

The Weston Post

Issue № 6

Spring 2021



VOLUNTEERING WITH HEATHER RICHARDSON

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Tell us about yourself and why you chose to move to Weston.

Eight years ago, my husband and I made a major life decision: we chose to pack up our comfortable suburban lifestyle in Washington DC and move south. With two babies in tow, we headed for rural Weston, Texas. We fell in love with the fresh air and wide, open spaces. As we settled into our new community, we felt the burdens of city and suburban life disappear.

Before our move to rural Texas, I had a career in the US army and the intelligence fields working for the federal government as a contractor managing multi-million dollar contracts. This part of my life is now a distant memory; my primary focus is homeschooling our two boys on our ten-acre homestead and juggling community positions of city alderman and secretary/treasurer of Weston's Water Supply Company (WWSC). If you had asked me ten years ago if I had planned this path for myself, my answer would have been a resounding "No". I pictured myself in high heels,



not ropers. However, I must admit, the move to Weston has been the best decision for my family. Lord willing, I plan to stay here as long as I can.

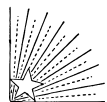
Why did you run for WWSC and Weston city alderman?

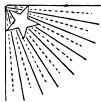
As my children became more independent, I realized I had more time to focus on Weston community matters—and as a bonus, I incorporated it into my homeschool curriculum. My boys attended our council meetings with me when they weren't home helping their dad around the farm. After getting involved, I soon learned that Weston needed greater representation on the council and with our local water utility, Weston Water Supply Company (WWSC).

I decided to run for a board position with WWSC in 2020, which was a time of conflict in our small community. Weston Water Supply and our city were not seeing eye-to-eye and I thought perhaps I could assist. I ran for a WWSC board position not knowing if I would even have an opportunity to take a seat at the table as the WWSC members were voting on whether to become part of the city that same evening. However, a majority wanted to remain independent and I was afforded the opportunity to serve.

Currently, I offer a few hours a month to WWSC, working with the city, understanding its future endeavors, and doing my best to align funds so that we can someday have new pipes and better infrastructure. The cost of these upgrades is immense and one of my biggest concerns is assuring our senior and fixed income residents are able to continue to have affordable rates.

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The struggle to balance our much-needed capital improvements with affordable water is important to consider. Fortunately, the city and WWSC are at last working together with a common goal of providing Westoners with the infrastructure needed to revitalize our historic district and residences.

Likewise, I decided to run for an alderman position because there was a great need for responsible representation with the city council. Before our new mayor took office, my family and I attended most council meetings and discovered that the community's voices were not being heard. Citizens would walk out of the meetings feeling crushed by the fact that they were ignored. Residents were also bullied and burdened by enforcement of onerous regulations; Weston businesses reported being harassed and fined by relentless code enforcers over bogus claims of unacceptable items behind their fence line. This unnecessarily stressful situation deteriorated the health of the residents involved and, sadly, much of the previous Weston City Council and previous mayor ignored the issue.

The atmosphere of the city council meetings was that of "they know best" which fueled my motivation to run for alderman. As a newly elected alderman, I have quickly realized that there is so much to learn. Currently, we are diving into stacks of ordinances, regulations and rules to decode and unravel. One of the first things I discovered is that most of our documentation is outdated and doesn't represent what most people of Weston desire.

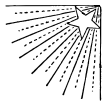
For instance, in the past, Weston adopted many of the ordinances and zoning regulations of a nearby much larger town. If you have attended recent city council meetings, you would witness the council going line by line modifying these critical documents to better reflect our town's input. During last month's meeting, the council unanimously approved that any future land purchased and subdivided in the Weston Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) will require a minimum of 2 acres as part of the city's first pass and review of the subdivision ordinances. This small, yet meaningful change will help keep Weston's rural feel and allow more green space and less cement sprawl.

How does your community service impact your homeschooling?

Our community's happenings are incorporated into our everyday life and homeschool curriculum. It's been a joy to be able to include my children with me on this journey to serve the Weston community. My kids know more than most boys their age when it comes to how small towns are managed. They witness the struggles of local politics and celebrate Weston's accomplishments, like community clean up days. They see how towns work to attract small businesses, how growing cities engineer infrastructure plans for future neighborhoods, how citizens use their first amendment to assert themselves via public speaking, and how rural communities band together in times of crisis.

