



BELTON JOURNAL/LYNETTE SOWELL
Ricky Garrett, General Manager of Bell County Water Control & Improvement District No. 1, says a few words prior to a ribbon cutting for the facility's 16 backup generators, which will help provide power to the water system's pumps in case of a power failure.

BCWCID No. 1 celebrates new backup generators for region

By Lynette Sowell
The Belton Journal

Winter Storm Uri occurred four years ago this month, and it is still fresh in many people's minds.

Last Thursday, Bell County Water Control & Improvement District No. 1, the local water supplier for area cities and Fort Cavazos, celebrated the installation of 16 backup generators to ensure that if power to the local area is affected by a disaster of any type, such as Uri, area cities will still be able to have water pumped to them.

This project equips the Belton Lake Treatment Plant with generators that will ensure continuous operations in the event of a power failure similar to what was experienced during Winter Storm Uri in February 2021.

Local officials, along with community and regional leaders, gathered at BCWCID's facility near Lake Belton to cut the ribbon for the generators.

"This project has been a long time coming, and it was brought to us by Winter Storm Uri," said Ricky Garrett, General Manager of BCWCID No. 1, prior to the ribbon cutting.

"If you're in the water service business, this is actually a historical event. It really is. There's not too many entities like us that can now boast that we can fully back

See **BACKUP**,
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Belton ISD Communications Department earns top honors at TSPRA awards



Courtesy photo

BISD Multimedia Specialist Marty Sullivan II and Communications Director Candice Griffin hold the district's award certificates received at the Texas School Public Relations Association's (TSPRA) annual conference in San Antonio, Texas.

Special to the Journal

The Belton ISD Communications Department recently attended the Texas School Public Relations Association's (TSPRA) annual conference in San Antonio, Texas.

TSPRA is a professional organization committed to enhancing public school communications.

During the conference, the district was honored with four Gold Star Awards and one Silver Star Award for their outstanding submissions.

The awards were presented at TSPRA's 63rd annual Star Awards Celebration on Wednesday, February 19, 2025, at the Grand Hyatt in San Antonio.

Chief Communications Officer Christie Parks stated, "It has been several years since our team has submitted entries for these state-level awards and I could not be more proud of the work that Candice and Marty produce. Our department is committed to delivering consistent, accurate and trustworthy information that engages and informs our stu-

dents, staff, parents, and community. Earning the trust and respect of those we serve is the ultimate measure of success, but being recognized by our peers is absolutely an additional honor."

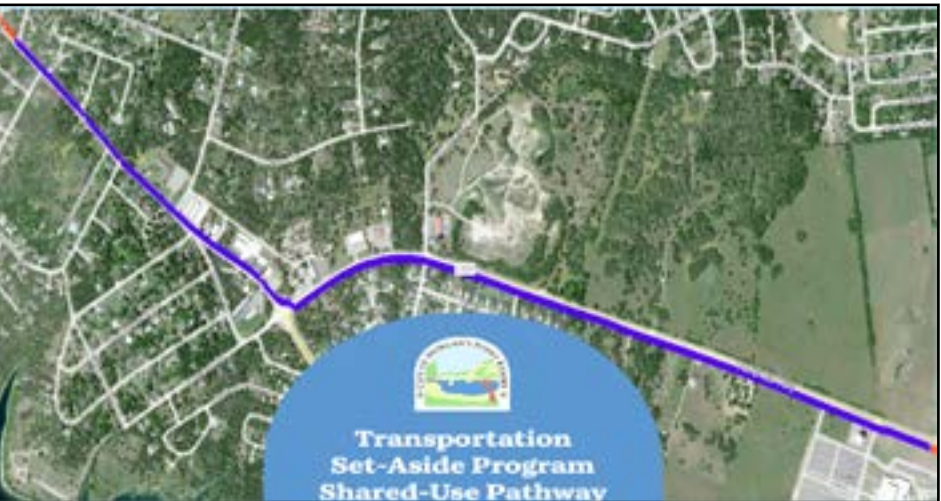
Superintendent Dr. Malinda Golden stated, "One of our district goals is to strengthen and support the engagement of all stakeholders in pursuit of the BISD vision. We are committed to sharing our comprehensive story, including both challenges and triumphs, with our Belton ISD community and our communications

team plays a critical role in this process. The team is setting a new standard for Belton ISD communications and our community can expect this level of transparency and engagement to continue and expand."

Entries in Print, Video, Electronic and Campaign categories are judged by division based on student population. Belton ISD competes in the under 15,000 students division.

Eligible submissions were produced and used by educational institutions between July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024.

Construction could start on 1.8 mile MPR pathway this fall



Courtesy Graphic

A 1.8-mile shared used pathway project could begin as soon as this fall. It will add safety to F.M. 2483, especially for students who attend Lake Belton High School, High Point Elementary, and North Belton Middle School.

By David Stone
The Belton Journal

Construction could start on a new 1.8-mile pathway in the City of Morgan's Point Resort in October of this year, and the \$3.8 million project likely would take about a year to complete, according to City Manager Dennis Baldwin.

Baldwin said the sidewalk will begin at the Morgan's Point Resort city limits on FM 2483 near Lake Belton High School and go along the

south-side of the highway to Morgan's Point Road, then north to Sobrante Road.

"City Council has accepted advanced funding through (the Texas Department of Transportation)," he said. "It's federal money that is passing through the state."

The \$3.8 million will come to Morgan's Point Resort through the Transportation Set-Aside funding program. The project qualifies for Transportation Development Credits (TDCs), signifying

that the entire \$3.8 million is funded by federal and state dollars, without any local match required from the city

The pathway will allow for safer biking and walking through the lake-side city.

The pathway addresses the safety of students from Morgan's Point Resort who attend Lake Belton High School, High Point Elementary, and North Belton Middle

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Council hears annual Belton police, fire reports



By David Stone
The Belton Journal

The Belton Police and Fire Department Annual Reports were presented to Council members Tuesday, providing overviews of the two departments' activities during 2024.

Belton Police Chief Larry Berg said police executed 9,776 traffic stops

and issued 2,749 traffic citations and 6,939 warnings last year. Eighty-eight arrests were made, and 70 percent of all stops resulted in warnings.

Of those 9,776 traffic stops, more than 6,000 drivers were male, 5,518 were white, 2,559 were

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Troy Ashford
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Belton sales tax revenue up more than 23% compared to February 2024

By Lynette Sowell
The Belton Jurnal

The city of Belton will be receiving a larger sales tax check compared to February 2024, according to the monthly sales tax report released by State Comptroller Glenn Hegar.

This month's check for Belton is \$1,047,756.20 which is 23.21 percent more than the \$850,338.74 the city received in February 2024.

So far for 2025, the city's sales tax revenue is up 12.57 percent compared to 2024.

That is higher than the overall sales tax revenue for cities statewide, which is up 8.74 percent compared to last February. Altogether, cities will be receiving a total of \$936.2 million this month. Statewide, sales tax receipts are up 4.7 percent statewide for 2025 compared to 2024.

The allocations are based on sales made in

December by businesses that report tax monthly; October, November and December sales by quarterly filers; and 2024 sales by businesses that report tax annually.

The city of Temple is receiving \$4,181,133.66, down 16.19 percent compared to February 2024.

Morgan's Point Resort will receive \$47,484.37, up 30.61 percent compared to last February.

Over in Nolanville, sales tax revenue went

Belton	\$1,047,756.20	up	23.21%
Harker Heights	\$1,246,982.71	up	5.7%
Holland	\$29,679.83	up	75.36%
Killeen	\$3,831,057.06	up	11.13%
Morgan's Point Resort	\$47,484.37	up	30.61%
Nolanville	\$163,689.56	down	2.75%
Salado	\$125,962.34	up	31.17%
Temple	\$4,181,133.66	down	16.19%

down by 2.75 percent compared to last February, with Nolanville to receive \$163,689.56.

Holland's sales tax revenue is up 75.36 percent, and will be receiving \$26,679.83.

Salado sees a higher check this month and will receive \$125,962.34.

Harker Heights sees an increase of 5.7 percent for February 2025 and will receive \$1,246,982.71.

Killeen's monthly sales tax revenue check is \$3,831,057.06, up 11.13 percent from last February and up 7.05 percent overall for 2025.

