigers in five innings, 4-3. Iris Molina had an RBI single and Hailey Schutz stole home plate in the bottom of the third inning to tie the score at 2-2. Alpine scored the go-ahead run on an overthrow. Hanna Wheeler and Reagan Stuart combined to no-hit the Lady Bucks, as they combined to strike out eight and walk five. Two of the runs allowed were unearned. Schutz had three of the Tigers' six hits. On Friday, both Belton and Lake Belton resumed the tournament in College Station. Belton played in a three-game round robin at Veterans' Park field two. The Tigers were 1-2 in the pool, having lost to Friendswood 9-3, defeated Whitehouse 3-2, and lost to Lovejoy 3-0. In the opener, Belton took a 1-0 on a second inning RBI double by Presli Thompson. However, the Mustangs scored nine runs over the next three innings. Jasmine Ruyle's two-run single in the fifth inning pulled the Tigers to within six. Thompson had two of Belton's four hits. Tara Stone took the loss in the circle. In the second game, Stuart's RBI single and Stone's two-homer in the first were the lone runs posted as the Tigers outlasted Whitehouse, 3-2. Stone and Stuart each had two hits in Belton's eight-


hit output. Wheeler allowed two runs on three hits, walked three and struck out three for the win in the circle. Stone picked up the save, having retired six straight. In the final game of the day, Belton found tough sledding as Thompson and Iris Molina collected the only hits in a 3-0 shutout loss to Lucas Lovejoy. Lake Belton's Friday schedule resulted in a pair of evening games at College Station High School. First, it was a ranked matchup as Class 5A No. 3 took on Class 6A No. 6 Bridgeland. Naser's two-run double in the bottom of the third provided Ruiz all the support that she needed in the circle as the Broncos shut out the Bears, 3-0. Ruiz picked up the win in the circle, as she pitched five innings, allowed two hits, struck out ten and walked one. She also added an RBI single in the fifth. Five different Broncos contributed hits. In the nightcap, the Broncos scored three times in the first, once in the third, two in the fourth, and one in the fifth to get past the Klein BearKats, 7-1. Ortiz scored on a passed ball, Naser crushed an RBI single and Lilli Herrera had a sacrifice fly in the opening inning to take a 3-0 lead. After the BearKats scored in the bottom of the first off Klein starting pitcher Madilyn Schultz, Trista Sheka scored on a steal of home plate in the third, Hosch's sacrifice bunt resulted in an error that scored Williams and Ortiz's sacrifice fly scored Hosch in the fourth, and Herrera's sacrifice fly in the fifth accounted for the scoring. Naser had three hits and Ruiz had two to lead the Broncos.

See **SOFTBALL**,
Page B3



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Belton and Lake Belton send swimmers to state meet

By Aries Ramos
The Belton Journal

The swimming programs from Belton High School and Lake Belton High School are making waves as they send swimmers to the UIL 5A State Championship Meet.

These talented swimmers have spent the season pushing their limits, and now they can showcase their skills on the biggest stage in Texas high school swimming.

Lake Belton will be well

represented at the state championship meet, with five swimmers earning their spots.

Christine Kim is leading the way, having delivered podium performances at regionals and finishing second in the 50-yard and 100-yard Freestyle. Her speed in the water secured her a state qualification in both events.

Kim will also be a key part of the Broncos' 400-yard Freestyle Relay team, joining Gwen Clark, Elizabeth Simeroth, and Brooke Phillips as they look to make an impact in their event.

Additionally, David Stewart will compete in the 100-yard and 200-yard Freestyle, bringing more depth to Lake Belton's lineup at state.

Belton High School is also sending five swimmers to the state meet, highlighted by a mix of individual and relay competitors.

Liliana Nelson will have a busy schedule, qualifying in four different events, including an automatic qualification in the 500-yard Freestyle after finishing as the regional runner-up. She also

earned a state call-up for the 200-yard Freestyle, 200-yard Freestyle Relay, and 400-yard Freestyle Relay.

Joining Nelson in the relays are Olivia Brillhart, Mackenzie (Zee) Gingerich, and Ema Whitzel, all of whom earned state call-ups for their performances in the 200-yard and 400-yard Freestyle Relays. Addison Richardson will also compete in the 500-yard Freestyle after claiming the regional title, securing her automatic qualification.

Kirra Martin and Sophia De-

tert will also serve as alternates for the Tigers' relay teams, ready to step in if needed.

With a potent mix of individual talent and relay depth, both Belton ISD programs have high hopes heading into the state meet. These swimmers have trained for this moment, and now they can compete against the best in Texas, proudly representing their schools and community. The UIL 5A State Championship Meet will be a test of endurance, speed, and determination, and the Broncos and Tigers are ready to rise to the occasion.

Tigers advance in basketball playoffs with win over Midlothian

By Clay Whittington
The Belton Journal

WACO – The Tigers are moving on.

One year after producing the best showing in school history, Belton returned to the playoffs Tuesday under new head coach Phil McCaslin, and while there were changes within the program, one thing remained the same.

For the third consecutive season, the Tigers earned a bi-district championship after defeating Midlothian by a single point, 57-56, at Waco Midway, and while the outcome extends the team's string of success, McCaslin is only concerned with current accomplishments.

"We just want to keep getting better one day at a time," he said. "This team

is this team, last year's team is last year's team, and next year's team will be next year's team, but I'm just so proud of our guys.

"This was a fantastic game, and it's a shame somebody has to be on the losing end of it, but we took care of the ball when we needed to, got stops and rebounds when we needed to and were always doing the things we believe in."

Neither team could take control early as Belton held a two-point advantage at the end of the first (11-9) and second (24-22) quarter of the back-and-forth affair.

In the third period, however, the Tigers found their rhythm.