Serving my community while homeschooling in Weston has been a blessing. As a family, we've met true, long lasting friends who would give us the shirts off their backs. Being a Yankee and a transient one, I wasn't used to the Texas hospitality and, at first, was somewhat skeptical. However, I quickly realized that the people in Weston truly care about one another even though we may not always agree on the politics of the day. I'm grateful to have found a place where I can homeschool my children without judgment, raise livestock, and have a sense of freedom that most will never experience.

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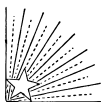
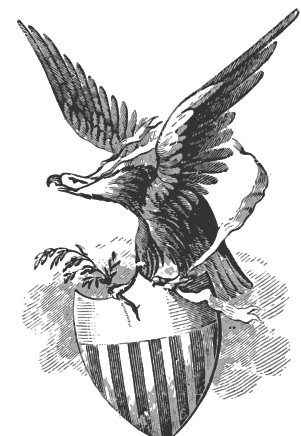
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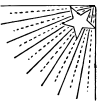
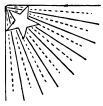
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What are your goals and vision for Weston?

This last year between the SARS COV-2 virus and the recent subzero temperatures we experienced, I have had plenty of time to reflect on what is important. For me, keeping Weston as rural as possible with a small-town feel is my priority. It is also essential that the council address and implement a solid 20-year plan that aligns with the desires of the local residents. Our land use, deregulation and zoning plans need a serious overhaul because what we have today is not what a majority of Westoners desire.

In the long term, we will need to eventually incorporate WWSC and our Weston Fire and Rescue and add in sewer and police services. We must work closely together now and in the foreseeable future as we prepare a roadmap for our small town. We are all volunteers and more community activities together will assist us in embracing a vision for Weston that welcomes healthy changes while cherishing our history and small-town heritage.

What would you like residents to know?

This year, the city is working on expanding our Christmas and 4th of July events; more community interaction is something I would like to see for our residents, so please volunteer if you can.

Furthermore, it's essential that Westoners take care of each other and get involved with the community. It is crucial that we have resident input from people in both the city limits and in the ETJ. You don't have to come to every city council meeting, but you need to reach out to the members of the council and let your voice be heard.

Your involvement helps tremendously. Recently, a volunteer citizen committee designed a well thought out thoroughfare plan to replace the old road plan which would have paved over our historical downtown and destroyed many homes in the ETJ. The volunteers met several times and crafted a plan that preserved downtown Weston, significantly reduced the impact on existing homeowners, and rejected the previous plan's massive divided six lane roads in Weston. The recommendations this team presented were approved by the city council and will affect future generations here in Weston.

We are at a critical junction in keeping our Weston wild. If you live in Weston or the ETJ we would like to hear your valuable input as we continue to review and update our city's important documents. I also encourage you to go to the city's website and take a look around, ask questions and participate when you can. The city council wants to know your opinions and incorporate them where applicable.

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MAYOR'S CORNER

By Jim Marischen

Residents of Weston and our surrounding area, spring is in full bloom and the State of Texas is now open for business. North Texas Covid-19 cases are subsiding as the vaccine gets distributed. I have had my shots and I hope all of you are moving in that direction. Please contact your local pharmacy or doctor to see where you can get your vaccine.

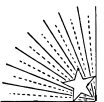
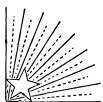
The city teams are beginning to make progress on rewriting our ordinances to better meet our vision of being a rural community. The city council has approved a rewrite of the Subdivision Ordinance to address many issues, including a minimum of two acre subdivides in our ETJ. We have also started the work on rewriting the Zoning Ordinance. Our new planner is updating our vision and will soon be focused on the City Comprehensive and Land Use Plans. These efforts will go a long way to simplify life for our existing citizens and put controls on the many developers we have knocking at our doors. If you want to be a part of this effort, please leave your contact information at the city hall.

