

# Downtown Belton hosts busy first Market Days of the season



TOP: Jay White & The Blues Commanders with Michael Mahler perform at Market Days ABOVE: Vendors celebrate the first day of Market Days in downtown Belton on Saturday.

By Lynette Sowell  
The Belton Journal

Dozens of vendors lined the streets of downtown Belton on Saturday for the first day of Belton Market days for the season.

Along with the market vendors, shoppers could purchase items from a variety of food vendors with specialty baked goods, cookies, salsa, local honey, fudge, jerky and more.

Those who wanted to dine had a selection of food trucks from which to choose – offering everything from cheese curds, kettle corn, snow cones, boba, and more.

While shoppers and diners circulated throughout downtown, they could enjoy live entertainment provided by Jay White & The Blues Commanders

with Michael Mahler in the morning, followed by Martian Folk at 1 p.m.

Both bands are local to the Belton area, and Leila Velchar, owner of My Giving Tree Gift Shop and Callery, head of the Discover Downtown Belton Association (DDBA), said that the bands love performing before a hometown crowd.

Likewise, she considered the day a success.

“We had hundreds of feedback cards from the attendees, and it was all very positive. They loved the variety of vendors, the music, the food trucks,” Velchar said. “We had people from all over Texas come on Saturday, from Hutto, San Antonio, Dallas, Houston. There were lots of people visiting family from out of state. It is a much loved family event.”

Velchar said that vendor slots for the next Market Days, set for November 15 from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m., are full and there is a waiting list.

Velchar added that she and the DDBA are grateful for the support from the city of Belton. “From behind the scenes and bringing the barricades, doing a soft close the night before, and them bringing us the stage, I am so grateful to work alongside them,” Velchar said. “The Belton Fire Department set up a first aid station, and this is something I’ve wanted to add to the event.”

Market Days has been a downtown staple since 2010 and is celebrating more than two decades of keeping downtown Belton a busy place to shop and dine.

The DDBA sponsors the Candy Trail and Christmas on the Chisholm trail, as well as organizes Market Days.



Courtesy Photo  
Members of the Belton High School student council show off their award for their video “Burning of the B,” that earned top honors at the Texas Association of Student Councils (TASC) 89th Annual High School Conference in Arlington.

## Belton High School student council earns state recognition

Special to the Journal

“Burning of the B,” a Belton High School Student Council video, earned top honors on March 31, 2025, at the Texas Association of Student Councils (TASC) 89th Annual High School Conference in Arlington.

Only ten high schools and five middle-level councils received this prestigious recognition.

TASC is the largest student council association in the world and the videos recognized at its conference represented the most outstanding submissions from across Texas. The theme for this year’s video submissions was “To the Furthest Horizon.”

The Burning of the B video highlights Belton High School’s long-standing homecoming tradition that brings students, alumni, families and the entire commu-

nity together. The event, which spans more than 30 years, is organized by the senior class and student council officers and features a giant letter “B” wrapped in burlap and ceremonially set aflame.

Under the leadership of Student Council Sponsor Danielle Conner, the event has evolved into a full-scale carnival with food trucks, games, music and more—showcasing the school’s deep-rooted Tiger Pride.

“BHS Student Council has been attending the TASC Annual State Conference for the past three years,” said Conner. “After attending last year, our Student Council President Angel approached me with the idea to submit a video to the Top 10 Video Competition. We chose Burning of the B because it’s such a meaningful tradi-

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# Belton’s \$17.7 million bond sale delayed until April 29

By David Stone  
The Belton Journal

Belton City Council once again delayed the issuance of an up to \$17.7 million certificate of obligation bond, but this time the postponement was to avoid

competing with a bond issued Tuesday by the city of Georgetown.

Belton’s proposed funding supports the city’s portion of the Temple-Belton Wastewater Treatment Plant expansion, lift station improvements, a new aerial fire

department apparatus and the acquisition of the former Miller Heights Elementary School as a public safety facility.

Council initially intended to consider the bond sale on April 8, but market volatility at the time led Mike

Rodgers, the city’s financial advisor, to recommend a delay. A resolution was passed to reschedule the issuance for April 22.

But, earlier that day, Georgetown issued \$120 million in bonds that were likely to draw significant

investor attention. Rodgers recommended another delay. The bond sale has been rescheduled for a special meeting at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 29.

A notice of intent to issue the certificates was originally approved by Council

on Feb. 11.

Belton’s 25 percent share of the \$71.2 million wastewater project is \$17.8 million. The project will expand the existing facility

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## City council approves agreement for South Connell Street project

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Courtesy Photo  
The Belton City Council approved an agreement for right-of-way services in connection with the future Connell Street reconstruction project.

Special to the Journal

Belton City Council approved a professional services agreement with Stateside Right of Way Services to assist with property acquisition for the South Connell Street Reconstruction Project.

The project will expand South Connell Street from a two-lane to a four-lane road with curb and gutter, along with sidewalks on both sides.

The improvements aim to increase safety, mobility, and pedestrian access.

To support the expansion, additional right-of-way must be acquired along both sides of the roadway.

Stateside ROW, based in Temple, will manage the appraisal and negotiation process with affected property owners.

City staff will oversee the process, but all communications and negotiations with property owners will be handled by Stateside to ensure a fair and compliant process.

The acquisition is expected to take up to 15 months and involves 32 parcels.

The \$329,500 contract, funded by the TIRZ Capital Projects Fund, covers appraisal and acquisition services but does not include compensation to property owners, which will be handled separately.

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## Early voting for May 3 election continues through Tuesday



Luke Potts



Ty Taggart

**By Lynette Sowell**  
*The Belton Journal*

Early voting continues through Tuesday, April 28, for the May 3 general and special elections.

Early voting hours are 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. through Friday this week, at the Belton City Hall Conference Room, 333 Water St.

On Monday and Tuesday, April 28 and 29, polls will be open 7 a.m. until 7 p.m.

Then next Saturday, election day,

polls will be open from 7 a.m. until 7 p.m. at the Harris Community Center, 401 N. Alexander St.

On May 3, residents can vote in the City of Belton’s first contested City Council election in five years and on a proposed measure to amend the City Charter to allow changes to the city’s municipal court system.

### General Election

Three City Council terms are expiring: Daniel Bucher (Place 5), Wayne Carpenter (Place 6), and Stephanie O’Banion (Place 7). Bucher and

O’Banion seek to retain their seats, while Carpenter is not seeking re-election.

Bucher, a former member of the Belton Parks Board, seeks a third term, while O’Banion, a former member of the Planning and Zoning Commission (P&Z), seeks a second term. She did not draw an opponent for Place 7.

Current P&Z Commission Members Ty Taggart (Place 5) and Luke Neale Potts (Place 6) have also filed for

See **VOTING**,  
Page A3

## City releases results of traffic studies

*Special to the Journal*

On April 8, City staff presented findings from two major traffic studies, offering insight into traffic congestion and safety concerns along River Fair Boulevard and Main Street.

The studies, conducted by Lee Engineering, focused on improving vehicle flow and safety near busy intersections, including River Fair at Texas 317 and Main Street between 2nd and 6th Avenues.

### River Fair Boulevard: Safety Concerns, But No Signal Yet

The River Fair study, originally required for the development of McDonald’s and Panda Express, was expanded to evaluate the corridor more broadly due

to increasing traffic from Starbucks, the shopping center, and residential growth.

Unsafe left-turn movements and vehicle stacking during peak hours are common at the intersection, which since 2019 has had 32 crashes in the vicinity, including 15 with injuries.

Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) does not currently support installing a traffic signal at River Fair for two reasons: the intersection does not meet state traffic volume requirements and its proximity to an existing signal.

In the short term, the city is considering making River Fair a right-turn-only exit and converting the shoulder into a dedicated right-turn lane. Long term, officials plan to revisit a traffic signal once new development increases vehicle counts.

### Main Street: Roundabouts Possible for 2nd and 6th

The Main Street traffic study confirmed what many residents already know: traffic backs up between 2nd and 6th Avenues, particularly during evening rush hour.

Due to space limitations and the presence of historic properties, traditional widening is not feasible. Instead, the study considered two roundabouts—one at 2nd Avenue and one at 6th Avenue—as a way to improve flow without adding lanes.

Consultants presented conceptual designs showing single-lane and three-leg roundabouts. The de-

signs include truck aprons and pedestrian buffers. Staff emphasized that both intersections must be addressed together to avoid shifting traffic issues from one area to another.

TxDOT, which oversees the roadway, has expressed openness to the roundabout concept. Sixth Avenue is already scheduled for full reconstruction in 2027, and 2nd Avenue (FM 93) is also in the planning pipeline.

Any plans to address long-term traffic needs require the city to coordinate with TxDOT, the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, and local property owners.

### Next Steps

No action was taken during the meeting, but the city plans to continue to have dialogue with TxDOT about signal timing adjustments, potential roundabout planning, and continued monitoring of traffic data. Councilmembers voiced support for the proposals and appreciation for the city’s proactive approach, noting that improved traffic flow is an important economic development initiative.



## Correction

The March 27th issue of The Belton Journal reported that the Temple Salvation Army received a donation of 1,100 pounds of meat. Donnie Ringler’s name was misspelled. Also, Don Ringler Automotive Group has been a sponsor of the food drive since the beginning of the event.



### Your usual or something new?

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## BHS - From Page A1

tion—one that celebrates our Big Red Community and brings everyone together.”

For senior Angel, the event holds personal significance. “For me, Burning of the B means being surrounded by family and friends for one special night that celebrates all of our hard work. It’s the heart of Belton High School spirit.”

Senior Haylee, who also contributed to the project, said, “The most challenging part of making the video was balancing the informative parts with the creative, entertaining elements. But I learned that being a leader is really about guiding others and building trust. Teamwork and school pride can be a lot of fun—and this experience really showed me that.”

Belton High School Student Council is particularly proud of Burning of the B, said Conner. “It represents everything we stand for—tradition, pride, service and community.”

“As student council members across Texas walk the stage to receive their diplomas, many will continue their journeys into college and careers with a strong dedication to public service, civic engagement and the understanding that their actions cre-

ate meaningful change in their communities and beyond,” said Patty Wangler, Director of the Texas Association of Student Councils. “I am continually inspired by the incredible impact high school student council members make, guided by outstanding advisors. Congratulations to these councils and students for their unwavering commitment to service and their efforts to enhance their schools, communities, and the world. They truly exemplify TASC’s mission of fostering student voice, engagement, and leadership.”