Paced by senior guard Easton Barrett, junior guard Jay'Dn Loggins and sophomore guard Luke Munden, who combined

for 14 points, Belton outscored the Panthers 17-12 in the quarter.

Midlothian reversed the trend in the final period, winning 22-16, but it was not quite enough to derail the Tigers' trip into the second round of the Class 5A, Division I bracket.

At multiple points in the fourth quarter, Belton's cushion inflated to seven points, including at 52-45 with 1 minute, 31 seconds remaining in regulation, but despite connecting on a trio of 3-pointers before the final buzzer, the Panthers could not completely erase the deficit.

Loggins finished with a team-high 21 points after making half (7-14) his field-goal attempts, and he had four rebounds, while Ty Johnson, a

freshman guard, had 10 points thanks in part to a pair of 3-pointers. Additionally, Barrett had eight points, seven assists, six rebounds, three steals and two blocks, and junior teammate Noah Childers contributed eight points.

"Our guys just know how to play together," McCaslin said. "A lot of guys are able to do different things with the ball, and they find ways to execute by relying on each

other.

"They are just selfless, tough kids."

Now, the Tigers turn their attention toward the second round.

Belton will face West Mesquite for the area championship after the Wranglers defeated Dallas Hillcrest 70-49 on Tuesday.

A date, time or location for the game was unavailable, but McCaslin was certain about one

thing.

"We're going to be heading back up I-35," he said. "We're only going to have a couple days to prepare, so we've got to make sure our practices are crisp. As fun as tonight is going to be after beating Midlothian, we have to burn it."

"By noon tomorrow, our minds have to be on the area round, and that will be all we can focus on."

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Soccer - From Page B1

greets by game time.

To the dismay of the Broncos, University’s offense swept in as well, as the Trojans scored twice in 3:04 span within the first nine minutes.

Lake clipped the lead in half, but pulled no closer as the Trojans defeated the Broncos, 4-1.

“The storm system came in earlier than expected, and that changed the game a lot,” Lake Belton head coach Jamie Tibbetts. “However, it is not an excuse. We let them put two in early, and they were very sloppy goals on our part. Both teams had to play in it. University came ready to play; we did not.”

Goals by University came with 34:08 and 31:04 to play in the first half.

“That changed the momentum of the game,” Tibbetts said. “We

had our heads down fast.”

Playing the first half with the wind at their backs, the Broncos had several scoring chances, with most going to the left or right of goal. Lake kept the shots below the shoulders, knowing the 35 miles-per-hour wind gusts would lift the ball above goal.

The Broncos began to penetrate center field above the goal box, moving the ball with success and pace. Clara Hill deposited the ball into the lower right corner of the goal to get the Broncos on the board.

Meanwhile, Aubrey Yeager, Elizabeth Gudgen, and Bennett Burdine stopped several Lady Trojan opportunities through the remainder of the game. University led at halftime, 2-1.

“We have been playing Aubrey in the field a little bit, so it gave the girls some opportunities,” Tibbetts

said.

University had the wind at its back in the second half, and deposited goals at the 25:10 and 17:34 marks to lift their advantage to three at 4-1.

Hill, Parker Ling, Evelyn Bragewitz, Teagan Pettyjohn, Mikaela Ebbers. Audrey Mughelli and Allyson McClanahan were amongst the Broncos putting pressure on the Lady Trojans in the midfield and the offensive zone.

Lake Belton (4-8-1 overall) will host Killeen Chaparral Friday at 7:15 pm at Bronco Field, before they head to Wilson Kerzee Field in a rematch against the Belton Lady Tigers on Tuesday.

“We need to work on our mental toughness,” Tibbetts said. “We must be mentally tough to play in any weather. It is as cold for the other team as it is for us.”

Powerlifting - From Page B1

Bailey (4th, 97, 125-90-145–360) and Isabella Ake (5th, 220, 190-125-235–550) scoring.

Copperas Cove placed first with 61 points, beating out Waco University (2nd, 31), Temple (3rd, 27) and Waco (4th, 21).

Lake Belton also hosted a girls meet last week, and the Lady Broncos defended their home turf, win-

ning the team title with 36 points.

Camryn Mikulas (105, 165-115-200–480), Tatum Vaughn (148, 320-160-305–785) and Aleyna Castor (181, 320-180-335–835) each placed first, while teammates Harper Holt (123, 185-130-230–545), Emyle Love (132, 245-125-265–635) and Abby Rydberg (148, 260-170-315–745) were second.

China Spring (2nd, 34), Belton (3rd, 17) and Copperas Cove (4th, 14) rounded out the top four.

The Lady Tigers were led by Kennedy Weston (2nd, 181, 285-175-305–765), Makayla Reyes (3rd, 123, 225-125-175–525), Ciara Messersmith (3rd, 132, 215-150-245–610) and Bella Reyes (3rd, 148, 265-150-245–660).

Track - From Page B1

who was first (36-4) in the triple jump.

In other field events, sophomore Isalei Simpson was second (73-10) in the discus and third (27-6½) in the shot put.

On the track, Lake Belton was second in both the 400 relay (50.60) and 3,200 relay (10:47.56) and third in the 800 relay (1:53.22) and 6,400 relay (25:19.29).

Lady Broncos senior

Chelsie Miller (3rd, 400, 1:03.07), juniors Kiely Camacho (2nd, 100 hurdles, 16.71), Nylah Berrian (2nd, 400j, 1:02.61) and Moriah Rydberg (3rd, 300 hurdles, 52.06) and sophomore Alexa Harbour (3rd, 100 hurdles, 16.88) also returned home with medals.