Council - From Page A1

Hispanic, 1,538 were black and 161 were Alaskan/Native American/Asian/Pacific Islander. Nearly 500 vehicles were searched during traffic stops, and contraband was found in 258 vehicles.

BPD responded to 1,788 calls regarding automobile accidents in 2024, including 452 non-injury accidents, 155 injury accidents and three fatalities.

The police department operated on a \$7.4 million budget last year. That breaks down to \$677,200 for administration, \$4.1 million for patrol, \$2.4 million for special operations and \$203,420 for code compliance.

According to the report, there were no murders investigated in 2024, but sexual assaults jumped from 15 in 2020 to 42 last year. Auto thefts, robberies, aggravated assaults and residential burglaries all dropped from 2020 numbers.

Council also was presented with the 2024 Belton Fire Department Annual Report during this week's meeting.

According to Assistant Fire Chief Wesley Gilbreath, the department responded to a total of 2,498 incidents, including 21 structure fires, 23 car fires, 41 wildfires, 395 motor vehicle accidents, and 163 alarm activations.

The department provided 990 medical assists, 165 lift assists, and 93 incidents involving hazardous materials. The average fire department response time in 2024 was 7:38.

City Council on Tuesday approved zoning changes that will allow a business inside the city limits to operate as a package store.

"Voters passed a new law last year allowing pack-

age stores in the city," Paul Romer, director of communications for the city.

"Our laws are in line with other communities that allow liquor stores — they can't be near schools or churches," he said.

Texas law requires package stores to be at least 300 feet from schools, hospitals and churches.

The 2024 election loosened alcohol restrictions in Belton and allowed businesses such as breweries or liquor stores to open. The proposition passed 381-132.

Council approved zoning changes for a package store on 0.11 acres at 2144 N Main.

The 2144 N Main location is currently used by Walker Furniture and will be the home to Longhorn Liquor.

According to Romer, if the stores have liquor licenses in place, they can start selling products such as gin, tequila, vodka and whiskey.

Council approved zoning changes for three liquor stores in January.

Mayor David Leigh presented two proclamations to Council on Tuesday evening — one proclaiming Feb. 25 as German Exchange Students Day and the other proclaiming March as Theatre in Schools Month.

University of Mary Hardin-Baylor students and staff, and German exchange students and their professor, were in attendance to receive the proclamation.

Six UMHB students traveled to Germany for a week and lived in German homes and consumed German cuisine. They spent time learning about the German education system. Six students from a German university

spent a week deep in Texas culture for the past week.

"We have different backgrounds but we have a lot in common," Leigh said.

Also, members of Belton High School's Theatre Troupe were on hand to receive the Theatre in Schools proclamation.

Leigh said the proclamation highlights the impact theater has on schools and on the community. It teaches problem-solving skills and allows students to get out of their comfort zones. Students thanked the Council for supporting the arts.

Council adopted a resolution appointing officers for the May 3 general and special elections.

The general election will select three council members, and the special election will decide if the city's Municipal Court will become a "court of record" by appointing judges for fixed terms.

The City Council appointed Shirley White to serve as Election Day presiding judge and Louise Oldham to serve as alternate presiding judge. White will appoint two election clerks.

Texas law designated the city secretary as early voting clerk, and deputies will be Oldham, Jim Lynch, Michelle Fogle and Lindsay Wagner.

State law also requires the city to appoint an Early Voting Ballot Board to qualify and process ballots by mail, late ballots and provisional ballots. Elizabeth Harper was selected as the EVBB presiding judge and LaJuana West is the alternate presiding EVBB judge.

About \$5,000 in wages was approved for election workers.

Backup - From Page A1

up everything in this plant. We have a 90-million-gallon-per-day plant. It's soon to go to 110 million gallons a day, and we have the power generation capability to keep it in service."

The project involved collaboration with entities like Atmos and Oncor, and included the purchase of transformers, 11,000 feet of natural gas lines and sixteen 625 kW generators capable of producing up to 10 megawatts of power, Garrett said.

He acknowledged Keith Sledd with the Heart of Texas Defense Alliance (HOTDA) and Killeen officials present on Thursday.

"HOTDA and the City of Killeen were absolutely critical to get DEAAG funding for military preparedness," he added.

Likewise, Garrett acknowledged Keith Graf, with the office of Governor Greg Abbott and the Executive Director of the Texas Military Preparedness Commission, as well as Cory Honl with Generac, the manufacturer.

The generators can generate as much as 10 mega-

watts of power to help keep the pumps running in the event of a power outage, such as the area experienced during Winter Storm Uri.

The backup system will automatically activate with power loss to the water treatment plant until main power is restored.

The project was supported by the cities of Belton, Copperas Cove, Gatesville, Harker Heights, Killeen, Lampasas, & Temple; Bell County, Coryell County, and Lampasas County; Fort Hood, WCID#1, and HOTDA.

The cost of the total project was \$15,997,700, of which the DEAAG grant covered \$5 million, with BCWCID issuing bonds in 2022 to cover the remainder.

The Cities of Belton, Copperas Cove, Killeen, and Harker Heights, as well as 439 Water Supply Corporation and WCID No. 3 are covering portions of the bond issued by BCWCID.

In addition to these cities, Fort Cavazos likewise obtains its water from BCWCID and will be covering part of the funds. The agreements between the cities and BCWCID were signed back in 2022.

Altogether, the City of Belton is contributing approximately \$2 million toward the project, or approximately 13 percent of the debt being taken out by BCWCID. This will cost the city about \$120,000 annually as part of its debt service, according to documents prepared in 2022 by the city. Killeen's percentage is 43 percent, Harker Heights is 18 percent, Copperas Cove 18 percent, BCWCID No. 3 is 2.7 percent, and 439 Water Supply Corporation is 4.05 percent.

In December 2024 it was announced that the City of Copperas Cove will likewise be receiving a DEAAG grant in the amount of \$5 million for their Fort Cavazos – Energy Resilience Storage System project. This project was the top ranked project out of 6 to receive funding, and of 11 that were submitted.

This project will install a Battery Energy Storage System for West Fort Cavazos providing energy resiliency as well as cost savings.

Sledd said on Thursday that after this system is installed on West Fort Cavazos, there will be a similar ceremony to the one held last week.

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OBITUARIES



Dalton
James Brandon Dalton
January 24, 1975 – February 22, 2025

James Brandon Dalton, 50, of Brazoria County, Texas, passed away on February 22, 2025. Born January 24, 1975, Jamie lived a life defined by service, adventure, and unconditional love for his family, friends, and community. A celebration of Jamie’s life will be held at 10am, Friday February 28th, 2025, at Dossman Funeral Home, Belton, TX, burial to follow at Pendleton Cemetery, Pendleton, TX. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations to Make-A-Wish Foundation, an organization that embodies Jamie’s lifelong commitment to bringing joy and hope to others. Visitation will be 6-8PM Thursday, February 27th, 2025, at Dossman Funeral Home. A dedicated career paramedic, Jamie served with distinction at Williamson County EMS for over 19 years as a lieutenant/paramedic, where during his time there, he supervised three ambulances and 11 employees. His 19-year career in Emergency Medical Services, which began at San Marcos EMS, was marked by his exceptional skill, leadership, and unwavering commitment to helping others in their moments of greatest need. He saved countless lives. Jamie was renowned for his vibrant personality, infectious humor (often expressed through his collection of hilarious and inappropriate t-shirts and tattoos), and his ability to light up any room. His genuine nature and adventurous spirit drew people to him, building lifelong friendships that

became an extension of his family. An Eagle Scout and lifelong adventurer, he found joy in hunting expeditions and cheering on his beloved Dallas Cowboys and Boston Red Sox. Though he had no biological children, Jamie was a remarkable father figure to his stepchildren, nieces, nephews, and the children of friends, treating each one as his own. His love for animals was evident in the devoted care he showed to his dogs and cat. Jamie was known for his non-judgmental nature and reliability – always showing up for those who needed him, no matter the circumstance. Jamie was preceded in death by his beloved wife of 11 years, Lisa Diane Dalton; his mother, Sandra Howard; father, Charles Dalton; step-father, Hank Howard; and nephews, Michael Gross and Clayton Dalton. He is survived by his step-mother, Rosie Dalton; brother, Gary Dalton (Sandy); sister, Terri Dalton Miller (Al); step-children, Stefan Schmid (April Welshon), Margie Tipton (Nathan), Aubrey Tipton(Jared), and Preston Tipton (Caitlin); nieces, Kristen Gross (Rachel Rutter) and Shelby Adams (Josh); granddaughters, Sundance and Maxine; and great-nieces, Elle Rutter and Blaire Adams – all of whom he loved deeply and who will carry his memory in their hearts. He also leaves behind countless friends who became family throughout his lifetime, each holding special memories of his friendship, generosity, and larger-than-life personality.