Student councils across Texas positively impact their communities, schools and peers through the activities they host and the projects they complete. These young leaders develop essential skills in team building, problem-solving, project planning and civic engagement—skills that serve them well beyond the classroom.

“I loved working on this project because it gave us the opportunity to show what makes Belton High School so special,” said Haylee. “It was a night to remember—and now, it’s a memory we’ve shared with the whole state.”



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To be considered for inclusion in the Belton Journal, all submissions must be received by 5:00 p.m. on Monday of the week in question.

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# OBITUARIES

## De Guardiola

Maria Purificacion (Pura) Rangel De Guardiola  
February 14, 1932 - April 18, 2025

Our beloved mother/grandmother/great grandmother, Maria Purificacion (Pura) Rangel de Guardiola, 93, of Temple, a devoted homemaker and the heart of our family, passed away peacefully while surrounded by loved ones on Good Friday, April 18th, 2025.

Pura was born February 14, 1932, in Lampazos, Nuevo Leon, Mexico, the daughter of Francisco Rangel and Elisa Taboada. She grew up with five sisters and three brothers. Pura later married Francisco Guardiola on August 17th, 1952. Together they had 12 children and traveled across the country working in the fields to provide for their family. Pura and her children later moved to Temple in May of 1983 where she became a devoted member of Our Lady of Guadalupe Church. She found joy in life's simple pleasures—taking small trips, caring for her birds and puppies, and tending to her beloved flowers and plants. Her flowers and plants were her sanctuary, a place where she spent countless peaceful hours, nurturing beauty with the same care she gave to everyone around her.

Pura is survived by her children: Frank Guardiola

(Theresa), Puri Ortiz (Epifanio), Elsa Castillo (Roy), Alma Davila (Francisco), Carmela Garcia (Arnulfo), Johnny Guardiola (Delia), Ricky Guardiola (Teresa), George Guardiola (Sue), Phillip Guardiola (Michael), Cesar Guardiola (Laura), Joe Guardiola and Raul Guardiola. She is also survived by her siblings, Graciela Villanueva, Sergio Hernandez, Antonio Hernandez, Carmen Rodriguez, Maria Elena Vega, Celia Solis, 30 grandchildren, 39 great-grandchildren, 1 great-great child, as well as numerous nieces and nephews.

Pura was preceded by one grandchild (Alondra Ines Garcia), three great-grandchildren (Alexander Thomas McLain, Francisco Tomas Trevino, and Lola Soledad Trevino), son-in-law (Robert Trevino), brother (Ernesto Hernandez), and sister (Elva Savedra).

Services for Pura will be as follows:  
Visitation on Wednesday, April 23rd, 2025 from 5-7 pm at Dossman Funeral Home in Belton, TX. Recitation of the Holy Rosary will immediately follow at 7:00 pm.  
Funeral Mass will be on Thursday, April 24th, 2025 at 10:00 am at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Temple with Father Tom Chamberlain and Deacon Oscar Valeriano officiating. Burial will follow at Hillcrest Cemetery in Temple.

Pallbearers will be Michael Trevino, Roy Anthony Castillo, Jay Ybarra, Carlos Guardiola, Frankie Guardiola,

and Raul Guardiola Jr.

Honorary pallbearers are Sammy Castillo, Ricardo Guardiola Jr., Fabio Guardiola, Phillip Guardiola, Nicholas Tucci, and Jorge Guardiola Jr.

The Guardiola Family would like to thank the staff of Baylor Scott & White Hospital in Temple - The 5 North Geriatric Trauma staff and nurses, the ICU staff, especially nurses in STC 4 Hospice Unit, Kenny and Lauren, and all their Family and Friends for the outpouring of love, messages, food and donations in this time of need.



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## Council approves amendment on ordinances concerning development outside city limits

By David Tuma  
The Belton Journal

The Belton City Council earlier this month held a public hearing before approving an ordinance amending Chapter 23, Article I of the Code of Ordinances for annexation when connecting to City utilities.

The ordinance requires property owners in the City's Extraterritorial Jurisdiction to request voluntary annexation if connecting to city utilities is requested or required.

The ordinance requires City approval of proposed Municipal Utility Districts in the ETJ, including voluntary annexation, subject to a Development Agreement or a Strategic Partnership Agreement.

There was no formal policy that addressed properties in the ETJ wanting to tap into the City's water and sewer system, and the requirement to voluntarily annex.

The policy created is a growth management tool that will assist with the orderly expansion of the Belton City Limits. Over the past several legislative sessions, a city's ability to annex property has shifted to voluntary requests. The policy created helps protect citizens of Belton from unregulated development on the fringe of the city, which may have a negative impact.

Previously, the only requirement was to pay a tap

fee to the City for a property owner's development to connect to the City's water or sewer system. Outside of the city, customers pay a \$1.25 tax rate for water and sewer services, but the fee does not fund the major capital costs for water and sewer services.

Temple, Austin, and Fort Worth have created similar rules and policies to those Belton created earlier this month.

## Bell County welcomes new public information officer

Special to the Journal

County Judge David Blackburn has appointed Meredith Bender as Bell County's new Public Information Officer.

In this role, Bender will oversee media relations, manage the county's social media platforms, coordinate open records requests, and assist various departments with their communication needs.

Bender brings a diverse background in broadcast journalism, public relations, and law enforcement outreach and communications. A native Texan originally from Dallas, Bender and her husband moved to the area in 2023 and have since embraced the Central Texas region.

"It's truly an honor to serve a county with such deep roots and a strong sense of community," said Bender. "I'm grateful for the opportunity to support

Bell County's mission of transparency and public service."

Judge Blackburn expressed confidence in the appointment, stating, "We are pleased to welcome Meredith to the team. Her experience and dedication to effective communication will be invaluable in representing the county."

For media inquiries, please email Meredith. Bender@bellcounty.texas.gov or call (254) 933.6724.

## Council - From Page A1

located off FM 93 between Belton and Temple.

Also, more than \$1.75 million of vital improvements to the primary Belton lift station must be done, and the second phase of the Loop 121 expansion project requires the relocation of utilities at a cost of \$2.3 million.

The Belton Fire Department must also replace its aerial apparatus for \$1.7 million, and the city will spend \$750,000 to purchase the former Miller Heights Elementary School property.

Each of these projects will be included in the bond when it is released. Even with

a \$6.6 million cash contribution by the city, an additional \$17.7 million is necessary to complete these projects.

According to Rodgers, utility revenue — not property taxes — will be used to pay the debt for the utility projects.

## Voting - From Page A2

seats, as has Clinton Bailey (Place 6), who serves as an alternate on the Building and Standards Commission.

After the filing period closed, candidates had an opportunity to draw for ballot placement, which resulted in:

**Place 5**  
Ty Taggart  
Daniel Bucher  
**Place 6**  
Luke Neale Potts  
Clinton Bailey  
**Place 7**  
Stephanie O'Banion

During this election Belton residents may vote for up to three candidates, one vote for each Place. The candidate with the majority of

votes in each respective Place will be declared the winner. Places differ from districts in that there are no geographical restrictions other than the city limits.

**Special Called Election**  
The Special Called Election will allow residents to vote whether to amend the city's charter regarding the Municipal Court. A vote "For" would change Belton's Municipal Court to a Court of Record where proceedings are recorded and cases with procedural concerns may be appealed. In addition, the amendment would create fixed terms of two or four years for City of Belton municipal judges.

A vote "Against" would maintain the current operations of the municipal court.

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# 1.2 million new striped bass coming to Lake Belton this week

**By David Stone**  
*The Belton Journal*

Lake Belton will become home to a massive number of new hybrid striped bass this week, according to Carl Kittel, program director of the Region 1 fish hatchery in San Marcos.

“For this stocking season, we plan to put about 1.2 million hybrid striped bass fry in Lake Belton,” Kittel said. “That’s all we have planned for new — there are no stockings planned in 2025 for Stillhouse Hollow.”

The Lake Belton stockings will continue a massive move to boost the striped bass population in the Bell County lake. In 2022, Texas Parks & Wildlife introduced 2.2 million Sunshine bass into the lake, and in 2023 more than 400,000 Palmetto and nearly 700,000 Sunshine bass were released.

Last year, 99,855 Lone Star bass fingerlings, 148,620 smallmouth bass fingerlings and 780,255 Sunshine bass found new homes in Lake Belton.

Lone Star bass fingerlings are second-generation offspring of pure Florida

strain ShareLunker largemouth bass that were at least 13 pounds, said Michael Baird, district supervisor for the Waco Inland Fisheries District of Texas Parks & Wildlife.

“They have taken the place of Florida largemouth in our hatcheries and are being stocked statewide,” Baird said. “Lake Belton is a smallmouth bass brood fish source for our state hatcheries, and it consistently gets smallmouth stocked, mainly for that purpose. But it is one of the best smallmouth reservoirs in Texas for angling.”

Sunshine and Palmetto bass are crosses of white and striped bass. Sunshine bass are a hybrid of female white bass and male stripers, and the Palmetto bass are the opposite — a hybrid cross between a male white bass and a female striper.

“In Lake Belton, TPWD typically stocks hybrid bass on an annual basis at 100 fry per acre — and that request shouldn’t change unless there is some unforeseen issue with production or the status of the reservoir,” Kittel said.

“Smallmouth bass are not stocked every year



Courtesy Photo

This week, more than 1.2 million striped bass will be stocked into Lake Belton.

in Belton but were last stocked in 2021 (51,308 fingerlings),” he added. “The smallmouth bass population is strong, and there is some natural recruitment from year to year. Whether or not TPWD stocks small-

ies at Lake Belton in 2024 depends heavily on the status of the reservoir at that time and the outlook for hatchery production of this species.”

In addition to the hybrid striped bass, Lake Bel-

ton also is known for large populations of smallmouth bass and blue catfish.

At Stillhouse, TPWD stocked 63,326 Florida largemouth bass in 2021, 123,165 channel catfish in 2022 and 93,228 Lone Star bass last year.

“TPWD has discontinued Smallmouth Bass stockings at Stillhouse due to poor stocking success and recruitment of fingerlings from previous stockings,” Kittel said.

# Wine pairing fundraiser set for Saturday



Courtesy Photo

Eldred’s Nursery Foundation is hosting a Wine Pairing Fundraiser an evening of wine, food, and giving back on Saturday, April 26, 2025, from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM at The Smith Family Farm House.

*Special to the Journal*

Eldred’s Nursery Foundation invites you to our Wine Pairing Fundraiser—a special evening of wine, food, and giving back—on Saturday, April 26, from 6-9 p.m. at The Smith Family Farm House, located at 3205 Airport Trail, Temple.