The Lady Broncos finished behind champion A&M Consolidated (172) and Pflugerville Hendrick-

son (2nd, 161), while A&M Consolidated (1st, 192), Hendrickson (2nd, 144), Brenham (3rd, 62) and Waco University (4th, 61) beat out the Broncos.

Julian Walker, a senior, emerged with two medals for Lake Belton, winning the long jump (22-2) and placing second (6-0) in the high jump, while teammates Carson Yandell and Travellis Har-



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Softball - From Page B3

Hosch pitched five innings for the victory, as she allowed one run on four hits, struck out four, and walked one.

On Saturday, the Broncos played late afternoon games against Little Elm and Conroe.

Against Little Elm, the Broncos pounded eight extra-base hits, as Ortiz and Naser had three hits each, Williams had three RBI, and Hosch scattered five hits in a 12-0 win.

In the second game, the Broncos took on Conroe.

Conroe took advantage of the opportunities that they were afforded as they defeated the Broncos, 11-1.

Six Broncos had base hits in the game, with Naser’s RBI single being the lone run for Lake.

Belton’s last two games of the tournament were postponed due to poor field conditions.

On Monday, both teams returned to action in non-district play.

In the late afternoon, Lake Belton posted seven runs in the bottom of the second inning and held on to be Fredericksburg, 12-6.

Analicia Diaz had a

bases-clearing triple and Maddison Ruiz crushed a two-run homer to highlight the second.

Eight of Lake Belton’s 12 runs were unearned, due to four Billies errors.

Natalie Hosch picked up the complete game win in the circle, having struck out seven and walked one.

The Tigers hosted Harker Heights Monday evening at Lady Tiger Field.

Belton erased a three-run Knights lead, but

Heights scored four times in the fourth to defeat the Tigers, 8-4.

Six different Tigers posted hits, with Reagan Stuart, Tara Stone, and Aubrey Lynch

Both teams will play at the Dragon Invitational in Round Rock starting on Thursday.

The Tigers will face Lockhart (9:45 am) and Thrall (11:30 am), and the Broncos will face Stony Point (3 pm) and Round Rock (6:30 pm).

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FISHING REPORT




Belton

FAIR. Water stained; 45 degrees; 2.49 feet below pool. The cold snap cooled Lake Belton down even further from 51 degrees to the mid 40s. Fish are still using the same locations as before the cold, but the fish are now moving more slowly, chasing shorter distances, and require a change in tactics and more importantly, a change in expectations. Catch rates will fall as the water temperature falls. Those whites and hybrids on bottom features are best targeted with a white Bladed Hazy Eye Slab in ¾-3/4 ounce. Drop the lure to bottom and then slowly lift it upwards 4-6 feet while observing on 2D or forward facing sonar for a follow, or snap-jig with it. To catch fish seen on side-imaging, cast a 1/2 ounce jighead with white curl-tail grub and work it back with a sawtooth retrieve. Those whites and hybrids which are suspended and roaming after shad are best targeted using a deadstick tactic with a 1½ ounce or heavier jighead and 2-3.5 inch soft plastic fluke-style bodies oriented horizontally. Again 2D or forward facing sonar will help anglers position the bait just inches above these fish. Fish will rise and strike once; a solid, instant hookset is a must. Rods with extra fast tips will help with all of these tactics. Birds will continue to be helpful in finding both kinds of white bass and hybrid. Report by Bob Maindelle, Holding the Line Guide Service. Catfish are fair. Blue catfish can be found along river ledges in 10 to 20 ft of water. Trolling at slower speeds with fresh cut shad has worked best.



Stillhouse

FAIR. Water stained; 45 degrees; 2.72 feet below pool. The cold snap cooled Lake Belton down even further from 51 degrees to the mid 40s. Fish are still using the same locations as before the cold, but the fish are now moving more slowly, chasing shorter distances, and require a change in tactics and more importantly, a change in expectations. Catch rates will fall as the water temperature falls. Those whites and hybrids on bottom features are best targeted with a white Bladed Hazy Eye Slab in ¾-3/4 ounce. Drop the lure to bottom and then slowly lift it upwards 4-6 feet while observing on 2D or forward facing sonar for a follow, or snap-jig with it. To catch fish seen on side-imaging, cast a 1/2 ounce jighead with white curl-tail grub and work it back with a sawtooth retrieve. Those whites and hybrids which are suspended and roaming after shad are best targeted using a deadstick tactic with a 1½ ounce or heavier jighead and 2-3 inch soft plastic fluke-style bodies oriented horizontally. Again 2D or forward facing sonar will help anglers position the bait just inches above these fish. Fish will rise and strike once; a solid, instant hookset is a must. Rods with extra fast tips will help with all of these tactics. Birds will continue to be helpful in finding both kinds of white bass and hybrid. Report by Bob Maindelle, Holding the Line Guide Service.



Key decisions for retired couples

Scot Hrbacek, CFP® Financial Advisor

Once you and your spouse retire, you’ll have some decisions to make — decisions that could affect your quality of life in your retirement years.

For starters, how much should you withdraw each year from your 401(k) and other retirement accounts? You’ll want to avoid taking out too much, too soon.

Next, when should you each take Social Security? If you wait until your full retirement age, probably age 67, you’ll typically get bigger payments than if you start taking benefits at age 62. Also, one spouse’s decision may affect the other, in terms of spousal benefits.

You’ll also want to think about downsizing — you could save money by moving into a smaller home. You might also think about moving to a more affordable area.

Finally, if you haven’t already done so, you’ll need work with your legal professional to decide which estate-planning documents are needed, such as a will, a living trust, and various powers of attorney.

You and your spouse will want to discuss all your choices and then decide which steps to take. After you’ve got your plans in place, you may well find that you can fully enjoy your retirement years.