Bond
William “Bill” Bond
April 27, 1966 – February 16, 2025

William “Bill” Bond, a beloved father, grandfather, brother, and friend, was born on April 27, 1966 in Bishop, California to Elmer and Charlotte Bond. He passed away on February 16, 2025 in Belton, Texas. Bill was a veteran of the United States Army, retiring after 24 years of service

to his country. After retirement from the military, he went on to own and operate his own business, B&C Tree Services. He is survived by his son, Keith Lofton and wife, Ashley; daughters: Michalya Bond, Miranda Ezell, Jordan Sumney-Kovitz and husband, Daniel; five grandchildren: Nate Ezell, Lucy Lofton, Riley Sumney, Nora Lofton and Jude Kovitz; one brother, Billy Douglas and two sisters, Ricky Hughlett and Terri Dominguez. He is preceded in death by his parents and sister, Toni Justice. Memorial Services were held on Friday, February 21, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. at Dossman Funeral Home in Belton, Texas.

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

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Did you Know...
Belton was first known as the town of Nolanville. In 1851, Nolanville was incorporated and the town name was changed to Belton.
Fact from Texas State Historical Association.

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Texell Credit Union receives consecutive SBA lending award

Special to the Journal

Texell Credit Union received the Small Business Administration’s (SBA’s) #1 in Credit Union Lending Award for a second consecutive year.

On February 4, the SBA Dallas/Fort Worth District Office presented the award to Vice President of Commercial Services Galen Burke during the North Texas Association of Government Guaranteed Lenders (NTAGGL) quarterly luncheon.

Texell’s Vice President of Commercial Services accepts a special achievement award from a representative from the North Texas Association of Guaranteed Lenders.

As the only credit union to receive an award at this event, the award represents not only the growth of the credit union, but the rise of small businesses in Central Texas.

Texell’s Vice President of Commercial Services, Galen Burke, joined Texell in 2011 in

Retail and helped the credit union grow and expand its Commercial Services.

In the past few years, the Commercial team expanded from a few employees to a large team that continues to add new jobs.

“We’ve come a long way in lending to help our members with commercial and SBA loans,” said Galen Burke, VP. “Our team takes pride in helping our small business owners achieve their dreams, and I’m honored to share this award with our team.”

Texell offers SBA 7(a) and 504 loans with the commercial team guiding members throughout the process. Other loan products include commercial real estate, acquisition, equipment, and working capital loans. Business checking and savings accounts, credit cards, and certificates are also offered, along with payment processing solutions. For more information, contact Texell’s Business Loan experts at BusinessLoans@Texell.org or call 254.774.5161.



Courtesy photo
Galen Burke, Vice President of Commercial Services for Texell Credit Union, receives the Small Business Administration’s (SBA’s) #1 in Credit Union Lending Award during the North Texas Association of Government Guaranteed Lenders (NTAGGL) quarterly luncheon.

Local arrests among U.S. Attorney’s Office more than 900 immigration cases filed in Western District of Texas

Special to the Journal

Acting United States Attorney Margaret Leachman announced on Tuesday that federal prosecutors in the Western District of Texas have filed more than 900 immigration and immigration-related criminal cases since Jan. 20.

Among those cases is one of local interest.

Guatemalan nationals Anderson Morales-Calderon and Ever Morales-Calderon were arrested on Jan. 24 in Waco on criminal charges related to their alleged aiding and abetting the possession of a firearm as undocumented noncitizens.

Troy Police Department and Lorena Police Department officers were responding to a road rage complaint called into 911.

The 911 caller alleged that an individual pointed a rifle at a semi-truck on IH-35. During the traffic stop, officers observed two air rifles and one .22 caliber rifle in plain view in the back seat and on the back floorboard of the vehicle.

Further investigation revealed that both Anderson and Ever Morales-Calderon were unlawfully present in the United States. If convicted, they each face up to 10 years in federal prison.

Other cases of interest include the arrest of Juan Ramon Hernandez-Limon in San Antonio, who had been previously convicted on April 28, 2021 for illegal re-entry into the United States and alien in possession of a firearm, and a second time on Feb. 8, 2024 for illegal re-entry. Hernandez-Limon repeatedly attempted to evade arrest during an ICE ERO op-

eration on Jan. 26, 2025, and was eventually taken into custody. He faces up to 20 years in federal prison, if convicted.

Honduran national Melvin Armando Funes-Canales was transferred to federal custody after he was located in the Williamson County jail, where he had been detained for alleged possession of a controlled substance. An investigation revealed Funes-Canales had been previously removed from the U.S. to Honduras on or about Oct. 9, 2020, and had also been deported on five other occasions. Additionally, Funes-Canales was previously convicted of burglary, grand theft and illegal re-entry. He now faces up to 10 years in federal prison for illegal re-entry, if convicted.

Four individuals illegally present in the U.S. were arrested in El Paso and face up to 10 years in federal prison each for criminal charges related to their alleged involvement in a human smuggling conspiracy. Yair Alejandro Aguilar-Flores, Angel Eduardo Carrillo-Carrillo, Jorge Alfredo Lopez-Acevedo, and Jesus David Reyes-Villagran allegedly conspired to harbor 12 illegal aliens in two El Paso hotels.

A Mexican national was indicted by a federal grand jury in Austin for one count of possession of a firearm by illegal alien. Marcelo Olvera-Moreno was stopped while driving in Hutto, Jan. 24. A Williamson County Sheriff’s Office deputy conducted the traffic stop after allegedly observing the passenger in Olvera-Moreno’s vehicle fire a handgun from the

front passenger window. Olvera-Moreno admitted to law enforcement that he knew that he was illegally and unlawfully in the U.S. and that he had purchased the pistol at a flea market approximately three months prior. If convicted, he faces up to 15 years in federal prison.

“Because the Western District of Texas shares 660 miles of common border with Mexico and is home to three of Texas’ largest cities and an estimated 7.6 million people, prosecuting immigration and border-related crimes has long been and remains a priority within this district,” said Leachman. “With the valuable investigative and enforcement efforts of our federal, state, and local law enforcement partners, this U.S. Attorney’s Office is committed to prosecuting immigration-related crimes in the interest of the nation and our citizens.”

These cases were referred or supported by federal law enforcement partners, including Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s Enforcement and Removal Operations (ICE ERO), U.S. Border Patrol, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the U.S. Marshals Service (USMS), and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), with the support and assistance of state and local law enforcement partners.

Along with enhanced interdiction efforts at the border, federal law enforcement has been also prioritizing immigration

enforcement operations and prosecutions of aliens unlawfully in the interior of the country and also those otherwise engaged in criminal activity in the U.S., including those who commit drug and firearms crimes, who have serious criminal records, who have active warrants for their arrest, or who have outstanding final orders of removal from the U.S., issued by an immigration judge.

Federal authorities have also been prioritizing investigations and prosecutions against drug, firearm, and human smugglers and those who endanger and threaten the safety of our communities and the law enforcement officers who protect us all.

Indictments and criminal complaints are allegations and all defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.



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LIFESTYLES

THE BELTON JOURNAL

Families enjoy dancing, activities at Father-Daughter Dance 2025

By **Daniel Moctezuma**
The Belton Journal

Fathers and daughters gathered at the Harris Community Center on Feb. 21 and 22 for the annual Father-Daughter Dance 2025, hosted by Belton Parks & Recreation. The event featured dancing, refreshments, photo opportunities, and a performance by Guzman Ballet Folklorico students.

Charisse Bennett, one of the event organizers, said the fiesta theme was chosen a year in advance.

“It’s always fun to have a party, you know, and a fiesta,” Bennett said. “A lot of people have their fiesta-themed parties around Cinco de Mayo or during Hispanic Heritage Month, so we wanted to do it a little earlier this year and have a great time.”

The event sold out both nights, with 125 attendees each evening.