Tickets for this important event are \$75 per person and can be purchased by phone at 254-831-3006, in-person at Eldred’s Nursery located at 1220 B North Main St., Belton.

Guests will enjoy a thoughtfully curated selection of fine wines paired with gourmet dishes, all while learning more about the mission and impact of Eldred’s Nursery Foundation. The event promises an unforgettable evening of community, connection, and charity. All proceeds from the fundraiser will go directly toward programs that promote independence, personal growth, and job training for individuals with disabilities.

Eldred’s Nursery Founda-

tion operates not only as a vibrant nursery selling flowers, plants, shrubs, and trees, but also as a transformative job training facility for adults with special needs in Bell County. Since its founding on January 1, 2017, the organization has offered individuals the opportunity to build confidence and gain experience in a supportive work environment. Eldred’s Nursery Foundation was formed on January 1, 2017, not only to be the best nursery in Bell County, Texas, but also to offer individuals with disabilities opportunities by teaching job skills.

The nursery provides a job training facility for people with special needs in Bell County, Texas, and allows community-based opportunities such as communication, social skill development, and interpersonal relationship development with customers and other trainees.

For more information about the Wine Pairing Fundraiser or to learn more about our caring program, call (254) 444-3587.

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# EDITORIAL

## Random Thinks

Pleasant Ramblings • Mark Magnan

Have you ever thought about the first person to wander through a field and saw a fuzzy plant, pulled it up and took a bite of the first carrot? I am sure roots have always been a suitable food, but it takes a brave and hungry person to gnaw on a dirt covered vegetable. Perhaps they spied on rabbits and thought the carrot would be a tasty choice.

Back in the days of cowboys, how did you car-thief-proof your horse? There were no keys or steering wheel locks, so you were just trusting your horse would be safe while you were in the bar drinking and playing cards.

Why are aliens (outer space ones) green and have four fingers?

Again, with the food, who was the hungry soul that stumbled on the first crawfish and decided to cook it and ate it? Was he\* also the one that thought that was not good enough so sucked the whatever out of the head side? (\* I said “he” because I didn’t think a proper lady would have experimented with sucking

the brains out of a crustacean) How long until someone decided to spice up that mixture?

I know we have had some brave test pilots in our country’s history, but how brave was the first guy that flew in a helicopter? “Hey, this thing has no wings!” “It doesn’t need them like other planes, trust me, get in and try it.”

Who decided that regular paper was to be 8.5 X 11 inches? And why is that size illegal and the longer size is legal? Rarely are there books of this size, only documents at offices, and perhaps lawyer offices.

What if the Catch of the Day was not a very edible fish? Would it go to the next fish down the list? What if the catch of the day was a shark and it ate all the other fish you already had?

Can you imagine school picture day at a fancy school before the camera was invented and they used a portrait painter? “Hold still, I will be finished in a week and then we will move onto the next student in line.” Probably

not that practical, but all parents want at least one school picture!

Why do they call it a “throw rug”? Have you ever known someone to throw one? Maybe place one on the floor, maybe trip over one, perhaps cover a bad spot but not really throw one around.

Have you noticed that if you touch your phone in the dark and you are not wanting to see anything it lights up, yet when you want to see the time you have to shake it all around to get it to light up? In the middle of the night you don’t want your phone to light up, much less see the time, well at least I don’t. When I want to actually see the time on my phone I have to move it into every position and it still doesn’t light up.

At what point in time did aliens from another planet come to Earth and steal all the implements we use to peel potatoes? Did they zap our memories so we forgot how good potatoes were without peels in them? I mean you

can rarely find mashed potatoes without peels in them anymore. When did we think that peeling potatoes was too much trouble and the patrons wouldn’t notice? I was raised on real mashed potatoes, or even whipped potatoes. Never at a family table did I have mashed potatoes with the skin in them. I get the argument that the skin has all the vitamins and nutrients, sorry but I ain’t eating mashed potatoes and gravy because it is healthy. I would trust anyone in my family to thoroughly clean the skins of a potato when I was a kid. These days I am not sure that I would believe that someone that doesn’t want to peel a potato would clean the skins well enough for me to eat. I am just looking for a place that makes decent gravy and will peel potatoes.

Why can I swallow a huge pill with just a small bit of water, yet the tiniest pills sticks on the back of my tongue like they were glued there and won’t go down?

Have a thought filled seven days.

## I’m of the opinion

My Front Porch • Lynette Sowell

There’s a saying about opinions that goes something like this: “Opinions are like noses. Everyone has one.” That’s the printable saying, anyway.

It’s true. You don’t have to go far to find opinions popping up, on social media, on the news, at the diner lunch table, at the office water cooler.

One of the best things about being in our country is the fact that nobody can tell us what to write (or not write) in the newspaper.

We’re not fined or taxed or threatened by the government, large or small, as to what we print. At least not around here.

I believe one of the most under-used aspects of the free press is the letter to the editor. It exists to give Joe and Jane Q. Public a chance to share their thoughts about this or that, even if I or anyone else on the news staff don’t agree with them.

We have our regulars, who perhaps once a month

send us their thoughts on politics and other current issues. But I wish we had more people writing letters and bringing their soapbox to us so we can give them a leg up to reach thousands of readers.

It costs nothing except time to write your letter and nothing to get it in print. The only requirement is we must have your name and contact information, although we never print your physical address or phone number.

Local business owners

who are “experts” in their fields can also chime in for a business column. If there is someone who would like to help others via sharing their thoughts in a column, they are welcome, too. Those are topics (no more than 500 words, please) that we print when there is space available.

What are your burning opinions and ideas? Maybe you’re not alone in what you think or have a fresh, creative idea for a solution to a local problem. Maybe

there is an unanswered question for which you’d like to have an answer for. There’s one way to find out. Gather your thoughts together, get a friend to read it over to make sure it flows and you’ve gotten your point across, then put it in an email with your full name, address, and phone number. Send it with the subject line Letter to the Editor to: [news@beltonjournal.com](mailto:news@beltonjournal.com).

Business owners with creative ideas, get your thoughts out there, too. You

may have something great to share with the community such as job hunting tips, real estate advice, tax preparation tips—the sky is the limit, depending on your business.

I’m of the opinion that we need to use our pens—and keyboards—wisely to help make changes, or get questions answered. Looking forward to hearing from you.

## Council OKs update to Mitigation Plan

By David Stone  
The Belton Journal

Belton City Council approved an update to the Bell County Mitigation Plan during Tuesday’s meeting.

“The city of Belton’s participation in this regional planning effort ensures continued eligibility for federal hazard mitigation assistance programs and demonstrates our commitment to reducing the long-term risks and impacts associated with natural and man-made hazards,” said Fire Chief Jon Fontenot.

“Natural hazards, such as severe weather, flooding, drought, and wildfire, have historically impacted the Belton area, causing damage to property, infrastructure, and natural resources,” he said.

According to Fontenot, the Federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 requires local governments to adopt and maintain a FEMA-approved hazard mitigation plan in order to be eligible for certain types of pre- and post-disaster funding through FEMA.

FEMA regulations require these plans to be updated every five years to reflect changes in risks, vulnerabilities, and mitigation strategies.

The updated Bell County Hazard Mitigation Action Plan outlines a comprehensive approach to identifying and reducing hazard risks throughout the County, including in Belton. It provides a vision, goals, and prioritized actions to enhance community resilience and reduce potential disaster impacts.

Also Tuesday, Council authorized the release of nearly 16 acres owned by Mistex Investments from Belton’s Extraterritorial Jurisdiction. The land is situated in the Young Williams Survey.

Council approved an ordinance that establishes requirements for addressing new fences in the city of Belton. This ordinance supplements the existing city codes and closes a gap in the requirements for fencing, including requiring a permit.

According to Belton Planning Director Bob van

Til, fences are regulated by several city codes. Although these codes stipulate height, types of materials, and when a fence is needed (separation between commercial and residential property, for instance), they do not specify location or provide any guidance relative to any potential negative impacts they may cause. A fence permit is currently \$35.

Last year, a property owner installed a fence in the middle of a shared parking lot. The owner placed the fence on his property line, as permitted, even though the property owners had shared the parking lots since the 1960s. The new fence effectively stopped any cross access from one part of the property to the other.

The fence was also installed across a private sidewalk and too close to existing parking spaces, yet not close enough to drastically prohibit the on-site parking circulation in one portion of the parking lot.

Effectively, the fence changed the overall functionality of the parking

system creating a barrier to traffic circulation, parking, and access by public safety personnel, although not to the extent prohibited by city codes.

“The property owner impacted by the fence approached the city for assistance in removing it,” van Til said. “As we examined the case, we discovered that we have no requirements that address this situation, finding that none of our existing requirements were an effective defense in this case.”

“There is no current requirement for a fence permit, which would allow the city to evaluate such issues in advance of construction,” he added. “The impact of this situation, should it be duplicated in other areas, would create unnecessary hardships for the public.”

The ordinance provides requirements that “fill in the gaps” in the overall regulation of fencing and screening, and it requires a permit, an important first step in evaluating the

fence’s compatibility.

It also provides definitions, identifies appropriate materials, locations, cross-references other related ordinances and requirements related to obstructing traffic flow, drainage, other potential safety hazards, and impact on neighboring property.



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Thursday,  
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# LIFESTYLES

THE BELTON JOURNAL

## ASCO Spartacus Dash presents donation to Unbound Now

Special to the Journal

Earlier this year, ASCO Equipment donated all 2024 race day proceeds to Unbound Now. The amount of \$38,000 will aid in freeing our communities of human trafficking.

Employees of ASCO and members of Unbound Now were on hand for the check presentation. In his remarks, Spencer Ridgeway, ASCO Regional VP of Central Texas, shared that he knows how much these funds will assist in the daily operations of the organization to identify and respond to human trafficking in our local area.

Unbound Now is a national nonprofit with 24/7 services across Texas and Louisiana. The 501(c)(3) aims to fight for the protection of the vulnerable, identify the exploited, and advocate for survivors on their path to restoration. Moreover, organizational leaders are passionate about mobilizing communities, including local law enforcement, churches, and professionals across industries to end human trafficking.

The 14th ASCO Spartacus Dash obstacle course event will be held May 24, 2025 and is anticipating more than 400 participants ages 5 years to 105 years willing to run, walk, climb and crawl through three miles of 20 obstacles and mud.

The race begins at 9 a.m. and includes divisions for individuals, families and teams. It welcomes both serious competitors and weekend warriors just looking for some fun.