This Article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor

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LEGALS

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is given that original Letters of Administration for the Estate of LADETRA RENAE CARTER were issued on February 12, 2025, in Cause No. 24CPB00678, pending in the County Court at Law of Bell County, Texas, to Sonja Donielle Sims. All persons having claims against the estate,

LEGALS

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 Whitney R. Thomas, 1202 West Bitters Bldg. 8, San Antonio, TX 78216
Dated February 14, 2025
Whitney R. Thomas Attorney for Administrator of the Estate of LADETRA RENAE CARTER 02.20

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TERMS AND PROVISIONS OF THE TEXAS ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CODE that Topsy Tios LLC dba B-Town Burgers & More has filed application for Mixed Beverage and Food & Beverage Certificate. Said business to be conducted at 508 Sparta Rd, Belton, Bell County, TX 76513. Topsy Tios LLC dba B-Town Burgers & More Elieser Escobedo, Manger. 02.13,02.20

THE STATE OF TEXAS
CITATION BY PUBLICATION
CASE NUMBER 24CPB00447

To: UNKNOWN HEIRS
Tamara Mosley, Applicant, on February 12, 2025, filed an application to determine heirship and for letters of independent administration - intestate in a proceeding styled: JANIE BELL HARRIS, Deceased, and bearing the number 24CPB00447 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 February 20, 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:
MARCUS BEAUDIN, 2109 S CLEAR CREEK RD, KILLEEN TX 76549
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

LEGALS

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 February 14, 2025. Shelley Coston County Clerk of Bell County, Texas, PO Box 480, 1201 Huey Road, Belton, TX 76513
By: Sophia Nieto Deputy 02.20

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters of Testamentary for the Estate RICKY THOMAS YOUNG, Deceased, were issued on February 10, 2025, in Cause No. 25CPB00010, pending in the County Court-At-Law: Number one, BELL County, Texas, to: MADELEINE MARIA YOUNG. All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them to the undersigned within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.
c/o: JAY R. BEATTY Attorney at Law, 3106 South W.S. Young Drive Building D, Suite 401 KILLEEN, TX 76542
DATED the 14th day of February 2025
JAY R. BEATTY, State Bar No.: 01992450
MICHALK, BEATTY & ALCOZER, L.P., 3106 South W.S. Young Drive Building D, Suite 401, KILLEEN, TX 76542, Telephone: (254) 526-3024, Facsimile: (254) 526-2545, E-mail: jbeatty@mbaattorneys.com, Attorney for MADELEINE MARIA YOUNG 02.20

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of JUDITH A. ROSTEN, Deceased, were issued on February 11, 2025, in Cause No. 25CPB00050, pending in the County Court at Law No. 1 of Bell County, Texas, to: DANIEL A. CORBIN. All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them to the undersigned within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.
c/o: DANIEL A. CORBIN Attorney at Law, 603 North 8th Street , Killeen, TX 76541
DATED the 13th day of Feb. 2025.
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Fax: (254) 526-6711
By: ASHLEY CLAPPER
DANIEL A. CORBIN, State Bar No. 04814300, JAMES BERRY STAPLER, State Bar No. 24013557, ASHLEY CLAPPER, State Bar No. 24076317, State Bar No. 24137204, Legal@CorbinLegalTeam.com, Attorney for DANIEL A. CORBIN 02.20



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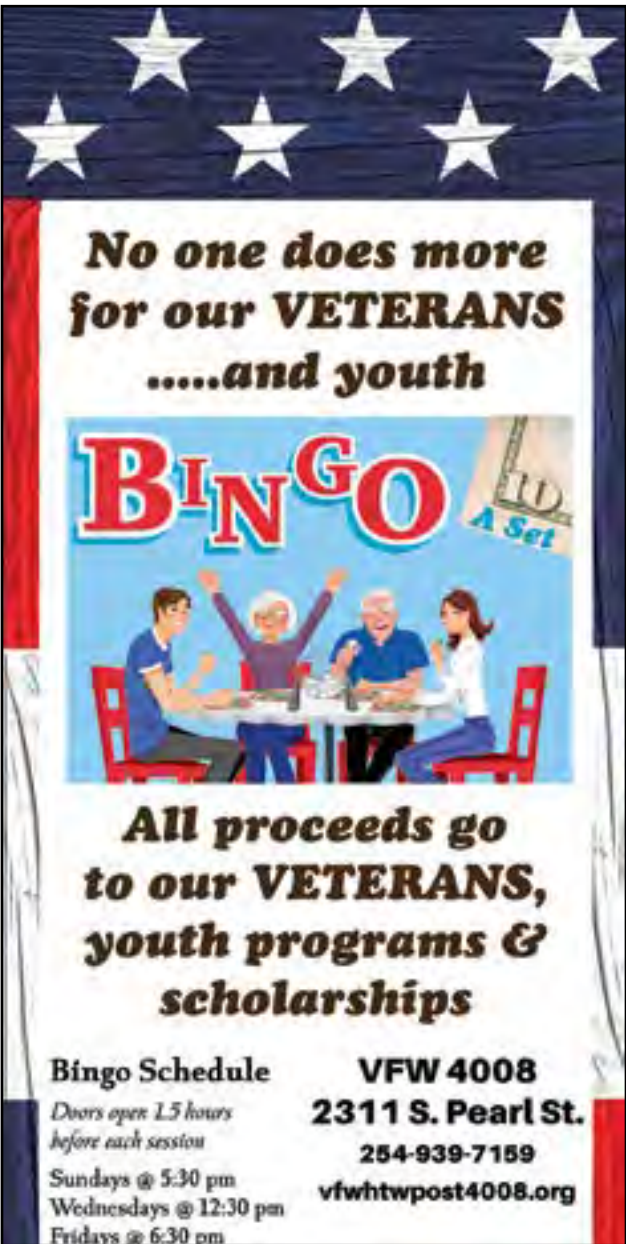
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BELTON ISD - Charming home with a nice front porch, 2 bedrooms, one bath and lots of storage. Living area could be used as a meeting room. Lot features a beautiful mature tree in the front yard, fully fenced yard, and several out buildings. Excellent location with many possibilities! Adjacent properties are also listed for sale and could make this an amazing commercial property
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LEGALS