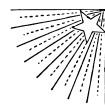
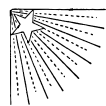
If you drive down Chambersville Road (CR 206) from Weston Road, you will notice the earth moving going on. That activity is the Phase I development by the Megatel Corporation. They should be building houses sometime later this year. The City is also designing a Waste Water Treatment Plant whose design will be finished in May. Construction will begin later this summer. The developer is paying for this infrastructure and will also provide the Weston Town Center with a sewer line and lift station. Currently, we are soliciting requests from citizens in the Town Center to hookup to the sewer so we can get started. If you have not yet responded to the City's request, please do so as soon as possible. The City needs 20 residential commits before it can start.

At the April city council meeting, the City agreed to sponsor the 4th of July parade again this year. Carol Decker will lead the parade development team. Don't be surprised if there are some new additions to the format. If you are interested in helping out, contact the City Hall and let us know.

Please provide any questions for me either through the Weston website or directly to Susan at the City Hall.

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THE SHEPHERD GIVES US REST

By Nancy Gemaehlich

Of all the psalms in the Bible, Psalm 23 is one of the most beloved. It was written by the Israelite, King David, in approximately A.D. 1020. As a boy, David was a shepherd, and later he wrote this psalm, or song, to speak of the Lord as *his* Shepherd. When pondering its words, we are wrapped in the Lord's care. I hope you will have a chance to speak these words of life and peace to yourself regularly. I often recite this psalm to myself morning and night, as I wake and as I go to sleep. It's like balm for my soul. This psalm brings our thinking and by extension our emotions into the place that God has prepared for us—His presence.

- 1 The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.
- 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters.
- 3 He restores my soul; He guides me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake.
- 4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.
- 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You have anointed my head with oil; My cup overflows.
- 6 Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life, And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.



Psalm 23 (from the New American Standard Bible)

Let's take a moment to look further into verse 2, "He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters." Verse 2 is another way of saying verse 1. It tells us in word pictures what our Shepherd is like, what He does for us, and how we can respond. We have a Shepherd in whom we lack nothing.

The psalmist invites us to compare ourselves to sheep whose shepherd has brought them into a place of abundance, a place of blessing, a place without lack. For the sheep, it is a pasture of tender grass. They experience the contentment of being fully fed. For us, it is the assurance that our Shepherd is present and caring for us. He leads us right where we need to be. We are fed. We are full. We are content.

Breathe in deep and exhale letting go of your cares, if even for just a moment. The Shepherd has brought you into a peaceful pasture of tender grass where you can feed on his goodness and his constant care for you. Let *him* watch out for the wolves. Let *him* concern himself with your needs today. He is the good Shepherd; he will do it. Thank you, Jesus, that you make me to lie down in green pastures.

This same idea is repeated and emphasized for us in the second line of verse 2, "He leads me beside quiet waters." My Bible says these are literally *waters* of rest. Contrary to thoughts of being alone and fending for ourselves in a hostile world, the Lord calls us to find respite. Water is cleansing. Water is life giving. Water is satisfying. The Lord offers it to us freely (Rev. 22:17). Imagine yourself drinking fully of his cleansing, life giving flow. We are full. We are content. We are satisfied in him.

Nancy Gemaehlich is the author of the women's Bible study, Come Lord Jesus: A Woman's Walk—Spirit, Body & Soul—Through the Book of Revelation. She is the Director of Women's Ministries at Weston's Calvary Chapel Honey Creek. Learn more about her writing/blog at www.nancygemaehlich-author.com.

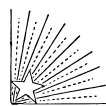
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Get in the Loop

Weston is requesting contact information for all of its residents, city and ETJ, to be used for emergency notifications and informational messages. Your help with this is very important. If your phone number is not in the database, you cannot be notified. Please call City Hall at (972) 382-1001, email cityhall@westontexas.com, or fill out the contact form at www.westontexas.com/page/Resident_Contact_Information.

Property Tax Exemption for Winter Storm Damage

On Friday, February 12, 2021 Governor Greg Abbott issued a Disaster Declaration in response to severe winter weather in Texas. This declaration enables property owners in Collin County to file for a temporary property tax exemption under Section 11.35 of the Texas Property Tax Code for qualified property damaged by the disaster. Visit collincad.org for more information.