At the completion of the race each participant receives a medal, t-shirt, post-race food and custom awards will be presented to the top three winners in each age division.



Courtesy Photo

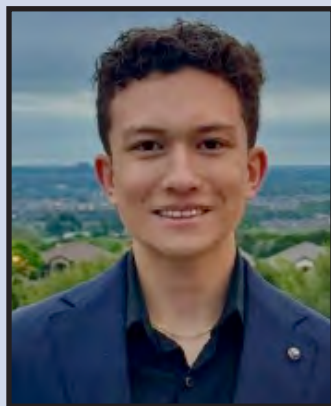
ASCO Equipment employees present a check for \$38,000 to Unbound Now, a local nonprofit that combats human trafficking.

To register, become a sponsor, volunteer or learn more please visit [www.ascospartacusdash.net](http://www.ascospartacusdash.net). Contact us directly via e-mail at [ascospartacusdash@gmail.com](mailto:ascospartacusdash@gmail.com) or 254-340-4577.

## CTRW Scholarship Endowment Foundation



Miss Millye Edwards



Mr. Joshua Veiga

A Scholarship Awards Luncheon was hosted by Central Texas Republican Women on behalf of the CTRW Scholarship Endowment Foundation on Monday, April 21st at The Harris Community Center, Belton Texas. Two scholarships were awarded in the amount of \$1000.00 each. This year's recipient of The Kitty Pope Scholarship is Millye Edwards. Millye is the daughter of Tanya and Marcus Edwards. She resides in Salado and will be graduating from Salado Highschool this year. Mylee will

be attending Texas A&M University this fall. Her field of study will be Agricultural Economics. The second recipient of The Sonny Pope Scholarship is Joshua Veiga. Joshua is the son of Sooky and William Veiga. He resides in Harker Heights and will be graduating from Harker Heights Highschool this year. Joshua will be attending University of Texas at Austin this fall. His field of study will be International Relations and Global Studies. Congratulations to this year's winners.

## Mother's Day Tea set for Saturday

By **DAVID TUMA**  
The Belton Journal

A Mother's Day Tea will be held at the Harris Community Center on Saturday, April 26<sup>th</sup> at 2 p.m. It is open to all family members, husbands and children, both young and grown, are welcome. A family last year had four generations attending.

More than 60 residents and their mothers attended the first-ever Mother's Day Tea last year.

Tea and refreshments are provided; there will be at least 10 tables set up for the event. There will be finger sandwiches, scones, cookies, and pastries. Crafts and coloring sheets for children will be provided.

"We kept getting feedback from the father-daughter dance about doing something for mothers and their daughters. I wanted to make the event

for all moms so they could bring their adult children. Our Belton Youth Advisory Committee will be serving tea. I think this event is a nice way to honor that special woman in your life. We have several repeats from last year. It was an enjoyable and delightful afternoon last year," said Charisse Bennett, Events and Marketing Coordinator for Belton's Parks Department.

Anybody there could tell the little girls attending had a blast all dressed up for tea last year.

"The smaller children loved it. There was a coloring station where they colored Mother's Day cards for Mom," said Bennett. Sweet Adelines International and the Chisholm Trial Chorus Group will provide entertainment.

Bennett and the staff at Parks and Recreation worked on the event for a year.



Courtesy photo

Mothers and children will have a photo opportunity as one of the fun activities at this year's Mother's Day Tea, set for Saturday, April 26 at the Harris Community Center.

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# TxDOT says ‘not yet’ to River Fair, Main traffic light

By David Stone  
The Belton Journal

Belton residents hoping for a traffic light at the intersection of River Fair Boulevard and North Main will have to wait at least a little longer, Assistant City Manager Matt Bates recently told the City Council.

“The city met with TxDOT staff and analyzed data from a recent traffic study,” Bates said. “While the answer isn’t a firm ‘No,’ it is a ‘Not Yet.’ Several factors contributed to TxDOT’s determination, including the intersection’s proximity to the Main Street and Lake Road signal, and current traffic volumes that do not meet the required threshold for a new signal installation.”

The study was conducted by Dallas-based Lee Engineering, and the city partnered with Belton developer Barge Properties, which has developments in progress near the intersection. Typically, TxDOT requires at least 1,400 feet between signalized intersections but exceptions exist when warranted, Bates said.

In late 2024, Belton was approached by the Barge Properties team regarding two new retail developments along N. Main Street — McDonald’s and Panda Express — following the recently completed Starbucks and Wendy’s developments. Each of these new developments was required to conduct a Traffic Impact Analysis to assess their impact on traffic in the area.

According to Bates, the city recommended that the Barge team conduct a single, comprehensive study to evaluate the entire area’s traffic conditions, building upon a previous study conducted in 2012. This approach would highlight both the near-term impacts of the two new restaurants and the longer-term effects of further development on Barge Ranch, including future phases of RiverPlace.

The Barge Properties team agreed to this proposal, and the cost of the study was split equally among the city, Barge Properties, and McDonald’s.

City staff and Lee Engineering consulted with TxDOT officials early in the Traffic Impact Analysis process regarding the potential for adding a traffic signal at this location.

TxDOT was not receptive to the idea because of the proximity of existing traffic signals at Lake Road and Main Street. Those signals are less than 750 feet apart, far short of the required 1,400 feet.

“The analysis recommended a traffic signal at the Main Street and River Fair Boulevard location only after a full traffic signal warrant analysis confirms the need,” Bates said. “We could conduct another warrant analysis after McDonald’s, Panda Express, and the remaining phases of the Cottages development are completed and operational — possibly by the end of 2026 — but higher traffic volumes are needed to justify a signal here.”

“From a community standpoint, we feel this signal is needed,” Bates added. “It’s hard to cross that area without a signal. But the study did not show a need. We put a ‘but’ at the end of that — one day soon it will be needed once more development is in place.”

“We will likely do another analysis in a year.”

# How students can manage finals week stress

Graduation season is often characterized as a joyous time for students and their families. There’s truth to such characterizations, as students, their parents, siblings, and other loved ones see graduation as the culmination of years of hard work. That hard work continues right up to the end, as finals week can be a trying time for students looking to finish a school year, and perhaps their academic careers, with a flourish.

Finals week may precede the celebratory graduation season, but this period can be uniquely stressful for students. A 2022 survey examining stress in college conducted by the American Addiction Center found that more than 89 percent of respondents felt stress from exams, while nearly three in four indicated studying was stress-inducing. Stress can sometimes be a good thing, as Firdaus Dhabhar, Ph.D., a one-time director of the Stanford Center on Stress & Health and now a professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the Miller School of Medicine at the University of Miami, noted in a 2012 interview that acute stress might actually translate to improved mental performance. That means the acute stress students feel during finals week might actually compel them to perform better on their exams.

The potential benefits of acute stress on academic performance might be music to the ears of students, but it’s important that they also find healthy ways to manage stress during finals week. In recognition of the importance of finding healthy ways to manage stress, the American Psychological Association offers

the following tips to students.

- **Get sufficient sleep.** Late-night cramming sessions may ensure students leave no stone unturned leading up to a final exam, but the APA notes sleep is essential for physical and emotional well-being. The Sleep Foundation urges college-aged students to get between seven and nine hours of sleep per night. The APA notes that limiting screen use at night and storing devices in rooms other than a bedroom are some methods to facilitate sleep.
- **Take time out to exercise.** Studying may dominate students’ time during finals week, but finding time to break a sweat can be a particularly effective tool in the fight against stress. The United Kingdom-based Mental Health Foundation notes that research indicates low-intensity aerobic exercise performed for 30 to 35 minutes three to five days a week can boost mood and improve alertness. Such rewards can be especially beneficial to students confronting the stress of finals week.
- **Prioritize healthy eating.** College students and their high school counterparts are notorious for favoring poor diets. But a shift toward a more nutritious diet can help combat the stress of finals week and actually make it easier to study. For example, Campus Health at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill notes that the vitamins and minerals found in fruits, leafy greens and other vegetables neutralize the harmful molecules produced when a body is under stress. In addition, foods high in fiber have been associated with greater alertness and decreased perceived

stress. It might be a lot to ask high school and college students to eat healthy all the time, but doing so during finals week might make finishing the school year strong a lot easier.

Finals week is stressful for students. Thankfully, there are many ways students can overcome the stress they feel at the end of a school year.



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Application period now open for City of Belton-Waste Management scholarships

Special to the Journal

The submission period is open for high school seniors interested in competing for a City of Belton-Waste Management scholarship.

This year a total of \$4,000 in scholarships will be distributed by the City of Belton and Waste Management, provided applicants meet all of the requirements.

The scholarship is open to graduating seniors living within the Belton-Waste Management service area, which is comprised of addresses within the Belton city limits and Three Creeks. Applicants may attend any area school.

To verify eligibility, visit this page <https://belton.maps.arcgis.com/apps/InformationLookup/index.html?appid=94a4b259f3394d07a2802395d784ae32> and type in your address. You are eligible if your address generates.

The Scholarship Application is available online. Please submit completed applications with supporting documents electronically. Contact Paul Romer, [promer@beltontexas.gov](mailto:promer@beltontexas.gov) or 254-933-5889, with any questions.

The application deadline is 5 p.m. on Sunday, May 4, 2025. Late applications will not be considered.

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Dr. Jack Welch  
From the Bleachers

“I Told You  
So” – The  
Rise of  
Payton Pardee

Occasionally, greatness appears before you. It’s not always fully formed, but it’s recognizable. Even when growth is still required, you can just tell, it’s in there, waiting to be developed.

During my coaching career, I encountered two young men I believed were destined to become the youngest head coaches in college or professional football. One was Major Applewhite, who fulfilled that prediction by becoming the youngest head coach in college football. The other was Payton Pardee. Ironically, Applewhite was Pardee’s head coach at the University of Houston. I suppose some things are just meant to be.

I first met Payton when I was coaching at Texas A&M University-Commerce, now known as East Texas A&M University. He had just started his coaching career as a graduate assistant. After only a few spring practices, I sat down with him and said something I didn’t say lightly:

“Payton, I believe you’re going to be the youngest, or one of the youngest, head coaches in college or professional football.” It was clear even then. From the very beginning, his work ethic, how he connected with people, his desire to learn, and most of all, his humble, s -hearted nature set him apart. He didn’t talk about being great. He just showed up and did the work, extraordinary work, at that.

And then, just like that, he began to soar. In his very first year as a GA, he was elevated to wide receivers coach. Within another year, he was hired full-time as the tight ends coach. After only three years of college coaching, legendary coach Wade Phillips brought him into the professional ranks with the XFL’s Houston Roughnecks. Payton served as the wide receivers coach, and after just one season, he was promoted to Special Teams Coordinator while still coaching receivers.