NO. 24CPB00771

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF ELAINE HILL ORY DECEASED IN THE COUNTY COURT OF BELL COUNTY, TEXAS NOTICE TO ALL PERSONS HAVING CLAIMS AGAINST THE ESTATE OF ELAINE HILL ORY, DECEASED

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of Elaine Hill Ory, deceased, were issued on the 3rd day of January, 2025 in Cause No. 24CPB00771, pending in the County Court of Bell County, Texas to WILLIAM GLENN ORY and RICHARD KENNETH ORY.

The claims may be presented in care of the attorney for the estate addressed as follows: WILLIAM GLENN ORY and RICHARD KENNETH ORY, Independent Co-Executors, c/o Smith & Bratcher, P.C. , P.O. Box 21473, Waco, Texas 76702-1473

All persons having claims against the estate which is currently being administered are required to present them within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.

DATED this 8th day of January, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

SMITH & BRATCHER, P.C., P.O. Box 21473, Waco, Texas 76702-1473, (254) 751-0044, (254) 751-0049 (FAX)

By: SAMUEL T. KINSLOW, State Bar No. 11490300

02.20

LEGALS

THE STATE OF TEXAS CITATION BY PUBLICATION CASE NUMBER 25CPB00093

To: UNKNOWN HEIRS

DRAKE MATTHEW MESECK, Applicant, on February 12, 2025, filed an Application to Determine Heirship in a proceeding styled: REED MATTHEW MESECK, Deceased, and bearing the number 25CPB00093 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 February 20, 2025 in the County Court at Law #1 Courtroom, at the Beli 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: JAMES O. CURE, 2584 BLUE MEADOW DRIVE, TEMPLE TX 76502

The officer serving this Citation shall, in compliance with the Law, serve it by publication once in a newspaper of the general circulation in this, the County in which the decedent last resided as required by Section 202.052 of the Texas Estate Code, for not less than ten days before the return day hereof, exclusive of the day of publication, and the date of publication said newspaper bears shall be the day of publication.

Issued and given under my hand and seal of said Court at office on February 13, 2025.

Shelley Coston County Clerk of Bell County, Texas , PO Box 480, 1201 Huey Road, Belton, TX 76613 By: Lillian Phillips Deputy

02.20

LEGALS

by law. ESTATE OF BRUNHILDE DIRK, c/o: MONA THOMAS, 11103 Salado Springs Cir. Salado, Texas 76571

DATED February 12, 2025.

KAREN M. VILLANUEVA, State Bar No.: 24102608, Telephone: (254) 771-1855, Facsimile: (254) 771-2082, E-mail: karen@templelawoffice.com

02.20

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is given that original Letters of Testamentary for the Estate of Sherry Ann Cavender aka Sherry A. Cavender, were issued on January 21, 2025, in Cause No. 24CPB00802, pending in the County Court at Law Number 1 of Bell County, Texas, to Jimmy Carmon.

All persons having claims against this 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 Jimmy Carmon Independent Executor, 101 Barite St., Hot Springs, AR 71901

DATED the 11th day of February 2025.

/s/ Joshua C. Tisdale, Joshua C. Tisdale Attorney for John Femrite, Texas Bar No.: 24075164, The Tisdale Law Firm, PLLC, 1216 S. 31st St., Temple, TX 76504, Tel: (254) 634-8600, Fax: (254) 554-6686, Email: legal@the-tisdalelawfirm.com

02.20

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original letters Testamentary for the Estate of Geneva Crowther, Deceased, were issued on January 31, 2025, in Cause No. 25CPB00005, pending in the County Court at Law No. 1 in Bell County, Texas, to: Felicia Susanne Holland. The address of the Independent Executor is in Bell County, Texas: Felicia Susanne Holland, c/o William T. Wilson, P.O. Box 427, Temple, Tx. 76503.

All persons having claims against this estate which is currently being administered are required to present them within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.

Dated the 17th day of February 2025.

Respectfully submitted, William T. Wilson Attorney and Counselor at Law, LTD, P.O. Box 427, Temple, Texas, 76503-0427, (254) 771-5885 Telephone, (254) 771-5887 Facsimile, Attorney for the Estate William T. Wilson, State Bar No. 21734000.

02.20

EDITORIAL

Random Thinks

Pleasant Ramblings • Mark Magnan

I was walking through the grocery store the other day, I was going down one aisle when I saw an assortment of cooking oils. Of course, the common ones, like lard and beef tallow. These are known to add flavor to whatever it is that you are cooking. There were a few exotics ones as well. However, the one that surprised me was Bacon Grease. You can actually buy bacon grease! In a store! Come on, who out there that loves bacon doesn't have enough bacon grease on hand to fry an entire acre of potatoes? I get it, perhaps you just ran short of bacon grease, but heck all you have to do is cook some more bacon, then you get to eat bacon. I think that bacon is probably the least economical of all meats. You get a quart of grease for about six slices, which is just enough to make a bacon sandwich to hold you over until breakfast, which should always include bacon. To prove my point, you can buy a canister that is just for bacon grease, and it is labeled accordingly. You don't see those for chicken fat, do you? No!

I have had some very (very) good tortillas in my lifetime. However, one of the top contenders was homemade with bacon grease. That is the versatility of that ingredient.