GET INVOLVED

By Denise Stufflebeam

Politics. The word probably makes you want to read no further. After all, isn't politics derived from the base words 'poli' meaning many and 'tics' meaning blood sucking insects? All joking aside: while the face of politics looks grimy, the art of politics is something quite different. Wikipedia defines politics as "the set of activities that are associated with making decisions in groups," meaning either you get involved with decision-making, or you let others make decisions for you. Those "others" may not necessarily share your values or have your best interests at heart. While sticking up for your values can be uncomfortable and complicated at times, the message is simple: get involved if you want your interests represented.

My husband, John, and I are local Weston landowners and have recently become aware of the simplicity yet complexity of local and state politics. We have realized that it's simple, and vitally important, to get involved. As citizen activists with Convention of States, a grassroots organization aimed at using Article V in the Constitution to save the Constitution, we have become aware how important it is to get involved with institutions working to preserve our liberties. We are not alone—there are millions of people getting involved, too.

Simple and Complicated

The simplicity of politics is that it affects us daily, probably much more than most realize. The complication is that politics is convoluted. Politics occurs at the federal, state, county, and city level. Politics is present at party precincts and school board meetings. There are committees, subcommittees, senators, representatives and on and on. And, as we have seen over the years, politics gets deep and swampy and icky. But, for now, let's just stick with the simple.

The simple fact is that our Founding Fathers gave us a wonderful document back in 1787, and it has now lasted 233 years. That's a pretty big deal given that the average life of similar documents throughout world history is about 17 years.

While reading the language in old government documents sounds complicated, our founding documents' message is quite simple: in America we are all created equal, our rights come from our Creator (God) and not from the government, and the government is created by the people to serve the people, not to rule over the people.

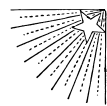
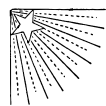
The first words of the U.S. Constitution are "We the People". That message is simple: that's you and me; that's all of us. Without us, and without our involvement, we no longer have freedom, as the government will simply become overbearing (because that's what government does when it's not held in check by the people).

As complicated and distasteful as politics might be, it's up to each of us to make it work like it should. No one is going to fix it for us. And it's not going to get fixed by those of us who are lying on the couch or are too busy to pay attention to politics. Politics requires action which is something each of us can do. There are many ways you can get involved and we definitely need to do something to stand up for our freedoms and liberties while we still can.

Speak up!

Paid lobbyists are at the Capitol every single day, lobbying against 'We the People' while advocating for higher taxes and more regulations. Many of those lobbyists do not have our best interests in mind. Want to know who will advocate for you and me? Go look in a mirror (or take a selfie).

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Each of us can contact officials about matters of concern and there are plenty of issues from which to choose. Write and/or call your representatives. You can also visit the Texas Capitol. After all, it is your house in Austin, remember. Yes, it may take time and money to travel, but isn't freedom and liberty worth it?

Rest assured that your legislators definitely know that the lobbyists exist and know how they stand on issues as they hear from them regularly. But they have no idea that you exist, and more importantly they don't know how you stand on very important matters.

The simple challenge is to do something, and today, I challenge you to visit the Capitol during the current legislative session which finishes at the end of May 2021. The Texas Legislature meets January through May in odd numbered years. Now is the time for your voice to be heard.



My Capitol Journey

With over six decades under my belt as a Texas citizen, I have visited the Capitol five times, and all those visits have been within the last few months. My first visit was scary and I was afraid I'd mess up. But I made it through and realized my voice is needed to make our government succeed.

The secret to having a successful Capitol visit is to go with someone who has been before. Shadow them. You can be there as support and don't have to say a word. You'll be amazed at how relatively painless it is, and you will learn so much, even if you just follow others and listen.

It takes all of us, and together we can be a powerful voice to make a difference in the decisions which affect us. You are a vital part of the grassroots movement to advocate for our liberties and freedom.

Get involved now, and I hope to see you at the Texas Capitol during this legislative session. Future generations are counting on you to step up. Will you be part of standing up for freedom and liberty, or will you remain complacent and hand the next generation a more broken system devoid of the values that have made America great?