“There’s lots of activities to do, but of course, the main activity is to dance,” Bennett said. “Tonight, they are creating their own DIY maracas, and there are also plenty of photo ops. We’re serving a full taco bar, so there’s a lot of people enjoying that as well.”

Bennett said the Guzman Ballet Folklorico students performed a traditional Mexican dance, adding cultural significance to the night.

“We wanted to highlight the culture in a fun and engaging way,” Bennett said. “Their performance brings energy to the event and gives the kids something exciting to watch.”

The Father-Daughter Dance has been held in Belton for nearly a decade, and Bennett said it remains a popular event.

“Starting in December, we start getting emails and calls about when tickets will go on sale,” Bennett said. “It’s a good night that everybody looks forward to and has made a tradition.”

For some attendees, this was their first time at the dance. Mark Stewart, who attended with his daughter Emilia, said he was glad to take part.

“It’s surreal,” Stewart said. “I grew up an only child, so having a kid of my own, it’s a crazy feeling.”

His daughter, Emilia, said she liked the creative activities.

“My favorite part was drawing on the table and



BELTON JOURNAL/DANIEL MOCTEZUMA

Fathers and daughters fill the dance floor at the Father-Daughter Dance on Friday night at the Harris Community Center in Belton.

making maracas,” she said.

Jesse Rodriguez and his daughter Amelia Rodriguez attended the dance for the second year in a row.

“We’re trying to go to all the daddy-daughter dances in the area,” Rodriguez said. “I have two daughters, so I went to the Temple one with one of them, and I went to the Belton one with this one. She’s having a re-

ally good time. She likes the atmosphere and the extra activities.”

Rodriguez said he enjoyed the night.

“It’s special,” he said. “I’m looking at her thinking, you know, she was once so tiny. Now she’s dancing right in front of me, just having such a good time.”

The dance is expected to return next year.

Lisa Wingate speaks at 20th Annual Book & Author Luncheon in Belton

By **Daniel Moctezuma**
The Belton Journal

The Friends of the Belton Public Library hosted their 20th Annual Book & Author Luncheon this past Saturday, at Christ the King Catholic Church Family Life Center in Belton.

The event featured New York Times bestselling author Lisa Wingate as the keynote speaker and served as the orga-

nization’s largest annual fundraiser for the Lena Armstrong Public Library.

“This is our primary fundraiser for the year,” said Juanita Smith, president of the Friends of the Library. “The funds raised here help the library with projects that might not fit into their regular budget, and we also use part of it to provide free books to children at different library events.”

The luncheon drew 289 attendees,

just shy of the 300-person goal set by organizers.

“We’re very happy with the turnout,” Smith said. “Lisa Wingate has drawn a very good crowd. A lot of people here have read her books, and she was a great choice for our anniversary event.”

Wingate, known for her historical novel *Before We Were Yours*, spoke to attendees about the power of books to build community.

“The books we read really are experiences,” Wingate said. “They give us a shared reality, shared thoughts, and shared conversations. In an age where people are more disconnected than ever, libraries, book clubs, and events like this are some of the last places where we still come together.”

In addition to Wingate’s speech, attendees participated in a silent auction, which featured donated items such as garden statues, themed gift baskets, and entertainment packages. The Belton High School National Honor Society as-

sisted with serving food at the event as part of their community service.

Smith noted that the Friends of the Library hope to raise between \$2,000 and \$5,000 from the luncheon, though the final amount is still being calculated.

“We won’t know the total until it’s all over, but we’re hoping to raise quite a few funds,” she said.

During the event, the Friends of the Library presented their ‘Friend of the Friends’ Award to Amy Stevens, H-E-B Community Coordinator, in recognition of her efforts to support the organization. Stevens helped secure an \$8,000 grant from H-E-B to help fund the luncheon.

The luncheon concluded with an opportunity for attendees to meet Wingate and have their books signed.

For those interested in supporting the Friends of the Belton Public Library, memberships are available, and volunteers are always needed for future events.



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BELTON JOURNAL/DANIEL MOCTEZUMA

Attendees browse and place bids at the silent auction during the 20th Annual Book & Author Luncheon in Belton on Saturday.

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Tigers end run with 30 wins on the season

By Clay Whittington
The Belton Journal

The season is over, but the Tigers made another impact. On the heels of producing the most victories (30) in school history and advancing to the third round of the playoffs, Belton mimicked the feat and defied the odds. Despite losing one of the best players in program history in Trap Johnson and longtime head coach Jason Fossett during the off-season, the Tigers delivered a second

consecutive standout showing. Belton won 28 games before its campaign came to a close Friday, when West Mesquite emerged from the Class 5A, Division I area-round encounter with a one-point win, 48-47. Although the outcome was disappointing, Tigers head coach Phil McCaslin had plenty to be pleased with. “These guys all just play together,” he said, “and they can all do something with the ball. They just find ways to execute by leaning into each other, spacing the

floor well and attacking. “These guys are just selfless, tough kids, and I’m really proud of them.” Belton opened its playoff run with a narrow 57-56 victory against Midlothian, but the trend reversed in the second round. The Tigers rallied from a double-digit halftime deficit, 27-17, to begin the final period with a 36-33 advantage, but it would not last as the Wranglers recorded seven unanswered points to reclaim control. Trailing by a point with

11 seconds remaining in regulation, Belton’s shot attempt went awry, but after the opposition missed a pair of free-throw attempts, the Tigers had one last opportunity, but once again, they could not connect. Noah Childers posted 16 points to emerge as the game’s leading scorer, while teammate Jay’Dn Loggins had 11 points for Belton in the loss. Now, the Tigers must turn their attention toward next season and returning to the playoffs once again.

They will have to do so without several key contributors, though. Childers and Loggins, who are guards, are juniors along with forward Daniel Briscoe, and Belton has a pair of sophomores in Luke Munden and Ty Johnson, but graduation will be taking multiple seniors from the roster. The defeat concluded the careers of guards Easton Barrett, Jason Green and David Shelburne and post Johnnie Carter.

Lake Belton’s Maldonado named co-defensive Player of year for district 22-5A

By Clay Whittington
The Belton Journal

The Lady Broncos and Lady Tigers each put together impressive seasons, and it is easy to see why. Lake Belton returned to the playoffs after placing third in the final league standings with a 6-4 record, and senior Natalie Maldonado was determined by opposing coaches to be a significant reason why. The guard was named 22-5A All-District Co-Defensive Player of the Year, splitting the award with Killeen Ellison senior Indigo Newburn. She was not the only Belton ISD player recognized on the list, though. Belton freshman guard Isabella Warner was named newcomer of the year after helping the Lady Tigers finish within a game of returning to the postseason. The Lady Eagles went undefeated en route to claiming the district championship, while Killeen Chaparral followed at 7-3 with Lake Belton and Waco (4-6) rounding out the playoff participants. The Lady Lions defeated Belton 54-42 on the final day of the regular season to claim the last berth. The Lady Tigers were 3-7 in district, while Waco University was

0-10. Along with the superlatives, several area players were placed on the first and second teams. Lady Broncos freshman Alexa King was a first-team selection, while teammates Ariella Polley, a junior, and freshman Layla King landed on the second team along with Belton senior Avelle Bonfoh. Additionally, Lake Belton junior Amara Sanchez, sophomore Gemma Pierce and freshman Alaysha Williams along with Belton junior Emma Flory and freshman Emma Harvey were honorable mentions. Ellison sophomore guard Faith Etienne was named most valuable player after guiding her team to an undefeated title, and Lady Eagles longtime head Sherry McKinnon was named coach of the year in her final season overseeing the program. McKinnon announced her retirement after 18 years at Ellison. Rounding out the list of superlatives, Lady Bobcats senior forward Chazlyn Dettor was named offensive player of the year. Chaparral senior Ivy Powell, Ellison senior Zoe Parker and junior Jade Oladipo and Waco sophomore Shamiah Taylor were also first-team selections.