(I do know of at least one Jewish reader, so feel free to continue reading below this line, my rant is over)

Where are dung beetles in the evolution lineup? I am hoping that they are not next in line for me if I were to believe in reincarnation? Perhaps that is a starting point so everything above that is a vast improvement.

This one might be just for the male readers. How many of you have missed a day or two of shaving and instead of trying to tackle the job and catch up you just made the decision to grow a beard? For the female readers I am sure you have similar issues.

However, for a man to miss a day of shaving it is work to catch up and get even again. No matter the method for shaving, it is not something that men enjoy, at least none that I know. The rugged two-day growth is not a fashion statement, it is just the easiest way of "shaving" without the detail of getting a clean shave every day. I can't remember the last time I was completely clean shaven, probably in my military days. I couldn't wait until I could grow some facial hair, so I didn't look like a little boy, so since then I have kept some growth. Now I wish I could look a lot more youthful, but it is not worth trying to completely shave everyday to accomplish that. I have thought about trying a new style, but I wake up in the morning and look in the mirror and say "heck" with it and shave just as I have done for many years.

Who makes up the names for new drugs? I mean what "creative genius" gets that job? There is a new drug and they churn out the name; Wiggity Blufanny Wovaa. It has nothing to do with the scientific names or Latin terms for the chemical makeup, it is just some wild name for a drug that "might" cure some ailment, but comes with a truckload of side effects. Oh, and don't stop taking the drug because those side effects multiply greatly. So we get a new drug, some catchy name, and now we need a dance for the television commercial. I wonder where they find a group of people that are willing to get in front of a camera and do a synchronized dance to promote a chemical to sell to people that watch old sitcoms.

Speaking of old sitcoms, I have always liked Hogan's Heroes, I remember watching it as a kid. I still watch it at times. It is very corny, but there are some funny parts, including the unique catch phrases. I mean if you say "I know nothing, nothing" to a

young person they are likely to know where that expression came from. The silly thing about HH is that we actually defeated (with the help of the Russians) the Germans using a poorly executed German accent and an

endless supply of technology in a POW camp. I often wonder what modern day Germans might think when they watch that show today.

Have a thought filled week

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Local Activities & Events

Newcomers Club Activities

February

2/20: Nonfiction Book Club; Meet & Greet Coffee
2/21: Trail Blazers Walking Group
2/22: Jimmy's Egg
2/24: Well -Read Women; Monday Canasta
2/25: Singing Bluebonnets
2/26: Fun Lunch
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.

March

3/03: Chat 'N' Canasta
3/04: Footloose Singles
3/05: Monthly Luncheon; Popcorn Bridge
3/06: 42, Dominoes
3/08: Couples Night Out
3/10: Bookworms
3/11: Singing Bluebonnets
3/13: 42, Dominoes
3/14: TGIF
3/15: Exploring Wines
3/17: Snack Time MahJong
3/18: Bunco
3/19 Popcorn Bridge
3/20: Nonfiction book Club; Meet and Greet Coffee; 42, Dominoes
3/21: Trail Blazers Walking Group
3/22: Jimmy's Egg
3/24: Well -Read Women; Canasta
3/25: singing Bluebonnets
3/26: Fun Lunch; Crochet and Knit
3/27: 42, Dominoes

CAC announces 2025 concert lineups *Here's a look at the 2025 Texas Music Series:*

LITTLE JOE HERNANDEZ Y LA FAMILIA — Feb. 22
Temple legend and five-time Grammy winner Little Joe Hernandez y La Familia is one of the most popular Tex-Mex bands in the industry. Described as the King of Brown Sound, Little Joe helped pioneer Tejano music, a mix of traditional norteno music and country, blues and rock styles.
THE TEXAS TENORS — March 30
Emmy award-winning classical crossover, the trio was formed in 2009 by country singer JC Fisher, pop singer Marcus Collins and opera singer John Hagen. They were a top four finalist in the fourth season of America's Got Talent, making them the highest-ranking vocal group in the show's history.

SHAWN COLVIN — May 16
In the 30 years since the release of her debut album, Colvin has won three Grammy Awards, released 13 albums, written a critically-acclaimed memoir, maintained a non-stop national and international touring schedule, appeared on countless TV and radio shows, had her songs featured in major movies, and created a remarkable canon of work.

RUTHIE FOSTER JAZZ BAND — July 12
With five Grammy nominations to her name, Ruthie Foster stands as a testament to the power of authenticity and resilience in music. Her soulful melodies, heartfelt lyrics and an unwavering commitment to her art inspire audiences and fellow musicians as she continues to carve a path uniquely her own.

AN CLIBURN FINALIST CLAYTON STEPHENSON — Oct. 18
American pianist Clayton Stephenson's love for music is immediately apparent in his joyous charisma onstage, expressive power and natural ease at the instrument.

ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL — Nov. 8
Founded in 1970, Asleep at the Wheel has been part of the American roots music landscape for more than 50 years.

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.

The Cultural Activities Center in Temple has announced lineups for its two premier music series, and visiting bands will include Los Lonely Boys, Asleep at the Wheel and the wildly popular Shinyribs. 2025 will usher in new music in both the Texas Music Series and the Central Texas Orchestral Society's Classical Music Series. Some old friends will be making return engagements in Temple, and many new performers also will be playing the CAC stage. For more information, please visit <https://www.cacarts.org/events>. Be on the lookout for the full 2025 Texas Music Series lineup in next weeks edition of the newspaper.