When the XFL merged with the USFL, Coach Phillips became

See **WELCH**,  
Page B3

BISD sending three to State Championship track meet

By Clay Whittington  
The Belton Journal

A state title is within the reach of three Belton ISD athletes.

Weeks of postseason competition will come to a conclusion May 2, when hundreds converge at Austin’s Mike A. Myers Stadium for the annual University Interscholastic League Track & Field State Championships.

Among the contingency will be two Belton standouts and a Lady Broncos pole vaulter.

At last weekend’s Region II-5A meet, Lady Tigers senior Olivia Brillhart and Lake Belton senior Abigail Rydberg captured gold medals in their respective events, and as a result, also qualified for the state meet.

Brillhart, a distance runner, was first to finish the 3,200-meter run, completing the race in 10 minutes, 55.68 seconds, while Rydberg cleared 11 feet, 6 inches to win the pole vault.

Along with placing first or second in an event, participants also advanced by having the next best showing from

across the four regional meets, which is how Belton junior Christian Porter earned his state berth.

Porter was third in the 400 at the regional meet, posting a time of 47.85, and he will enter the event with the field’s third fastest seed time. At state, Porter will compete at 7 p.m.

Brillhart, who is the fourth seed, will start at 9:30 a.m., and Rydberg will begin at 3 p.m. She is tied for the sixth seed.

While the season ended for all but three individuals, both Belton and Lake Belton experienced additional success at the regional meet.

During the course of two days at Arlington’s Maverick Stadium, the Lady Tigers amassed 17 points to place 12th in the final standings.

Along with her win in the 3,200, Brillhart placed third in the 1,600 with a time of 5:10.55, and the outings were complemented by a pair of teammates.

Damauria Nolan-Hemphill, a sophomore, delivered a sixth-place finish in the 200 (24.83), and she was

10th (16-8½) in the long jump, while Belton junior Laila Page placed eighth (9-6) in the pole vault.

Lake Belton landed just three spots back after scoring a dozen points to finish in a three-way tie with Carrollton Smith and Melissa for 15th overall.

Kiely Camacho, a junior, complemented Rydberg by delivering a fifth-place time of 15.54 in the 100 hurdles, while the 800 relay quartet of Chelsie Miller, Aleya Russell, Nylah Berrian and Bella Garcia was seventh (1:41.60).

Sophomore high jumper Danika Kelley (12th, 5-0) completed the Lady Broncos’ performance.

Red Oak emerged with the team title, scoring 78 points to beat out McKinney North (2nd, 76) and Lucas Lovejoy (3rd, 56).

In the boys division, McKinney North easily claimed the championship with 88 points – 35 more than second-place Lovejoy (53). Frisco Heritage was third (52).

With 11 points, the Tigers tied

Frisco Lebanon Trail and Frisco Emerson for 14th place as four more were among the top 10 of their respective events.

Logan Lamberte, a senior, was fourth (14-0) in the pole vault, Porter was sixth (22.11) in the 200, sophomore Graham Chambley was seventh (14.85) in the 110 hurdles, and senior Joshua Roberts was 10th (12-6) in the pole vault.

Senior distance runner John Zachary Moehlenbrock was 12th (2:01.10) in the 800.

Julian Walker had the Broncos’ top finish, placing third (22-6½) in the long jump, while fellow seniors Michael Frazier and Travellis Harrison were seventh (triple jump, 44-1¼) and 13th (discus, 137-11), respectively.

Additionally, sophomore Michael Lockett was part of the high jump competition, but he did not produce a mark.

Lake Belton scored six points and finished in a tie for 23rd with Dallas Hillcrest, Hallsville, Terrell and Frisco Wakeland.

Lady Tigers begin playoff  
run with three game series

By Clay Whittington  
The Belton Journal

The Lady Tigers begin their Class 5A, Division II playoff run Friday, when they open a best-of-three series against Crandall.

First pitch for Game 1 is set for 6 p.m. with Game 2 starting at noon Saturday. If necessary, a deciding Game 3 will take place approximately 30 minutes following the conclusion of Game 2.

All three games will take place at Whitney High School.

While advancing will be difficult, Belton enters the postseason with momentum after winning each of its last four games.

The streak began with an 11-0 victory at Killeen Chaparral that ended in six innings.

Tara Stone earned the pitching victory, collecting eight strikeouts and allowing

only three hits along the way.

Offensively, the Lady Tigers connected for 14 hits thanks in part to Andalyn Logan and Stone each going 3 for 4 at the plate, while teammate Reagan Stuart posted a team-high three RBIs.

Then, on Tuesday, Belton cruised into a three-way tie for second place in the district standings by traveling to Killeen Elison and emerging with a one-sided 20-0 win.

In three innings of competition, Hailey Schutz, Presli Thompson, Jacklyn Munoz, Aubrey Lynch, Addison Reed, Stuart and Stone each recorded a perfect batting average.

Other highlights included Stone’s four RBIs, Munoz’s five stolen bases and pitcher Hanna Wheeler’s six strikeouts.

See **LADY TIGERS**,  
Page B3

Lake Belton Softball earns  
thrilling win over Cedar Ridge

By: Aries Ramos  
The Belton Journal

The Lake Belton Broncos softball team showed exactly why they’re a playoff threat in their latest matchup, battling through adversity to pull off a thrilling 4-3 comeback win over Cedar Ridge.

After falling behind early, the Broncos stayed poised and executed when it mattered most, something head coach Kelsie McEachern said the team has been preparing for all season.

“Last night we faced some adversity and we haven’t in a long time,” McEachern said. “I think we played hard and showed some fight while still finding ways to do the little things in big moments. We needed that game last night going into the playoffs.”

Down 2-0 heading into the fifth inning, the Broncos began chipping away. A well-executed first-and-third play, something the team practices frequently, cut the deficit to one run. The fundamental momentum shift came in the sixth. Lake Belton loaded the bases and forced Cedar Ridge to bring back their ace, but the Broncos had already created

enough pressure to tilt the game. They scored three runs in the inning on a mix of walks, a hit-by-pitch, an error, and a passed ball.

“At this point, we had created chaos, and you could see a shift in the momentum,” said McEachern.

Several players stepped up in key moments. Alexis Ortiz went 2-for-4, helping to move runners and maintain offensive pressure. Madison Perkins got the Broncos going early with a double and later came through in a clutch moment by getting hit by a pitch to bring in a run. On the mound, Natalie Hosh came in to close the game in the seventh, helping turn a double play and shutting the door on a potential rally.

While the Broncos came away with the win, Coach McEachern noted areas that need improvement, particularly at the plate. “We need to be more consistent,” she said. “We had too many strikeouts, and we aren’t forcing the defense to do anything.”

Looking ahead, the Broncos are shifting into playoff mode with a win-or-go-home

See **LAKE**,  
Page B3

Bronco Baseball locks up fifth consecutive district title; Holland deals no-hitter

By Tony Adams  
The Belton Journal

The Lake Broncos Baseball team continued to press onward toward the postseason this week, as they visited Chaparral Friday evening in Killeen and University on Tuesday evening in Waco.

Lake spotted the Bobcats a run in the first inning. However, the Broncos scored in five of the next six innings on their way to a 9-1 win.

Maverik Maddux pitched six innings in the win, allowed an unearned run on five hits, struck out ten and walked two. Ely Vaughan pitched a scoreless seventh to slam the door.

Bryce Davis led the Broncos with three hits

and two RBI. Cooper Mees, and Logan Winkler each had two hits, and Jory Holland scored twice.

On Tuesday, Lake’s offense provided an eight-run fourth inning, and Brandon Holley fired a five-inning no-hitter as the Broncos shut

See **BASEBALL**,  
Page B3

Belton ISD golf  
ends season at  
Regional tourney

By Clay Whittington  
The Belton Journal

Needing to place among the top three teams in order to advance to the upcoming University Interscholastic League State Tournament, both Belton ISD squads fell shy of the lofty goal.

After dominating the District 16 competition, the Tigers and Broncos were unable to maintain the momentum at Pottsboro’s Tanglewood Golf Course, placing eighth and 10th, respectively.

Led by senior Daniel Perkins, Belton posted a two-day total of 664, while Lake Belton finished a mere four strokes back with a 668. The score tied the Broncos with Frisco Emerson in the final standings.

Paced by Perkins’ 32nd-place score of 161, the Tigers’ total was partially rounded out by three more seniors, who witnessed successful careers end.

Haden Hoelscher and Chase Aggers finished with identical scores of 169 to tie for 45th overall, while Miguel Matos was 65th with a 176.

Owen Babcock, a junior, was 63rd, shooting a 175.

The quintet helped Belton hoist its 16th district championship in the last 18 years and gave the program its 18th consecutive trip to the regional tournament.

Lake Belton delivered a balanced showing as all five players finished within

four strokes of each other.

Jackson Null, a junior, had the Broncos’ best performance with a 166 to place 39th individually, while junior Miles Parker (44th, 168), junior Jack Brown (45th, 169) and seniors Nicholas Brooks (tied 50th, 170) and Rawley Soliz (tied 50th, 170) followed.

Furthermore, competing as medalists, sophomore Austin Watson (42nd, 167) and senior Hudson Nix (56th, 171) represented Lake Belton.

With matching totals of 584, Prosper Walnut Grove and Dallas Highland Park split the team championships and secured spots at state along with Dallas Highland Park’s second team (3rd, 587).

The Tigers and Broncos earned their regional berths by finishing atop the district tournament standing.

Belton clinched the team title with a 635, while Lake Belton was the event’s runner-up, sitting 11 strokes back.

Parker edged out Perkins for the individual championship by a single stroke with a 153.

The remainder of the Tigers were all also situated among the field’s top 10 as the squad emerged from the event with two medals highlighted by Perkins’ runner-up outing consisting of back-to-back rounds of 77.


Hoelscher shot a 158 to place third, and Babcock was fourth (161).



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# Plaque in late Danny Spradley’s honor dedicated

By **Tony Adams**  
*The Belton Journal*


The Class 4A Belton Tigers baseball championship in 1994 was a special time in Belton ISD athletics. It was back in a time where the district that the Tigers played in was loaded with talent and only two teams made the playoffs.

The District 25-4A winner in 1994, Belton was coached by David Tidwell, who was named 4A Coach of the Years and who Tiger Stadium was named for a couple of years ago.