John & Denise Stufflebeam have lived in Collin County for over 30 years and have recently gotten involved in making change as Regional Captains SD8 with Convention of States (www.conventionofstates.com). They raised their four children in Collin County and also have four grandchildren, one great grandchild, and another on the way. They enjoy spending time with family, traveling, and helping to stand for freedom and liberty.

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LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE COLD

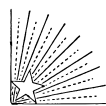
By Brittany Yurkovitch

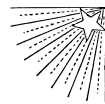
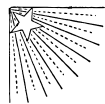
February proved to be tough for Texans who were shocked when plunging temperatures and infrastructure negligence led to serious power outages and water issues for millions in the Lone Star state. Some weathered the storm with minor disruptions while others totally lacked power and water for the duration of the cold snap. Across the United States, over 70 people died due to the winter storm with the majority of those deaths coming from Texas.

Some handled the storm better than others. I reached out to locals to see how they fared, what they learned, and what worked for them. This information is very important given the data suggesting we are experiencing a grand solar minimum. A grand solar minimum is an extended period of time where the sun has diminished solar activity causing cooling temperatures. This cooling can dramatically impact how we experience the seasons and can affect agricultural output. I compiled some great tips for us to keep in mind so that we can all be better prepared for a future with potentially colder winters.

Dress for Success

Because we generally enjoy mild winters, lots of Texans don't have heavy duty winter gear. Given the likelihood of colder winters, it may be wise to consider purchasing a long, thick winter coat and some durable scarves, hats and gloves. While we didn't have any Hot Hands warming packets, several folks mentioned it being very helpful to keep in their pockets for extra warmth, especially when outside. Mayor Jim Marischen stayed toasty wearing a battery powered warming vest that he uses when golfing.





My husband enjoyed wearing an insulated Carhartt bib during the cold snap and it came in handy when he had to venture outside to cut and stack extra firewood. He walked into downtown Weston on one of the coldest days to take some pictures of the town covered in beautiful snow without a problem. His pair of YakTrax traction cleats made it easy to walk on the snow and ice. We plan on getting bibs for every member of the family, including our young children.

Home Protection

Those who had a generator were grateful they had one on hand. Despite lacking electricity or water, a lot of homeowners were reluctant to leave their homes and shelter elsewhere as they wanted to do what they could to protect their home's pipes from freezing.

Lori Ellis was glad to have a gas generator and noted that the insulated faucet protectors didn't prevent her outdoor faucets from freezing. She recommended streaming water, and not dripping water, to prevent the pipes from freezing. Jason Cole explained, "We have a regular propane water heater but have added a hot water recirculator. When we had power, it moved water through our pipes helping them not to freeze. During normal times you can set it to recirculate the water during normal shower times and you will get hot water faster [thereby] reducing waste."



Photos: Mitch Levine

Brenda Holman noted, "I wish that tankless water heaters were put inside the house, not on the external facing side. They froze up possibly because it did not have insulation around the pipes. Thankfully I had a 100,000 BTU heater to blow on it for 30 [minutes], or this weather would have destroyed it."

The Randalls devised some clever solutions to keep their pipes from freezing. Using a Goal Zero solar generator with wall charger, Laura Randall says "We were able to easily run a 100 watt bulb continuously in our master shower, located on an outside wall. We suspect there is little insulation and kept that from freezing. The power station was plugged in, so whenever the power came back it replenished the battery... We wrapped a shallow bowl in heavy duty aluminum foil and lit a candle and placed it on the floor next to toilet water line. Same outside wall, same lack of insulation. Just enough heat to keep from freezing."



Once the temperature began to thaw, many people realized they had busted pipes. It's very important to know where your home's water shutoff is located. If a snow is coming, it may be wise to stick a flag or some other kind of marker in the ground to indicate where the shutoff valves are located.

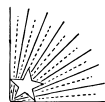
Folks with pools also experienced pump problems even if they had the electricity to keep the water circulating. It's normal for Southerners to leave their pools open all-year and many did not winterize—or drain—the equipment that circulates water before the big freeze. Unfortunately, many people found extensive damage to pumps, filters, and heaters and were stuck on a long wait list for plumbers and pool parts.