The Bell County Master Gardener Association is hosting a free monthly seminar "Landscaping with Drought Tolerant Native Plants" on Thursday, February 20 from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Texas Agrilife Extension Office, BCMGA Learning Center, 1605 N. Main St., Belton. Certified Master Gardener, Barbara Ishikawa and Natalie McAnerney will discuss how to best use native drought tolerant plants in your landscaping that grow well in Central Texas. They will provide a list of native plants that grow well in Central Texas. The class limit is 50. Please register at bcmgaspeakers@gmail.com

Please join us for the 49th TABA Home and Garden show on Friday, February 21-23 at the Cadance Bank Center in Belton as we bring you new features for exhibitors and attendees alike. The Temple Area Builders Association Home and Garden Show gives local and national companies the ability to highlight their services and unique products to a captive, motivated audience. Come check out the largest Home & Garden show in Central Texas with 125 exhibitors taking up 75,000 square feet of exhibit space! With everything from home builders, landscapers, plants and healthy and beauty products. Admission: Adult (single day) - \$7 cash (additional fees with credit card payment) Children (12 & under) - Free For more information, call 254-773-0445.

Friends of the Belton Public Library presents their Twentieth Annual Friends of the Belton Public Library Benefit Book and Author Luncheon on Saturday, February 22 at 11 a.m. It will be held at Christ the King Catholic Church Family Life Center in Belton. Lisa Wingate, author of 30 novels, will speak at the Book and Author Luncheon. The event is the Friends' annual fundraiser, which provides books for children and special library events. Reservations are available at <https://FriendsBeltonLibrary.org>

The Bell County Historical Commission will show a video instruction of the Open Meetings Act. The meeting and program are February 24, 2025, at 6:00 in the Old Bell County Courthouse on the first floor. The public is encouraged to attend.

Join the MPR Explorers for a "Conversation Over Coffee" on Thursday, February 27 from 9 a.m. to noon. and learn about wildfire safety and forest management presented by the Morgan's Point Resort Volunteer Fire Department. It will be held at the Garrett & Mic Hill Event Center (60 Morgan's Point Blvd., Morgan's Point Resort) Please send questions to Library@mprtx.us.

CASA of Bell and Coryell Counties presents the CASA St Patrick's 5K and Shenanigans Fun Run on Saturday, March 1 at 9 a.m. It will be held at Vista Real Estate, 7446 Honeysuckle on West Adams in Temple. Sign up now and you'll be entered to win a 1-hour massage from Anthony Medical & Chiropractic!

Don't miss out—secure your spot today by visiting
Ladies Auxiliary M.P.R.V.F.D. presents Roses for Hoses on Saturday, April 12 at 8:30 a.m. at the Oakmont Park in Morgans Point Resort. A 5K run and walk, part of the Centex race series formerly known as Cops Vs. Robbers. Dress in costume or come as you are. The event supports the fire department and community outreach projects.

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.

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 come 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 go by their 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 th 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 public.

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

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

Community Information

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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Worship Center
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Christ the King Catholic Church
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Christian Tabernacle Apostolic UPC
1010 S. Wall St. ~ 254.939.3464
Cornerstone Community Church
5081 Dog Ridge Rd ~ 254.721.8250
Crossroads Church
500 South I-35 ~ 254.939.2122
Dominion Life Chapel
105 Green Briar St. ~ 254.563.0472
Elm Grove Baptist Church
6388 Elm Grove Rd. ~ 254.933.8127
Family Gospel Church
2210 Holland Rd. ~ 254.721.0707
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2025 Morgan's Point Rd ~
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First Christian Church of Belton
306 E. 5th Fecbelton.com
First Mexican Baptist Church
703 S. Wall St. ~ 254.939.6900
First Presbyterian Church of Belton
2500 Church Street ~ 254.939.2115
First United Methodist Church
205 E. 3rd Ave. ~ 254.939.5703
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1215 S. Wall St. ~ 254.939.0824
Keys Valley Baptist Church
4393 W. US Hwy. 190 ~
254.939.1650
Lakeview Baptist Church
7717 N Hwy. 317 ~ 254.780.1884
Liberty Church
302 E. Central Ave. ~ 254.933.7107
Liberty in Christ Church
2520 N. Main ~ 254.939.3337
Miller Heights Baptist Church
1400 S. Wall St. ~ 254.939.1835
Ministerios Vida
2020 S. IH-35 ~ 254.624.8015
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218 Alexander St. ~ 254.939.5621
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12 West French ~ 254.773.3407
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740 Jayline Drive ~ 254.773.1401
Grace Comm. Primitive Baptist
3111 N. 3rd St ~ 254.774.8192
Grace Presbyterian Church
2401 S 57th ~ 254.773.2134
Harvest Church
2501 General Bruce Dr. ~
254.780.3566
Immanuel Lutheran Church
2109 W. Ave H ~ 254.773.3898
Leon Valley Church of Christ
4404 Twin City Blvd. ~
254.939.0682
New Hope Church of God
2005 W. Ave D., Suite D. ~
254.742.2181
St. Francis Episcopal & School
5001 Hickory ~ 254.733.4255
St. Luke's Catholic Church
2807 Oakdale Dr. ~ 254.773.1561
St. Mary's Catholic Church
1018 S 7th St. ~ 254.773.4541
Taylors Valley Baptist Church
2497 W. FM 93 ~ 254.939.0503
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First Church of the Nazarene
5000 S. 31st ~ 254.773.3744
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405 Van Dyke Drive, Suite 403A ~
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318 N. 2nd ~ 254.770.0070
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EDITORIAL

Sick Days

Coffee Talk • Renae Brumbaugh Green

A couple of weeks ago, I had the flu. On my birthday. It was not my favorite birthday, but I guess that’s one of the hazards of being born during flu season. I’ve been told I celebrated my first birthday—and my first steps—in the hospital with pneumonia. I suppose that set a precedent.