He was assisted by

Danny Spradley, who passed away in December, current Belton head coach Mark Krueger, and long-time athletic trainer Craig Bower. Members of the team included Robbie Aguilar, Darren Brinkley, Alex Cortez, Shayne Drake, Michael Jones, Mark Lechowicz, Michael Locklin, Willie Mahan, John Munz, Doug Oltmer, Jason Regan, Brock Rumfield, Josh Sammon, Bobby Spradley, David Stroud, Scott Thrush, Kyle Tidwell, Brad Turner,


See **DANNY**,  
Page B3



**DANNY SPRADLEY**  
Varsity Baseball Assistant Coach  
1991-2000

His true legacy lives on in the countless lives he touched, the invaluable lessons he imparted, and the unwavering values he instilled in every player who wore the jersey. He had a genuine heart for each individual, ensuring they always felt loved, valued, and supported. With steadfast dedication, he continually challenged his players to rise above every obstacle, push beyond their limits, and pursue excellence in all aspects of their lives.

**B**



**Financial moves for a growing family**

Scot Hrbacek, CFP® Financial Advisor

If you’re adding a child to your family, it’s an exciting time, but you’ll want to be prepared — especially in terms of your finances. So, consider these moves:

First, estimate what new expenses you’ll incur and plug these figures in to your budget. And look at what support you might get, such as paid family leave, for taking time off work.

As early as possible, look around for a child care provider. Child care can be expensive, but you might find low-cost options from local community centers, religious organizations and nonprofits.

You may want to build an emergency fund to cover six months of living expenses, with the money

kept in a liquid, low-risk account.

And contact your tax professional to learn about the dependent care credit and the federal child tax credit.

Also, think about education planning. Among other options, consider a tax-advantaged 529 education savings plan.

You’ll want to add your new child to your health insurance plan or obtain a new plan. You might also need to add to your life insurance and get disability coverage.

Bringing a new child into your life is joyful — and by being financially prepared, you can make the whole experience even more rewarding.

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

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# Big week for Tiger Baseball leading up to playoffs

By **Tony Adams**  
*Belton Journal*

The Belton Tigers baseball team continued its District 16-5A schedule on Friday and Tuesday, as they hosted Ellison and Waco at Tidwell Field.

Tigers’ patient plate approaches led to a 13-run second inning, eight-run fourth inning, and seven Eagle errors that led to 14 unearned runs as Belton run-ruled Ellison in five innings, 23-1.

Jacob Quigley led the Tigers with five runs batted in, Trey Garcia had three runs batted in and four runs scored, Will Shepard scored four

times, and Oakley Torres added three hits.

Quigley pitched four innings for the win, as he pitched four innings, allowed a run on three hits, struck out ten and walked two. Billy Young pitched an inning in relief, allowed one hit and struck out three.

On Tuesday, Belton scored in all four offensive innings as the Tigers shut out Waco in four-and-a-half innings, 13-0.

Garcia had three RBI, Gage Flores had two runs batted in, and Pecos Smith scored three times in the win.

Cole Heisler pitched a four-hit

shutout over five innings, struck out nine and walked two in the win.

At the conclusion of Tuesday night’s action, Lake Belton is 9-0, Belton is 6-3, Chaparral and University are 5-4, Waco High is 2-7, and Ellison is 0-9.

District 15-5A, 16-5A’s bi-district playoff partner, have one game left in district play. Their standings: Midlothian Heritage (11-2), Midlothian (10-3), Corsicana (9-4), Red Oak and Ennis (7-6), Kaufman (5-8), Crandall (3-10), and Terrell (0-13).

The Tigers end the regular season against the Lions on Friday at the Waco ISD Complex.

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## Danny - From Page B2

Brad Washburn, Matt Wood, and bat boy David Spradley.

“The team was a special group,” David Tidwell said of the coaching staff and team. “It was one cohesive unit. One of the best coaching staffs that I had during that time.”

Danny Spradley’s contributions to the Big Red Community are now memorialized with a plaque in his honor that is now mounted on the first-base dugout at Tidwell Field.

The Tigers started their 1994 run with an 8-0 win over Austin Travis in the bi-district round, took two out of three games in a tight area series with Austin Westlake (6-5, 3-4, 5-4), outlasted Corpus Christi Calallen two out of three (2-6, 8-6, 16-4) in the regional semifinal, and won two of three from Robstown (1-0, 5-6, 13-1) in the regional final to qualify for the state tournament at Disch Falk Field.

Belton rallied from behind to knock off Carthage 9-5, with Regan hitting the “Shot Heard Around Texas”. The Tigers won the state crown with a 4-0 shutout of Big Spring.

Spradley played a key leadership

role not only in the team aspect, but also as a respected educator.

“Everything good I have in my life can be traced back to Coach Spradley never giving up on me,” former Belton coach Jeremy Engelke said. “He took a very lost boy and gave me the tools necessary to get on the right track. He worked side by side with Mrs. Crowson to get through to me. Sometimes. it involved the swat board and I’m forever grateful for each lick. I needed them. Needed the tough love-and he provided it.

“Coach Spradley, or “Thunder Dan” as a lot of us 99’ers called him, was a gentle yet stern father figure for many of us,” former Tiger Thomas Melvin said. “He always enjoyed a good laugh but made sure we knew how to have fun and do it with class. He taught us to be tough when needed but also had a vulnerable and loving side that he wasn’t ashamed of. He was as genuine as genuine gets and that showed through in every player he ever coached. My first memory of Coach Spradley was when I was in elementary school. He would always

honk or wave at me as I was riding my oversized ten-speed bike to school. My first interaction with him wasn’t long afterwards on a cold rainy day, when I had to walk to school because my bike was broken. He pulled over and gave me a ride. He asked about me, and if I played any sports. Little did he know the impact he would have on a future Tiger. Not only did he inspire me to continue playing, but he is another reason I continue to coach today. There is no doubt I fall short in what he accomplished, but I hope I can continue to spread his legacy through the passion and dedication he showed me in my continued efforts. I will miss Coach Spradley dearly, but his love and commitment to kids will always be remembered.

Spradley’s coaching style was firm and fair, but in the thick of things, he was one of the most beloved coaches in the history Belton ISD athletics

“I will leave with one of his favorite quotes, and he had many!” Melvin said. “Hit your stinking’ cut-off man!”

## Lake - From Page B1

mentality. McEachern emphasized the importance of being aggressive and capitalizing on their postseason experience, even with a younger roster.

“It’s playoffs, so it’s win or go home,” McEachern said. “We may have a young team, but they have a lot of playoff experience from last season. We hope to use this all to our advantage.”

Their upcoming opponent poses a formidable challenge, boasting a strong presence on the mound and a solid lineup of bats. McEachern said preparation this

week will be more opponent-specific while staying true to what has brought the team success all season.

“Our pitchers want to keep the ball in the park. Our offense is trying to get on base by any means. We want to use our speed,” she said. “If we can strike from the beginning, then I know we are going to be tough to beat.”

With playoff intensity rising, the Broncos look to carry their momentum forward and continue proving they belong among the best in the region.

## Baseball - From Page B1

out the Trojans, 11-0.

Rohde Smith scored on a passed ball in the first inning, and Davis scored on the passed ball in the second to give the Broncos a 2-0 lead.

Lake broke the game open in the top of the fourth. Cole Mikulas’ two-run single and subsequently scoring on a wild pitch set up Cameron Bartz’s RBI single. Bartz scored on a wild pitch and Mees’ single brought in Smith. Mees and Zavian Rodriguez scored on passed balls to lift the Broncos’ lead to ten.

Ty Green’s ground out scored Holland to cap the scoring.

Mikulas had two RBI, Mees had two hits, and Smith and Davis each scored twice.

Holley struck out two and walked one, as he needed just 50 pitches over five innings in the win.

The Broncos’ fifth consecutive district baseball championship ties Bronco Softball with five straight titles.

Lake has a 50-game district winning streak dating back to 2022,

which is tied for the second-longest streak in school history with Bronco Softball who had a 58-game district winning streak.

It will be a busy weekend for Lake, as they will play three games in four days. The Broncos will host University at Bronco Park on Friday. Lake will play a pair of road tune-up games at Leander Rouse on Saturday and at Waco Midway on Monday. The Broncos defeated Midway 2-1 and 3-2 on Feb. 22 and Rouse 5-4 on April 12.

## Lady Tigers - From Page B1

The outcome gave the Lady Tigers a final District 16 record of 6-4, placing them in a deadlock with the Lady Bobcats and Waco University, and set them up with a tiebreaker versus the Lady Trojans the following morning.

Playing at Lake Belton

— home of the undefeated district champion Lady Broncos (10-0) — Belton defeated University 4-1 behind another strong showing from Stone, who had nine strikeouts in the seven-inning performance.

Iris Molina led the team offensively with a pair

of RBIs.

In advance of the bi-district round, the Lady Tigers faced Liberty Hill in a warm-up game, earning a 6-4 win.

Lauren Vazquez and Stone led the way by each going 2 for 3, while Logan and Stone were each respon-

sible for three-run home runs.

On the mound, Wheeler and Stuart combined to allow no earned runs.

With a series victory against Crandall, Belton would advance to face either Mesquite Poteet or Dallas Jefferson in the area round.

## Welch - From Page B1

head coach of the San Antonio Brahmas. Naturally, he took Payton with him. And in their second season, just after the second game, Payton was promoted to Offensive Coordinator.

Then, in a turn of events no one wanted to see, Coach Phillips had to step away for health reasons. The league wasted no time promoting the widely respected Payton Pardee to interim head coach. At just 28 years old, he made history, becoming the youngest head coach ever in professional

football.

People like to say, “You were lucky” when success comes. They say it to players after great performances, or to colleagues who get promoted. But here’s the truth: luck is often just preparation meeting opportunity.

Payton made his own luck through tireless work, an eagerness to grow, and by treating others with humility and respect. He listens more than he speaks. He asks why. He seeks understanding. And he’s never afraid to serve

others as he leads.

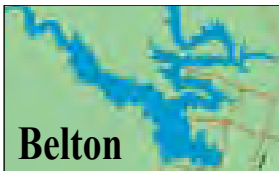
So yes, it is with deep joy that I get to say to him today, with a smile on my face: “I told you so.” Keep soaring like the eagle you are, Payton. The sky is just the beginning.