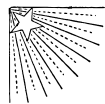
Given the cooler winters we can expect with a grand solar minimum, it is important for Texans to stay on top of the pool situation this winter. If freezing weather is predicted, winterize your pool pumps immediately; it shouldn't take long to completely drain. Don't wait for freezing conditions or think you can rely on running your pump 24 hours a day. As we have seen, electricity can be unreliable during a winter storm. When temperatures reach the 30s, it's time to drain and plug pool equipment.

Eating Well

Food preparation proved to be quite challenging during this storm. Seeing the chaos of the events of 2020, many people had already stocked their pantries with nonperishable food items. Sadly, others were either not so well prepared or they lost all their refrigerated food from lack of power. Several stories emerged of people standing in long lines in the cold, waiting to buy food from the grocery only to get turned away because of power outages inside the store.

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Having at least two weeks of nonperishable food in your house is crucial for emergencies just like the one we experienced. However, preparing that food certainly proved to be challenging given the limited or lack of power. We ate a lot of meals with rice and I had the pot filled and ready to go when the power returned during those 20 minute intervals. We also purchased some better fireplace cooking tools and a cast iron Dutch oven to facilitate campfire cooking.

Bobbie Powell remarked “I am so glad we have a garden and put up food every year...[and am thinking] about building a brick box... with a simple cooking grate so that [we can] cook (boil water) on it if needed and have dry firewood, dried food (beans, rice, etc.)”



Photo: Mitch Levine

Water Problems

Not only did folks lose electricity, but many lost water or, like us in Weston, were put on a boil order for several days. We were grateful to have been using a large Berkey water filter. Not only do Berkeys remove chlorine and fluoride from municipal water, but a Berkey filter is extremely valuable during a boil order as it filters non potable water into clean drinking water. Many people bring these filters on camping trips for this very reason. Personally, I think a Berkey or another comparable filter is a must-have emergency item for every family and it made the boil water issue quite a bit more manageable.

For those who lost water, many people reported filling their bathtubs and washing machines with water from the hot tub or with snow, which then melted so they had water to flush their toilets or to filter for drinking. Lori Ellis strongly advises that folks “[do not] wait to see if you lose water, fill up a bathtub with water to use to flush the commode. Any talk of possible freeze of any kind, buy two cases of water.”

A few respondents had some clever ways to stay warm using water. Hunter Hankie filled a metal water canister with water and set it in front of the fire until it was boiling. Then, he wrapped the canister in a towel and used it for warmth in his sleeping bag.

Tina Coil explained “I don’t think that all of the major sources of heat should be tied to one energy source. We were lucky that the hot water heater and stove were independent of electric. We were not completely out of heat. When we could not stand the cold in the house any longer, I filled up the tub in the guest bathroom with water as hot as it would go, plugged the space between the door and the floor with a towel [to create an] instant sauna. The water warmed the room for several hours.”

Freezing Farm Chores

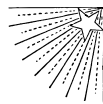
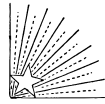
The deep freeze took a huge toll on farmers across Texas and destroyed over a half-billion dollars’ worth of crops and livestock. Many have compared the February storm to the 1989 historic freeze in South Texas. However, the 1989 storm occurred in December when very few crops were in the ground. This February storm was particularly devastating as many valuable spring crops were already planted. Sadly, we can expect food prices to increase this year as a result of the freeze and overall inflation. Given the circumstances, it may be wise to consider how you can offset these costs and food supply risks by producing more of your own food and stocking up on non-perishable items when they go on sale.

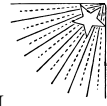
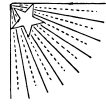
I spoke with a few gardeners, farmers and homesteaders about the extra set of challenges and chores they had to contend with during the deep freeze. The Randalls have an amazing garden and were able to save many of their spring plants. Laura explains, “Jerry saved lots of spinach, parsley, Swiss chard, cilantro, fennel and kale by placing a hoop tunnel, covered with packing blankets, sheet plastic and a 100 watt bulb inside. When we removed the encased homemade greenhouse we couldn’t believe how well the plants did!”