Though my fever is gone and I can now breathe through my nose, I’m still feeling icky. I want to sleep all the time, which doesn’t work well when one has actual responsibilities... like writing a weekly column. So today, I scrolled back in the annals and found this blog post from 2009. My kids are all grown up now, but they still have the same sick-person profiles. I thought you might like to share my stroll down sick-memory lane:

February 24, 2009

During the last few weeks, we’ve had more sick days than well days at our house. And because we’re a loving family, and we like to share with each other, we just keep passing things back and forth.

We’ve had it all: the coughy-sneezy-sniffly thing. The headache-fever-achey thing. We’ve even had the yucky stomach thing. We’ve had so many bugs, I’ve been tempted to call the exterminator.

We run the gamut of types of sick people, too. My daughter is ready to call 9-1-1 when she stubs her toe, but she doesn’t want to be sick. She hides from the thermometer and insists that she (cough) is (achoo!) fine.

My husband refuses to acknowledge sickness of any

kind. He just gets grumpy and keeps going and going like the Energizer Bunny until he finally falls over, and the rest of us stand around at a distance and watch to make sure his chest is still moving.

“Is he dead?”

“No, I think I saw a little movement there.”

“Maybe you should check his pulse.”

“I’m not gonna do it! You do it.”

“I’m not gonna do it!”

Then, about an hour into his coma-like sleep, he starts snoring. Loudly. And we all breathe a deep sigh of relief.

My son tells it like it is. He’d much rather be out climbing trees than sick in bed. So when he says he doesn’t feel well, he means it.

One such time, he complained of a stomachache.

“Mom, do I have to eat dinner? My tummy hurts.”

“Are you sure you can’t eat just a few more bites?”

“Okay, I’ll try.”

A few minutes later . . . well, I won’t go into the gory details. One of these days I will learn to listen to my son when he tells me his tummy aches.

Later that evening, the poor guy was holding his stomach.

“Mommy, it hurts! It really hurts. Mommy . . . I think I’m having birth!”

(Remind me to have “the talk” with my son.)

Within a couple of days, he was out climbing trees again. It did my mother-heart good to see him back to normal. Now,

if I can only keep him from falling out of a tree and breaking his arm . . .

I’m the biggest baby in the house. But I’m the mom, and the mom isn’t allowed to get sick. So I usually end up pretending I’m fine. But then I feel sorry for myself and I get caught up in the whole “poor little me” game, which is worse than just admitting I’m sick and staying in bed.

But I shouldn’t complain. Truly, I have the greatest kids and the sweetest husband in the world. When I’m sick, they fix me hot tea and plump my pillows and stroke my hair. Sometimes this outpouring of mercy and compassion lasts the better side of four minutes.

I’ve noticed I don’t appreciate my health until it’s struggling. As I type this, I’m taking a deep breath. With my mouth closed, even. And I’m so grateful for a nose that works. Right now, for the first time in a month, we’re all healthy. I feel very blessed.

I suppose that even in sickness, there’s good. In sickness, we learn to value our health. In sickness, we become grateful for the little things, like clear sinuses and clean toilets. And in sickness, we’re given extra opportunities to show our love for each other.

3 John 2 “Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well.”

Memoran-Duh 24

Shop the Insanity • Darren Blair

To The Entertainment Industry At Large

Anyone who has been paying attention to the world of entertainment over the last decade-plus should have made note of several instances in which much-hyped and highly-praised entertainment projects utterly failed while other projects managed to achieve astounding levels of success despite having everything – sometimes including the entertainment industry itself – against them.

As I’ve noted before, unless someone has tried to have it clawed back again, I have a master’s degree in business administration. That part of me is telling me that each movie, TV series, video game, and other such project should be regarded and studied individually to determine why it succeeded or failed, and only *after* this is done should one make any attempt to ascertain any broader trend. This is because there are a great many factors which could each individually have an affect on the overall outcome.

Instead, I have seen far too many individuals within the industry and among its supporters who choose to bypass the “study each work individually” part of the process and go straight into attributing any success or failure to those broader trends that they merely presume exists. As a consequence, any lessons that could be learned from a given project are typically ignored, if not potentially lost. What’s more, in far too many instances the “broader trend” presumed to be the culprit far too often involves casting aspersions on the general audience and attributing malice to people who have none.

If there’s a broader trend that needs to be corrected, it’s this trend towards jumping to conclusions.

Take, for example, the Paul Feig – directed “Ghostbusters: Answer The Call”. Analysis after analysis has been done on the film, noting its various points of failure. The film’s

\$140 million dollar budget was so large that the film had low odds of even breaking even without being able to open in China, whose film authorities typically reject movies that have supernatural elements. The first trailer left fans confused as to whether it would be a sequel or remake. Feig and other people associated with the movie reacted poorly when they realized the first trailer was unpopular, shoving the film into “culture war” territory and leaving people hesitant to engage with it either way. Sony failed to conduct a proper damage control campaign accordingly. Put it all together, and the film was done for before it even opened, at which point it quickly got negative reviews for its frequent comedic misfires.

To Sony’s credit, they learned several hard lessons. The next film, “Ghostbusters: Afterlife”, was made on a much tighter budget, was firmly established as a sequel, had a

more tightly controlled public relations and advertising campaign, and had a director who prioritized the high fantasy elements over the comedy. This film was a smash success, quickly receiving a sequel.

Nearly a decade out, however, and one can still find both people and pop culture accusing audiences of not wanting to see a female-led movie, ignoring the large number of female-led films past and present that were roaring successes and putting false notions into the heads of would-be talent.

The general public is no mysterious monolith. Nor is it impossible to understand why something doesn’t succeed. It may be painful to admit mistakes were made or the “experts” failed to ascertain what audiences wanted, but far too many studios are on the brink and far too many jobs are on the line. You can’t keep getting it wrong like this.

Signed, A business-minded entertainment writer.



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