Broncos baseball sweeps Midway

By Tony Adams
The Belton Journal

The Lake Belton Broncos hosted the Waco Midway Panthers in a doubleheader on Saturday at Bronco Park. Rohde Smith’s RBI doubleheader in game one, and Andrew Ramos’ sacrifice fly in game two helped the Broncos sweep the Panthers. Scores of the twin-bill were 2-1 and 3-2. In the bottom of the second in game one, Kaden Ward reached on an error and moved to third on a pickoff error. Bryce Davis reached on an RBI infield single to put the Broncos on the scoreboard. With one out, Smith socked a shot to the gap for double to score Davis to give Lake a two-run lead. Midway scored an unearned run in the sixth inning and loaded the bases with two-outs in the top of the seventh. However, Landon Willey got Hayden Merritt to ground out to second to close out the game. Brandon Holley got the start for the Broncos and retired six in a row for the win. Kellen Scarborough allowed three hits and a walk in two innings. Eli Vaughan pitched two innings, allowed an unearned run on two hits, and walked one. Landon Willey picked up the save, having pitched one inning, allowed a hit, two walks, and a strikeout. Ward had three hits and Smith had two to combine for five of Lake’s nine hits. Two errors in the top of the second inning of game two gave Midway a 2-0 lead. RJ Hunt’s double with one on and no one out in the bottom of the third inning scored to put Lake on the boards.

Cameron Bartz’s single up the middle with one out in the bottom of the fifth scored courtesy runner Brent Thomson to tie the game at 2-2. Midway had a chance to add to their lead against relief Braxtan Cope in the sixth inning. With bases loaded and two outs in the top of the sixth, Cope struck out Tyler Seith swing to leave the bags packed. Davis’ leadoff walk in the bottom of the sixth inning set the table for Cooper Mees’ push-bunt single between the pitcher and third base, and Smith walked to load the bases. With one out, Ramos hit a medium-depth fly ball that was hauled in by Garrett Wiethorn. Davis broke for the plate and beat the throw home with a head-first slide to put Lake up 3-2. The Panthers had runners at first second but could not score the equalizer. Davis had two of the Broncos’ seven hits. Maverik Maddux got the start and allowed two runs (one earned) on two hits and walked two. Tate Lisenbe pitched two innings of hitless relief and struck out two. Cope pitched two innings for the win in relief, allowed one hit, three walks, and struck out three. Hunt picked up the save, allowed a hit and a walk in an inning of relief. “When you win two from a quality team like Midway, those are quality wins,” Lake Belton head coach Chris Peacock said. “We have a ton to work on, but this is a good start for us.” The Broncos will next be in action in the Round Rock Legends Tournament on Thursday, as they will take on Vista Ridge (11 am) and Austin Westlake (4 pm) at Stony Point High School.

Broncos blank Tigers, 3-0 in crosstown matchup

By Tony Adams,
The Belton Journal

The Crosstown Rivalry continued on Tuesday night at Bronco Field, as the Lake Belton Broncos boys’ soccer team celebrated senior night as they hosted the Belton Tigers. Tyrrence Taylor’s goal off a corner kick with 1:14 to play in the first half stood as the game-winning goal, and Roman Manriquez and Kevin Muchunu added second-half goals, and Caden Ortiz and Canyon Burke combined for a clean sheet to give the Broncos a 3-0 victory. “I am happy for the guys. They have been working hard all season,” Lake Belton head coach Andrew Kirshner said. “We have played some tough teams this season and we have had our ups and downs. I feel like we are playing well right now and playing for each other.” While the teams split play on both sides of the field over the first five minutes, the Tigers held early momentum. Lennin Malvaiz had four free kicks for Belton in the first half, with three sailing wide left of the goal and one wide right. Josh Roberts slid a free kick over the crossbar, and



another wide left. Lake Belton’s Austin Robello had a pair of close calls by the goal that were steered aside by the Tigers’ defense. “We created a number of chances for ourselves in the first half,” Belton head coach Carlo Mosnia said. “Our keeper made the stops, but we missed on our chances and couldn’t the shots away.”

The Broncos swung momentum in their direction over the final three minutes of the first half. Josue Reyes Trejo had a pair of corner kicks, with one headed away by Cole Francis and the second snagged in traffic by Ortiz. Off a corner kick in the Belton zone, Taylor deposited the ball in the left corner of the goal past Daniel Arroyo to give the Broncos a 1-0 lead with 1:17 to


play in the opening half. “They scored the goal right before the half off a set piece,” Mosnia said. “We talk at halftime about overcoming adversity and try to get the next one.” The match experienced some feisty moments in the second half, as the foul count picked up with four being awarded yellow cards. Manriquez and Kevin Muchunu combined to score the second goal with 32:41 to play in the game. Off a free kick from 25 yards out, Muchunu sprinted past the ball and Manriquez blasted the shot through the Belton defense and past a diving Arroyo to double the Broncos’ lead. A foul in the goal box by Lake Belton resulted in a penalty kick. Malvaiz had plenty of pace on the shot destined for the right corner. Ortiz has the timing down, dove and snagged the shot to keep the Tigers off the board. “It is always reassuring that Cayden is in the net,” Kirshner said. “We had played the tough teams and made saves on quality shots. This is his third year with the program, and his second year on varsity. He has really grown since last year and it shows in his play.” Muchunu added an insurance goal off a 15-yard free kick with 24:13 to go. “The mindset, the crowd, and the energy was amazing,” Kirshner said. “With it being senior night, it was huge. They wanted to play well in front of their families and friends. It motivated them to play well.”

See **SOCCER**,
Page B3



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Sports Briefs

By Clay Whittington
The Belton Journal

Belton and Lake Belton return to action in track & field Saturday, when Tiger Field will play host to the annual Big Red Relays.

Events are scheduled to begin at 8 a.m.

Both schools were scheduled to compete at Copperas Cove last weekend, but the frigid temperatures caused the meet to be canceled.

POWERLIFTING

Lake Belton hosted a last chance qualifier meet in advance of the upcoming regional meet, and the Broncos emerged with the team title.

With 36 points, Lake Belton

beat out Copperas Cove (2nd, 26), Belton (3rd, 21) and Little River Academy (4th, 18).

Leonel Castillo won the 132-pound weight class by combining a 360-pound squat, 200 bench press and 355 deadlift for a 915 total, while teammates Will Daugherty (181, 450-320-485-1,255), Freddie Westbrook (242, 525-340-540-1,405) and Jacob Johnson (308, 515-290-535-1,340) also earned gold medals.

Hunter Loraus (2nd, 308, 535-325-475-1,335) and Travelis Harrison (3rd, 181, 420-280-505-1,205) were responsible for the remainder of the Broncos' points.

The Tigers' score was generated by Corbin Wittman (2nd, 123, 365-195-285-845), Owen Rivera (2nd, 132, 320-200-310-

830), Thomas Morter (2nd, 181, 470-320-435-1,225), Anthony Anderson (3rd, 132, 315-185-300-800) and Gino Zecca (3rd, 165, 420-245-435-1,100).

The Region II, Division II meet is March 8 at Joshua, where the top two finishers in each weight class along with anybody who meets a predetermined total advances to state.

The girls regional meet is Saturday at Del Valle.

SOFTBALL

The Lady Tigers begin competition at the three-day Jarrell tournament today with a pair of games at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.

The event comes after Belton suffered a 2-1 loss to Salado.

Tara Stone threw six strikeouts in the defeat, and she pro-

duced two hits, matching the output from teammate Andalyn Logan. Lauren Vazquez also had a hit.

On Tuesday, the Lady Tigers host Gatesville at 7 p.m.

Beginning today, the Lady Broncos spend the next three days at the Georgetown tournament before playing twice at Liberty Hill on Saturday. Lake Belton plays Abilene Wylie at 11 a.m. and Troy at 1 p.m.

Then, the Lady Broncos host Troy on Tuesday at 7 p.m.

BELTON GOLF

Jacklyn Munoz won the Temple Valentine Girls Invitational at Simmons Golf Club, shooting an 84 to beat out 88 others at the competition.

This was her first win as a

member of the Lady Tigers.

As a team, Belton was third out of 14 squads in attendance with Anya Jinadatha, Hanna Wheeler, Abby Beck and Isiah Jinadatha also playing.

BASKETBALL

Temple's Holy Trinity Catholic High School will host a March Madness Open House on Sunday from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

The event is intended for the entire family with attendees receiving a complimentary lunch along with tours of the facilities, and there will be contests, games and tournaments as well.

The school is located at 6608 W. Adams Ave.

For more information, contact Renee Morales at morales@holytrinitychs.org.