**Thought for the week,** “*Success is where preparation and opportunity meet.*”  
**Bobby Unser**

*Dr. Jack Welch is an educator and professional football coach. His doctorate*

*is in educational administration, and he has been an educator, administrator, and football coach, mentoring young minds, for over 40 years. He is also the author of Foundations of Coaching. He can be reached at jackwelch1975@gmail.com.*

## FISHING REPORT



**Belton**  
FAIR. Water stained; 59 degrees; 2.80 feet below pool. White bass fishing on Lake Belton exists in three distinct areas. There are spawning fish in the upper reaches of the Leon River and Cowhouse Creek. Immature fish which did not spawn and mature fish which have returned from spawning are in shallow water under low light conditions at sunrise and for about an hour thereafter, and at sunset and about an hour prior to it. This is typically in under 16 feet of water where the water temperature is significantly warmer than the water temperature at 25 feet and deeper. Finally, there are fish in deeper, clearer, cooler water from 250-40 feet deep. These fish are much more sluggish and still require wintertime tactics. The shallow fish can be caught throwing MAL Originals with chartreuse tails using a sawtooth method by letting the lure drop to bottom, reeling in 7 times, letting it drop again, and repeating. Deeper fish can be targeted with a 5/8-ounce white bladed Hazy Eye Slabs in conjunction with forward facing sonar. Allow the lure to settle to the bottom, reel it slowly and smoothly up five turns watching sonar for a follow. Report by Bob Maindelle, Holding the Line Guide Service. Catfish are excellent. Anglers should search for blue catfish in river channels and around steep ledges in 20-35 feet of water. Larger cut baits have been effective for trophy size fish. Eater fish under 10 pounds are active and slow drifting with small cut shad along sand flats will produce.



**Stillhouse**  
GOOD. Water stained; 59 degrees; 3.50 feet below pool. Your best bet on white bass on Stillhouse is to avoid the crowds and take a weekday trip up into the Lampasas River. Look for schools of white bass using sonar in sharp river bends and deeper holes. If your craft can make it past the gravel crossing and into the spawning rifles, flyfishing gear works best to present small gray streamers to imitate river minnows using a sinking tip line and a flat, 6 foot leader of 8 pound test fluorocarbon. Those looking for white bass on the main lake should focus on the middle and lower third of the reservoir, looking for adult fish returning from spawning along the flats adjacent to the river channel. The white, three-quarter ounce Bladed Hazy Eye Slab will excel for this application. Largemouth bass continue to move shallower with the spring warm-up. Medium sized soft plastics 6-8 inches in length with dark, natural hues fished with a Carolina rig are producing well. Report by Bob Maindelle, Holding the Line Guide Service.

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John A. Crane, State Bar No. 05006490, 5508 W Hwy 290, Suite 225, Austin, Texas 78735, (512) 469-9444 Fax:, (877) 469-9439 Attorney for Silke Rosemarie Dye 04.24

**THE STATE OF TEXAS**  
**CITATION BY PUBLICATION**  
**CASE NUMBER 25078**  
To: VADA FRANCIS SUTTON  
Benjamin D. Burnett Successor Guardian of the Estate, on April 16, 2025, filed an Account for Final Settlement, Request for Compensation, and Request for Reimbursement of Expenses in a proceeding styled:, Deceased, and bearing the number 25078 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 April 24, 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: Benjamin D. Burnett, 15 N Main Street, Temple, Texas 76501  
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 April 16, 2025.  
Shelley Coston County Clerk of Bell County, Texas, PO Box 480, 1201 Huey Road, Belton, TX 76513

LEGALS

By: Delainy Treadway Deputy 04.24

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**  
Notice is given that original Letters of Testamentary for the Estate of Mary Lee Richardson aka Mary L. Richardson, were issued on March 5, 2025, in Cause No. 25CPB00066, pending in the County Court at Law Number 1 of Bell County, Texas, to Genera Denise Miller  
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 Genera Denise Miller Independent Executor, 3914 Stone Creek Dr., Harker Heights, TX 76548  
DATED the 16th day of April 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@thetisdalelawfirm.com 04.24

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Pursuant to Texas Health and Safety Code 775.015, the County Clerk of Bell County, Texas hereby provides notice of a public hearing to be held on the creation of the proposed Bell County Emergency Services District No 3. **This public hearing will be held at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at the Bell County Historic Courthouse, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Courtroom, at 191 E. Central Avenue in Belton, Texas.** Each person who has an interest in the creation of the district may attend the hearing and present grounds for or against the creation of the district. A petition for the creation of an emergency services district has been filed with the County Clerk of Bell County, Texas and the creation of an emergency services district is proposed. The district is to be created and is to operate under Article III, Section 48-e of the Texas Constitution, as proposed by S.J.R. No. 27, Acts of the 70<sup>th</sup> Legislature, Regular Session, 1987 and adopted by the voters at an election held November 3, 1987. The name of the proposed district is **Bell County Emergency Services District No. 3.** It is to be created and is to operate under Article III, Section 48-e, Texas Constitution, and Chapter 775, Texas Health and Safety Code, for the provision of fire suppression and medical response in response to an emergency situation in accordance with the authority granted to emergency service districts under Chapter 775 of the Texas Health and Safety Code. The district's boundary map is attached hereto, and incorporated herein for all purposes as Exhibit A. Upon request, the metes and bounds are available for public viewing in the County Clerk's office during regular business hours and on the public notices page of our website at [https://www.bellcountytexas.com/publicnotice\\_list.php](https://www.bellcountytexas.com/publicnotice_list.php).



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**APRIL**

04/23: Fun Lunch	04/28: Well -Read Women; Monday
04/24: 42 Dominoes	Canasta
04/26: Jimmy's Egg	04/30: Crochet and Knit

**MAY**

05/01: Dominoes	05/16: Trailblazers Walking Group
05/05: Chat 'N' Canasta	05/17: Exploring Wines
05/06: Footloose Singles	05/19: Well-Read Women; Snack Time
05/07: Monthly Luncheon; Popcorn	Mahjong
Bridge	05/20: Bunco
05/08: 42 Dominoes	05/21: Popcorn Bridge
05/09: TGIF	05/22: 42 Dominoes
05/10: Couples Night Out	05/26: Monday Canasta
05/12: Bookworms	05/27: Singing Bluebonnets
05/13: Singing Bluebonnets	05/28: Crochet and Knit; Fun Lunch
05/15: Nonfiction Book Club; 42	05/29: 42 Dominoes
Dominoes	05/31: Jimmy's Egg

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

**CAC announces 2025 concert lineups**

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.

*Here's a look at the 2025 Texas Music Series:*

**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.

**MPR Explorers Social - Apr 24**

Join the MPR Explorers for a "Conversation Over Coffee" and meet & greet the MPR City Council/Mayor Candidates. Remember, local elections matter! 9:00 a.m. to Noon at Garrett & Mic Hill Event Center (60 Morgan's Point Blvd., Morgan's Point Resort) Email [library@mptx.us](mailto:library@mptx.us) with any questions.

**Bell County Master Gardeners Association's Herb Interest Study Group Round Table Discussion: Lemon Balm - May 8**

The purpose is for all persons with this interest to pursue greater knowledge of each and every herb (defined as any plant with a use in addition to its beauty). The Coordinator arranges for the meetings and the topics, with all others expected to lead, in turn, on one or more topics, while the rest research the topic and share what they've learned at our meetings. Attendees are encouraged to bring for sharing edibles with the culinary herb to be studied as one of the ingredients, and/or a specimen plant if one is already growing the herb, and/or a photograph, and/or craft project and/or medicinal and/or cosmetic concoction. Socializing starts at 6:00 p.m. and the study promptly starts at 6:15 p.m., at 1605 N. Main Street, Belton. Attendees take turns sharing researched information (including chemical properties, growth habit, harvesting, etc.) on one or more topics, announced well in advance by the Coordinator, each session led by one or more volunteers. This meeting is open to Master Gardeners, MG Interns, and the general public. Class limit, 50. Please Register at [bcmgaspeakers@gmail.com](mailto:bcmgaspeakers@gmail.com) by May 5th to secure your spot. Registration is not required but is desired to ensure we have enough materials and seats available.

**Let's Talk About Herbs — A Four-Part Seminar Series - May 10**

Step into the fragrant, flavorful world of herbs with our new seminar series, Let's Talk About Herbs. Hosted at the Extension Office Grounds in the Oak Grove area (next to the BCMGA Learning Center), on May 10 th 9:00a.m. 1605 N. Main Street, Belton. This four-part series invites you to dive deeper into how herbs can enhance your kitchen, garden, and daily life. Each session—lasting up to two hours—will feature focused conversations on growing herbs, using them in everyday cooking, preserving their freshness, and exploring creative ways to incorporate them into meals. We'll share recipes, swap gardening know-how, and learn from each other in a relaxed and welcoming environment. Whether you're curious about starting your own herb garden, looking for fresh cooking inspiration, or simply enjoy connecting with like-minded folks, this series is for you. Come to one session or join them all—there's always more to discover when we talk about herbs. Let's grow, cook, and learn—together.

**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](http://aspenhealthcare.net) or call 512-856-5668 for more information.

**Bell County Historical Commission Meeting and Program - APR 28**

The Bell County Historical Commission will have a short meeting followed by a program on Monday, April 28, 2025. Dan Elder, Chairman of the commission, will present a program titled "The U.S. Army in Belton before Camp Hood." Before the founding of Camp Hood on September 18, 1942, the U.S. Army had an established presence in and around Bell County going back to the earliest days of statehood. Mr. Elder retired from the Army in 2009 as a Command Sergeant Major. He is a noted speaker and writer. He has authored two books: Soldier for Life and Educating Non-commissioned Officers. A small reception will precede the program starting at 5:30 p.m. The meeting/program starts at 6:00 p.m. in the second-floor courtroom of the old courthouse at 101 East Central Ave, Belton, Texas. The public is encouraged to attend this interesting program that focuses on local history.

**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.

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

**Bell Fine Arts Visitors** welcome Wednesday's from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 306 E 5th Ave in Belton. Majong games are available every Monday from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Come join the fun and meet new folks. For more information text Jeanne at 409-313-0611.

**Local chapter of the Crochet Guild of America** meets from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Wednesdays at the Lena Armstrong Public Library, 301 E. First St., in Belton. The group is open to anyone interested in crochet. All skill levels are welcome. For information email Betty Reichert at [bettyreichert@yahoo.com](mailto:bettyreichert@yahoo.com) or Kathy Bement at [katshookandneedle@gmail.com](mailto: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](http://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](mailto: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](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., Belton.