BISD turns in historic performance at state meet

By Aries Ramos
The Belton Journal

The Belton ISD swim teams made a strong statement at the UIL-5A State Championship, with the Lake Belton Broncos and the Belton Tigers delivering historic performances.

With many state qualifiers from both programs and multiple school records broken, the weekend marked a significant milestone for Belton ISD swimming.

The Lake Belton Broncos continued raising the bar for their program, sending their largest swimmers to the state meet.

Five Broncos earned their spot in the competition: Elizabeth Simeroth (Jr.), Gwen Clark (Fr.), Christine Kim (Jr.), Brooke Phillips (Sr.), and David Stewart (Jr.).

Christine Kim delivered a standout performance, becoming the first Bronco swimmer to place in the top eight in the

state. She finished fourth in the 50-yard freestyle and sixth in the 100-yard freestyle, demonstrating her speed at the highest level. During prelims, Kim shattered her school record in the 50 freestyle with a time of 23.57 seconds, further cementing her status as one of the top sprinters in school history.

The girls' 400-yard freestyle relay team, composed of Simeroth, Clark, Kim, and Phillips, finished 19th overall, representing Lake Belton on the state stage in the relay competition for the first time.

On the boys' side, David Stewart put up an intense fight in his events, placing 23rd in the 200-yard freestyle and 20th in the 100-yard freestyle.

The girls' team wrapped up the meet with a 22nd-place finish among the 50 point-scoring teams.

The Belton Tigers also left their mark on the state meet, sending

a record five swimmers to compete: Olivia Brillhart, Mackenzie Gingerich, Liliana Nelson, Addison Richardson, and Ema Whitzel. The Tigers reached new heights by qualifying two girls' relay teams for state competition, another first in program history.

Liliana Nelson made headlines by breaking the school record in the 200-yard freestyle, posting a time of 1:55.44 during prelims. She followed up that performance by finishing 15th in the event during finals, proving her ability to compete among the best in Texas. She also placed 13th in the 500-yard freestyle, adding to the Tigers' point total.

In the boys' 500-yard freestyle, Addison Richardson became the first swimmer in Belton boys' history to secure a top-10 finish at the 5A state meet. He placed ninth overall with a time of 4:48.05.

See **SWIM**,
Page B3

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Soccer - From Page B1

Belton had two more quality chances, but both shots ended up wide of the net.

The Tigers will have a couple of days to heal and learn before hosting Waco University on Friday and Killeen Chaparral on Tuesday.

“We need to work on mindset,” Mosnia said. “This game is done. We need to move forward. We have three games left in district, and we need to win them.”

Lake Belton will head to Killeen to take on Ellison on Friday and will take on first-place Waco High on Tuesday.

“Our big thing tonight was to play for each other,” Kirschner said. “Let’s play for the team. Let’s play for us. We didn’t make the game bigger than it was or focus on anyone else. Moving forward, we showed the confidence to play the game that we want to play, and ensure the trust is there for one another.”



Swim - From Page B2

The Tigers’ relay teams also performed well, with the 200-yard freestyle relay (Nelson, Gingerich, Whitzel, Brillhart) finishing 18th and the 400-yard freestyle relay team placing 13th.

As a team, the Belton girls finished 35th in the standings with 14 points, while the boys placed 39th with nine points.

The Lake Belton Broncos and the Belton Tigers proved they belong among the state’s best, setting new program records and competing at a high level. Belton ISD swimming is on an upward trajectory with a growing number of state qualifiers and young talent rising through the ranks. This season’s success lays the foundation for even more significant achievements in the years to come.

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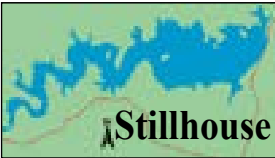
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FISHING REPORT



Belton

FAIR. Water stained; 50 degrees; 2.35 feet below pool. Before the most recent blast of cold came in on February 19, water temperatures had cooled back to the levels they were at before the record-setting, 8-day warming trend that ended on February 8. After a few smaller male white bass began to appear headed toward spawning areas around Mother Neff State Park, the migration run generally halted and will likely remain low key until our next significant warmup. For those heading upriver, light leadhead jigs with white or off-white curl-tail grubs selected to fish just inches above the bottom will produce well, as will grey and/or olive streamers fished on fly gear. Anglers remaining on the upper ends of the main lake on the Leon River or Cowhouse Creek arms, flatline trolling will be improving. Troll multiple baits that dive to different depths, then change over once fish show a preference. Fish in deeper, clearer water will remain interested in the 5/8 ounce and 3/4 ounce white Bladed Hazy Eye Slab worked with a very slow, steady upward motion where fish are seen concentrated on bottom via sonar. Report by Bob Maindelle, Holding the Line Guide Service. Catfish are fair. With cold water temperatures anglers should search for blue catfish in deeper river channels and around steep ledges in 30-45 feet of water. Larger cut baits have been effective for trophy size fish. Eater fish under 10 pounds are still active and slow drifting with small cut shad along sand flats will produce. Channel catfish are fair but can still be caught on warmer days using punch bait in 15-25 feet of water. Report by Brian Worley, B&S Catfishing.



Stillhouse

GOOD. Water stained; 50 degrees; 2.92 feet below pool. Before the most recent blast of cold on February 19, water temperatures had cooled back to the levels they were at before the record-setting 8-day warming trend which ended on February 8. After a few smaller male white bass began to appear headed toward spawning areas on either side of the Gravel Crossing, the migration run generally halted and will likely remain low key until our next significant warmup. For those heading upriver, light leadhead jigs with white or off-white curl-tail grubs selected to fish just inches above the bottom will produce well, as will grey and, or olive streamers fished on fly gear. For those remaining on the upper end of the main lake, flatline trolling will be improved. Troll multiple baits that dive to different depths, then change over once fish show a preference. Fish in deeper, clearer water will remain interested in the 5/8 ounce and 3/4 ounce white Bladed Hazy Eye Slab worked with a very slow, steady upward motion where fish are seen concentrated on bottom via sonar. Report by Bob Maindelle, Holding the Line Guide Service.



Carefully consider Social Security decisions

Scot Hrbacek, CFP® Financial Advisor

Your Social Security benefits can be an important part of your retirement income — but when should you start collecting them?

You can start taking Social Security as early as 62, but your benefits will be about 30% higher if you wait until your full retirement age, which will be 67 if you were born in 1960 or later. Your benefits will “max out” once you reach 70.

So, in deciding whether to start early or wait until later, consider these factors:

First, if you simply need the money, you might not be able to wait. But if you have sufficient income from other sources, you could delay taking your benefits.

You also might want to wait before collecting if you’re employed and you haven’t reached your full retirement age. Otherwise, you’d temporarily lose benefits if your income exceeded certain amounts.

And think about your life expectancy: If you’re healthy and come from a long-living family, you might lean toward waiting before collecting benefits.

Finally, your claiming decisions, or those of your spouse, could affect spousal and survivor benefits.

By making the appropriate choices, you can help maximize your Social Security benefits — and possibly enjoy a more comfortable retirement.

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

Edward Jones

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LEGALS

NOTICE TO ALL PERSONS HAVING CLAIMS AGAINST THE ESTATE OF RUSSELL GLEN CUMMINGS, DECEASED

NOTICE is hereby given that original Letters of Administration were issued on February 20, 2025, in a proceeding styled Estate of Russell Glen Cummings, Deceased, in Cause Number 24CPB00482, pending in the County Court At Law #1 of Bell County, Texas.

Claims may be presented in care of the attorney for the Independent Administrator, addressed as follows:

Thelma D. Cummings Independent Administrator of the Estate of Russell Glen Cummings, Deceased

c/o Burk Roberts, Roberts & Roberts, L.L.P., 2501 East Elms Rd., Ste. A, Killeen, Texas 76542-3023

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.

Signed on March 8, 2024.

Roberts & Roberts, L.L.P., Attorneys for Thelma D. Cummings

By: Burk Roberts
02.27

NOTICE TO ALL PERSONS HAVING CLAIMS

LEGALS

AGAINST THE ESTATE OF MARLENE P. KREMER, DECEASED

NOTICE is hereby given that original Letters of Testamentary were issued on February 11, 2025 in a proceeding styled Estate of Marlene P. Kremer, Deceased, in Cause Number 25CPB00029, pending in the County Court at Law #1 of Bell County, Texas.

Claims may be presented in care of the attorney for the Independent Executor, addressed

as follows: Kurt O. Mehl Independent Executor of the Estate of Marlene P. Kremer, Deceased

c/o Burk Roberts ,Roberts & Roberts, L.L.P. 2501 East Elms Rd., Ste. A, Killeen, Texas 76542-3023

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.

Signed on February 12, 2025.

Roberts & Roberts, L.L.P., Attorneys for Kurt O. Mehl
By: Burk Roberts
02.27

NOTICE TO ALL PERSONS HAVING CLAIMS AGAINST THE ESTATE OF SHERRY LEE CAGLE, DECEASED

NOTICE is hereby given that original Letters of Testamentary were issued on February 10, 2025 in a proceeding styled Estate of Sherry Lee Cagle, Deceased, in Cause Number 24CPB00812, pending in the County Court At Law #1 of Bell County, Texas.

Claims may be presented in care of the attorney for the Independent Executrix, addressed as follows:

Rita Jo Springfield Independent Executrix of the Estate of Sherry Lee Cagle, Deceased

c/o Burk Roberts, Roberts & Roberts, L.L.P., 2501 East Elms Rd., Ste. A, Killeen, Texas 76542-3023

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.

Signed on February 12, 2025.

Roberts & Roberts, L.L.P., Attorneys for Rita Jo Springfield
By: Burk Roberts
02.27

NOTICE TO ALL PERSONS HAVING CLAIMS AGAINST THE ESTATE OF ERIC DONZELL PRELOW, DECEASED

NOTICE is hereby given that original Letters of Administration were issued on February 13, 2025, in a proceeding styled Estate of Eric Donzell Prelow, Deceased, in Cause Number 24CPB00653, pending in the County Court At Law #1 of Bell County, Texas.

Claims may be presented in care of the attorney for the Independent Administrator, addressed as follows:

Tevin Donzell Prelow Independent Administrator of the Estate of Eric Donzell Prelow, Deceased

c/o Burk Roberts, Roberts & Roberts, L.L.P., 2501 East Elms Rd., Ste. A, Killeen, Texas 76542-3023

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.

Signed on February 12, 2025.

Roberts & Roberts, L.L.P., Attorneys for Tevin Donzell Prelow
By: Burk Roberts
02.27

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of MARGIT A. SPRIGGS, Deceased, were issued on February 20, 2025, in Cause No. 25CPB00059, pending in the County Court at Law No. 1 of Bell County, Texas, to: REBECCA BRYANT.

All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them to the undersigned within the time and in the manner prescribed by law. ESTATE OF MARGIT A. SPRIGGS, c/o: REBECCA BRYANT, 3401 Cayman Way, Apt. 212, Abingdon, MD 21009 DATED the 21st day of February, 2025.

KAREN M. VILLANUEVA, State Bar No.: 24102608, Telephone: (254) 771-1855, Facsimile: (254) 771-2082, E-mail: karen@templawoffice.com 02.27

LEGALS

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of GERALDINE POOLE, Deceased, were issued on February 20, 2025, in Cause No. 24CPB00798, pending in the County Court at Law No. 1 of Bell County, Texas, to: REBA KING.

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

ESTATE OF GERALDINE, c/o: POOLE REBA KING, 4708 Fannin Falls Place, Austin, Texas 78735

DATED the 20th day of FEB. 2025.

J. ERIC STOEBNER , State Bar No.: 24046919, Telephone: (254) 771-1855, Facsimile: (254) 771-2082,

E-mail: eric@templawoffice.com
02.27

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters of Administration for the Estate of NANCY CHARLENE RUNNELS, Deceased, were issued on February 13, 2025, in Cause No. 24CPB00534, pending in the County Court at Law No. 1 of Bell County, Texas, to: DANNY W. RUNNELS.

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: ESTATE OF NANCY CHARLENE RUNNELS, DANNY W. RUNNELS, 9014 Willow Springs Lane, Conroe, Texas 77302

DATED the 19th day of FEB. 2025.

J. ERIC STOEBNER, State Bar No.: 24046919, Telephone: (254) 771-1855, Facsimile: (254) 771-2082,

E-mail: eric@templawoffice.com
02.27

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of SHARON DIANNE NECESSARY, Deceased, were issued on December 20, 2024, in Cause No. 35.009. pending in the County Court at Law No. 1 of Bell County, Texas, to: KRISTIN N. BROOKHART.

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: ESTATE OF SHARON DIANNE NECESSARY, KRISTIN N. BROOKHART, 14803 Providence Manor Way, Cypress, Texas 77429

DATED the 19th day of FEB.2025.

J. ERIC STOEBNER , State Bar No.: 24049619 ,2106 Bird Creek Drive, Temple, TX 76502, Telephone: (254) 771-1855, Facsimile: (254) 771-2082

,E-mail: eric@templawoffice.com 02.27

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of Irene Ina Kistler, Deceased, were issued on February 14, 2025, in Cause No. 25CPB00053, pending in the County Court of Bell County, Texas, to: Fred H. Kistler.

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. Fred H. Kistler,

c/o: Michelle Lehmkuhl, 200 Josie Lane, Rockdale, Texas 76567

DATED February 19, 2025.

Michelle Lehmkuhl, State Bar No.: 24036964, 200 Josie Lane, Rockdale, Texas 76567, Telephone: (512) 446-9529,

Facsimile: (512) 446-9528, E-mail: michelle@milamcounty.com Attorney for Fred H. Kistler

02.27

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of James Allen Kistler, Deceased, were issued on February 14, 2025, in Cause No. 25CPB00052, pending in the County Court of Bell County, Texas, to: Fred Kistler also known as Frederick Herman Kistler

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. Fred Kistler, c/o: Michelle Lehmkuhl, 200 Josie Lane, Rockdale, Texas 76567

DATED February 19, 2025.

Michelle Lehmkuhl, State Bar No.: 24036964, 200 Josie Lane, Rockdale, Texas 76567, Telephone: (512) 446-9529,

Facsimile: (512) 446-9528, E-mail: michelle@milamcounty.com Attorney for Fred Kistler 02.27

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GIVE US A CALL!

SALADO - Discover elegance and comfort in this meticulously crafted 3389 sqft custom-built home. With 4 bedrooms and 3 baths, the spacious interior offers a seamless flow between its open-concept living spaces. Modern amenities and luxurious finishes grace every corner, while the serene backyard oasis provides a perfect retreat. This residence harmoniously combines architectural sophistication with contemporary living, promising a lifestyle of refined beauty.

ACREAGE From the Starry Nights to the City Lights this one-of-a-kind Texas Ranch is under 30 minutes to Waco & 1.5 hrs to Austin! Approx 29 acres with views over Leon River/Lake Belton! 3,000+ square ft custom home you must see to appreciate. Enjoy the fabulous chef's kitchen and large family room both with panoramic views. Take family game night to a whole new level with wet bar and full bath with separate entrance for possible future pool. Enjoy covered back porch to see the magnificent Texas night sky and enjoy cool nights by the custom fireplace. Everything is bigger and better in Texas and it is clear to see why when you see this amazing ranch!

NEW CONSTRUCTION! Beautiful rock and brick home situated on 1/2 acre in the newly developed Deer Grove subdivision in Belton ISD. The open floor plan features 3 bedrooms and 2 bath, a pop-up ceiling in the family room as well as a corner fireplace as a focal point. Large open kitchen with beautiful cabinets and granite! A formal dining and breakfast area plus office. A generous master suite with large walk in closet as well as nice sized secondary bedrooms. Large covered porch, perfect for relaxing or entertaining with your friends and family. As if that is not enough - the home has been pre-wired for a home generator.

SALADO -- **Sellers are offering a 2-year home warranty to include pool and septic coverage!** Beautiful custom home with pool to cool off in the Texas summer heat and an oversized backyard to enjoy! This home is located in Salado ISD - features a split floorplan with 4 bedrooms (2 secondary are oversized), 3 bath, formal dining and eat-in breakfast area with luxury vinyl flooring throughout. The kitchen is open to the breakfast and living areas making it great for entertaining. Oversized, insulated garage. All interior walls insulated for sound and exterior walls are fully insulated making this very energy efficient! Great location with easy access to I-35, Belton, Temple, and Austin.