**Community Information**

**TAKE ME HOME PROGRAM** The Belton Police Department is adopting the Take Me Home Program, aimed at helping individuals who need special assistance to return safely home after getting lost. The program is a database with photos and personal information to help police officers find someone who is lost or wandered away from home. Take Me Home is designed for individuals who may need additional aid including those with Dementia, Autism or specific mental health needs. It's free to register someone and the data is kept confidential to first responders. You can sign up a loved one here: [www.beltontexas.gov/takemehome](http://www.beltontexas.gov/takemehome). Read more about the program here: [https://www.beltontexas.gov/news\\_detail\\_T11\\_R1166.php](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](http://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 God in Christ**  
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**Belton First Assembly of God**  
500 S. IH-35 ~ 254.933.2803

**Belton Lighthouse**  
1001 NE Loop 121 ~ 254.654.7278

**Belton Nazarene Church**  
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**Bethel A.M.E. Church**  
401 S. Davis St. ~ 254.939.6090

**Central Texas Cathedral  
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**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 Church 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

**Fellowship Baptist Church**  
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**First Baptist Church Belton**  
06 N. Main St. ~ 254.933.3391

**First Christian Church of Belton**  
306 E. 5th in Belton fcebelton.com

**1st Christian Church of Temple**  
300 N 5th St ~ (254) 773-9061

**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

**Free Pentecostal  
Church of Jesus**  
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**Freedom Bible Fellowship**  
308 W. Ave. D ~ 254.933.3310

**Holy Temple of Our Lord Jesus Christ of  
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**Hope Community Church**  
507 Mitchell St. ~ 254.933.8222

**Hope Tabernacle**  
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3303 N. Main ~ 254.939.6910

**Immanuel Prince of Peace  
Lutheran Church**  
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**  
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**Miller Heights Baptist Church**  
1400 S. Wall St. ~ 254.939.1835

**Ministerios Vida**  
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**Mt. Zion United Methodist Church**  
218 Alexander St. ~ 254.939.5621

**New Life Fellowship**  
706 E. 4th. ~ 254.939.8011

**Nolan Valley Baptist Church**  
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**Pentecostal Church of Jesus Christ**  
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**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 Church**  
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 Church & 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

**Temple First Church of the  
Nazarene**  
5000 S. 31st ~ 254.773.3744

**The Redeemed Christian Church of God  
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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**  
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**Wildwood Baptist Church**  
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## Not For Sissies



**John Perry**

You know the old saying, “getting old is not for sissies”? Well, I can now confirm, without a shadow of a doubt, that it is 100% true. I think I’ve officially crossed the threshold from “old” to “elderly”—an elite club I apparently now belong to, whether I signed up for it or not.

The first warning sign came years ago when AARP welcomed me with open arms, followed by the warm embrace of Medicare eligibility. But if those weren’t enough to

seal the deal, the past couple of weeks have slapped me with the undeniable truth.

**Exhibit A:** A Corvette Show at a Local Nursing Home.

Our local Heart of Texas Corvette Club put on a flashy display for the residents, their families, and the staff. And as I was chatting with some of the residents, reality hit me like a rogue check-engine light—I was older than some of them! Older than nursing home residents. Let that sink in for a second. At this point, I don’t know if I should be admiring the cars or putting down a deposit for a room.

**Exhibit B:** Hearing Aids.

I now sport these nifty little devices in my ears. The up-

side? I can finally hear soft-spoken people and stop nodding along to conversations like I know what’s going on. The downside? Yet another reminder is that Father Time is undefeated. I swear, that guy is ruthless and unrelenting!

**Exhibit C:** The Shirt Fiasco.

If you ever need proof that I’m solidly in the elderly category, here it is: I managed to show up to our Good Friday church service with my shirt on inside out. Yes, INSIDE OUT! Thankfully, a kind soul, Kyle, discreetly pointed it out moments before the service began. Cue my high-speed sprint to the restroom (which was probably more of an elderly shuffle if we’re being honest)

to fix the situation. I made it back with mere seconds to spare, but the damage was done — my dignity slightly bruised, my status as a seasoned senior citizen fully secured.

So, what’s next for me? A stockpile of Ensure? A finely curated nap schedule? A personal assistant to help me dress? Should I be bookmarking nursing home brochures? If this trajectory continues, I’ll probably start attending senior mixers with my fellow “seasoned” folks in the near future.

If a nursing home is in my future, I will look at the bright side — at least I’ll be rolling into assisted living in style, in my shiny torch red 2024 Corvette Stingray. There’s always a silver lining.

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Rev. Kathy Vineyard, Pastor



# EDITORIAL

## The Ending Point

Coffee Talk • Renae Brumbaugh Green

As a college English teacher, I’ve been faced with the moral and ethical issues of using AI (artificial intelligence). It’s been an interesting few years of convincing students not to give away their voices to a robot. While AI is a useful tool, it should never be used as a substitute for reasoned, human thinking. It is, after all, it’s just a machine.

This machine gathers and compiles data from existing information found on the internet. While far from perfect, it’s a useful tool, and can provide a great starting point for personal research. It just shouldn’t be the ending point.

Someone recently posed an interesting question to an AI program. Pastor Jonathan Pokluda of Harris Creek Baptist Church in Waco, Texas asked Chat GPT, “Of all the religions in the world, which one is most likely to be true? Answer in one word please.”

The answer? “Christianity.”

Pokluda asked for elaboration. The program brought up “Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection, the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies, the coherence of its worldview and the transformative power of the Gospel.” It continued with

“Ultimately, the truth of Christianity rests on Jesus. If He rose from the dead, then everything He said is true. And the evidence overwhelmingly supports that He did.”

It wrapped up its defense with, “At the end of the day, the question of truth comes down to Jesus. If He really lived, died and rose again as history suggests, then Christianity is not just true — it’s the most important truth in the world.”

Wow.

I’m tempted to end this article right there, but that would make me an AI hypocrite. After all, I’ve preached that AI is a machine. It’s a great place to start, not end. Fortunately for me, I have all the evidence I need, right in my own heart. I have the life I’ve lived. I have story after story of His presence when I needed it most peace when nothing in my life was peaceful provision when there was no logical way to get what I needed.

There have been miracles—things that could have never been orchestrated by human will, yet God answered my prayers more beautifully than I could have imagined. There’s that still, small whisper in my mind when my own thoughts

convince me all is doomed—that voice that says, “It is well. I’ve got everything under control.”

Even if there were no other evidence, I only need to look to my past to know God is real... to know Christ is who He says He is. I am as confident in this as I am in any proven scientific fact.

You can have that same confidence, if you want it. More than anything, God longs for a relationship with you. That’s why He created you. But He’s a gentleman, and He’s waiting for an invitation. I’d love for you to know what I know, to experience the strength and peace and joy that only God can give, because He is the source of everything good.

I know this because I’ve experienced it. And that, my friends, is as good an ending place as I can think of.

*“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In His great mercy He has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” 1 Peter 1:3*

## The Weight Of Knowledge

Shop the Insanity • Darren Blair

Once upon a time, before I blew all those vertebrae in my back and neck, I used to take a gym bag with me to church each Sunday. That gym bag was filled to the brim with books, including my personal set of scriptures, dozens of official instructional manuals from my denomination, and quite a few books I had acquired on my own time and effort. As I read a book, or as I chose a book to read, into the bag it went. And yes, yon bag was indeed rather heavy after a while.

Whenever one of the members of the congregation I was in at the time got a little too big for their britches I’d invite them to test themselves against The Weight of Knowledge, which is what I called that bag. More often than not, they wouldn’t even stop to ask why I called it that before trying to heft it. They’d try to pick

it up, be astounded by how difficult it was for them to lift it, ask me why it was so heavy, and then flinch a little when I opened it up & explained to them that I had either read or was in the process of reading every book in there. The shock of it all would usually settle them a bit and leave them pondering for a while.

I did not do this as a flex, but rather as an object lesson to drive a point home.

You see, in virtually every situation, each of these people had a rather surface-level understanding of life. They were, like the individuals I’ve mentioned before, of the opinion that because they had achieved some milestone, completed some task, earned some post-graduate degree, gotten some citation, or were just that awe-inspiring they knew all there was to know about everything. Often, this was the

eye-opener they needed to humble themselves a little and recognize that there was so much more out there than what they already knew.

After a while, people started catching on to what I was doing and worked to counsel the other members accordingly. This meant I no longer had to issue such invitations, which was a good thing as by then I was having trouble lifting and carrying the bag on my own. Even though The Weight Of Knowledge has officially been retired, though, the point still stands:

We, as individual people, are not so “perfect” that there is no more room for improvement and not so “wise” that there is nothing more to be learned.

From the moment we are born, we are enrolled in the School of Life. It is, all at once, an academic classroom where we learn facts, on-

the-job training program where we learn skills alongside hard lessons, finishing school where we work to improve ourselves as people, gymnasium where we develop ourselves physically, library where we read, playground where we seek recreation, museum where we seek culture, and public square where we make social connections. Attendance is mandatory, and we will be tested when life sees fit to test us. But we get out of it as much as we’re willing to put into it.

Yes, there are a few things I’m trying to work on as well. For example, I sometimes struggle to come up with really good conclusions to these columns, especially if I run short on word count. It’s something I need to keep chipping away at.



IT IS BELIEVED THAT THIS FORM OF LITERATURE CAME BEFORE LANGUAGE ITSELF, PROBABLY BECAUSE IT HAS CLOSE TIES TO MUSIC.

ANSWER: POETRY

### Math Blocks

Fill in the missing blocks with numbers between 0-20. The numbers in each row add up to the totals on the right. The numbers in each column add up to the totals on the bottom.

	10	2	16
20		1	29
	15		26
30	33	8	

5	51	9
1	8	20
2	10	4

Solution

### THIS DAY IN...

### HISTORY

- **1614:** NATIVE AMERICAN POCAHONTAS MARRIES ENGLISH COLONIST JOHN ROLFE.
- **1862:** THE BATTLE OF YORKTOWN BEGINS DURING THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR.
- **1998:** THE AKASHI KAIYO BRIDGE OPENS TO TRAFFIC IN JAPAN, BECOMING THE LONGEST BRIDGE SPAN IN THE WORLD.

### Get Scrambled

Unscramble the words to determine the phrase.

H R Y G N M I D S O W R

Answer: Rhyming words

### METER

the rhythm of a piece of poetry

### How they SAY that in...

**ENGLISH:** Verse

**SPANISH:** Verso

**ITALIAN:** Verso

**FRENCH:** Strophe

**GERMAN:** Verse

POETRY CAN BE TRACED BACK TO ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS SUCH AS MESOPOTAMIA, EGYPT AND GREECE.

Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

ANSWER: HARDCOVER BOOKS