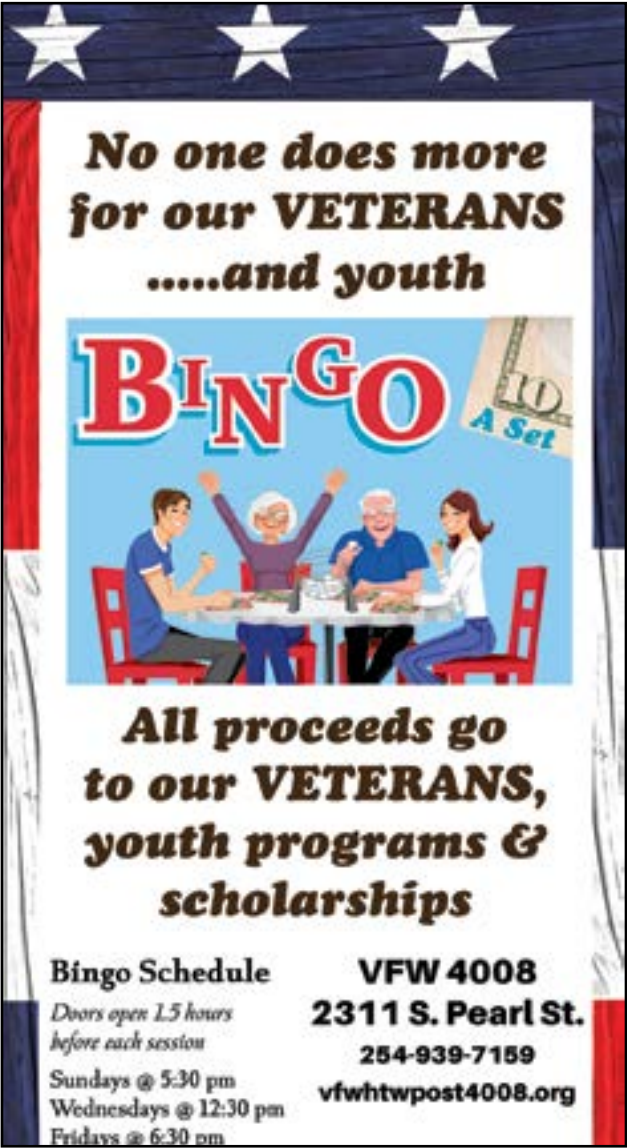
BELTON ISD - Charming home with a nice front porch, 2 bedrooms, one bath and lots of storage. Living area could be used as a meeting room. Lot features a beautiful mature tree in the front yard, fully fenced yard, and several out buildings. Excellent location with many possibilities! Adjacent properties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

THE ESCARPMENT is a legendary neighborhood, and the perfect setting for this gorgeous residence. Just minutes from Stillhouse Hollow Lake, this gated home sits on over an acre and includes a sparkling pool, garden area and a 30x40 building that is insulated. Enjoy the abundance of windows throughout the home and especially in the breakfast area while watching nature. A gourmet island kitchen is a chef's dream with an loads of countertop space with attached breakfast area. The master suite is an exceptional space with room to make a sitting area and you can enjoy the sunroom just off the suite. The property has beautiful shaded areas, native Texas plants and fruit trees to enjoy throughout the year. As a bonus enjoy the wildlife that passes by in the extended yard outside the fence.

Exceptional property featuring a 3800+ sqft home sitting on 84 fully fenced AG exempt acres with stock tank and views for miles!

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Local Activities & Events

Newcomers Club Activities March

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

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

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.

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!

The Grace Gallery cordially invites you to attend the opening of their new exhibit Professional Artists of Central Texas on Thursday, March 6 from 5-7 p.m. Located behind Main Street Bridal in Belton, the address is 108 West Central Avenue. Parking will be available behind the building.

SAVE THE DATE! Are you looking for Veggies, Herbs, Native-Drought Tolerant plants for your garden this spring and want to support our local Bell County Master Gardeners Association? If you answer yes, you will not want to miss our annual fundraising plant sale at Cadence Bank Center (EXPO Center), 301 W Loop 121, Belton, TX. Check out our website and FaceBook page in the weeks to come for plant highlights.

Rare of Breed The Redemption Tour at Schoepf’s BBQ Rare of Breed: The Redemption Tour Pt. 2 is coming to Belton on Saturday, March 22 from 6-10 p.m. at Schoepf’s BBQ. Rare of Breed brings his message of hope, redemption, and faith to the stage. Special guests Joe Nester and Just Nate Musik will also perform, making this a night filled with powerful performances and uplifting stories.

Team Poss’Abilities” presents the Central Texas Poss’Abilities” Job Fair for high school & college students, including young adults with disabilities. They’re inviting employers, job training programs, and vendors to participate in the 6th Annual Area Poss’Abilities” Job Fair on Friday, March 28 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. for high school students and 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. for college students and young adults. It will be held at the Bawcom Student Union Center located at University of Mary-Hardin Baylor. Lunch will be provided. For any general/registration questions, contact: Cheryl Nelson at 254-913-4193.

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.

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

Bell County Historical Commission holds their meetings on the fourth Monday of every month at 6 p.m. in the historical Bell County Court House, 101 E. Central Ave in Belton. Join us in our vision of preserving and promoting Bell County’s rich historical heritage for current and future generations. We are dedicated to initiating and conducting programs that preserve and celebrate the county’s historic cultural resources in alignment with state laws governing historical preservation in Texas. Our community resources consist of a research room, book repository, cemetery information, historical markers and monument records. Our services include information on historic preservation, educational programming, history community outreach and partnerships. We welcome you to 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.

Temple-Belton Ladies Lion Club Meeting Second and Fourth Monday of every month at 6:30 pm at the Belton V.F.W., 2311 S. Pearl St.

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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Belton Church of Christ
3003 N. Main ~ 254.939.1816
Belton Church of God in Christ
1122 W. 2nd Ave. ~ 254.939.1697
Belton First Assembly of God
500 S. IH-35 ~ 254.933.2803
Belton Lighthouse
1001 NE Loop 121 ~ 254.654.7278
Belton Nazarene Church
1701 Sparta Rd ~ 254.939.3404
Bethel A.M.E. Church
401 S. Davis St. ~ 254.939.6090
Central Texas Cathedral
Worship Center
700 S. Main Street ~ 254.831.3064
Christ Bible Baptist Church
1590 Jack Rabbit Rd ~ 254.939.9247
Christ the King Catholic Church
310 E. 24th Ave. ~ 254.939.0806
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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First Presbyterian Church of Belton
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205 E. 3rd Ave. ~ 254.939.5703
Free Pentecostal Church of Jesus
1111 Cacti Lane ~ 254.933.8201

Freedom Bible Fellowship
308 W. Ave. D ~ 254.933.3310
Holy Temple of Our Lord Jesus
Christ of the Apostolic Faith, Inc.
519 S. Pearl St. ~ 254.613.4591
Hope Community Church
507 Mitchell St. ~ 254.933.8222
Hope Tabernacle
202 E. 1st Ave. ~ 254.933.8222
Iglesia de Cristo
3303 N. Main ~ 254.939.6910
Immanuel Prince of Peace
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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
New Life Fellowship
706 E. 4th. ~ 254.939.8011
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1726 Morgan's Point Rd. ~
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and School
300 N. Main St. ~ 254.773.1657
Christian Life Church
4343 West FM 93 ~ 254.939.2626
Covenant Lutheran Church
4202 Hickory Rd. ~ 254.733.7718

First Baptist Church
8015 West Adams Ave. ~
254.773.6866
First Methodist Church GMC
102 N. 2nd Temple. TX
~254.773.7992
First Presbyterian Church Temple
12 West French ~ 254.773.3407
Foundation Church
10701 W. Adams ~ 254.780.9673
Grace Baptist Church
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
Temple Bible Church
3205 Oakview Drive ~ 254.778.3233
First Church of the Nazarene
5000 S. 31st ~ 254.773.3744
The Redeemed Christian Church of
God Salvation Center
405 Van Dyke Drive, Suite 403A ~
469-348-1475
Unity Church of Temple
318 N. 2nd ~ 254.770.0070
Vineyard Christian Fellowship
7425 W Adams Ave. ~ 254.778.2802
Vista Community Church
7051 Stonehollow Dr. Sundays 8:30,
10, 11:30 a.m., 5 p.m.
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