Others with livestock made many trips to their animals’ shelter to break up the ice in their watering bowls, and replace with hot water. Others used creative tricks like adding molasses to their livestock’s water trough, a common homesteading practice before the days of electricity. The sugars in the molasses slow down the freezing process. The water might be a little slushy but it will be drinkable.

Another very simple option for keeping your animals’ water from freezing is floating basketballs or milk jugs filled with saline solution in the trough. As it floats, it prevents the water from completely freezing. You will still have to clear out some ice but it will help your livestock drink between waterings.

Many farmers added extra hay to insulate their animals’ pens and turned on the heat lamps in the barn. Remember, heat lamps can be a fire hazard so be careful when purchasing one. Prima heat lamps are considered to be one of the safest lamps for reducing fire risks. Some folks use a deep litter method with their animals as the rotting hay and manure in the barn or chicken run generates its own heat.





Entertainment and Morale

Coping without water and electricity was very difficult for a lot of folks. Leslie Luscombe explained that “I learned I am emotionally and physically not cut out for bitter cold weather. I handled it horribly. No heat or electricity just about did me in. I do not have a fireplace in my home. My little 1913 home held at 42 [degrees]. I now have a busted pipe in my jelly barn... I already knew this, but I live in a great community. I had another issue at my home so I posted and a plumber came to help me and didn't even charge me. Another gentleman came and helped me turn off my water when the pipe burst. As you know, living in the country that turn off isn't always easy to get too. Mine is over a barbed wire fence and was buried under snow. Go figure. Then my son who is in [Colorado] had his best friend whom I consider a second son come to bring me a generator from Fort Worth!”

Many folks may have been a bit antsy without their Wi-Fi and their electronic creature comforts. High school teacher Jillian Innis noted, “the most fascinating piece of the snowstorm in February was watching how both teenagers and adults alike struggled to cope without modern technology. With a loss of power came the loss of Wi-Fi, spotty cell service, and streaming television. Many adults struggled not only with the cold itself, but also overall boredom of what to do without the internet. I would spend my time reading books or completing needlepoint, but [my peers were] endlessly complaining on social media (when they had power) of how much they struggled to cope without the internet... though modern technology has vastly improved our world in many ways, its reliance on electricity has enabled generations to lose the art of self-entertainment without a plug or screen.”



Consequently, it's important to consider entertainment needs for everyone in the family during an extended period of time without electricity. We have tons of board games, coloring books and card decks which kept us in good spirits. I took some time to fix some clothes that had been sitting in my mending pile and I read lots of books with my kids. My husband and daughters had loads of fun making shadow puppets at night using flashlights. My kids were also thrilled to simply make blanket forts and tend to the fire. Fortunately, we had all the supplies needed to make s'mores which was a huge morale booster for the little ones during the evening.

Final Thoughts

While spring is such a beautiful time to enjoy the outdoors, it is essential that we learn some lessons from this intense winter storm and prepare for the potential of colder winters during the grand solar minimum. Now is the time to do some spring cleaning, declutter a closet, and consider the items you need to make it through a tough winter storm with little water and electricity.

And it's not just material items that will help you make it through the next storm. Good relationships with family and neighbors are crucial. Countless stories emerged during the freeze about neighbors sheltering other neighbors who completely lost power. Folks shared food, warmth, and lent a helping hand to those in need. Make this year the year to dig deeper roots in your community and make friends with your neighbors. You never know when you will need each other.

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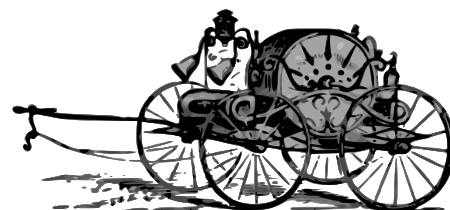


THANK YOU, WWSC

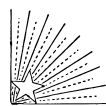
By Michael Hill

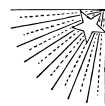
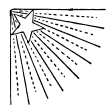
On behalf of the greater Weston community that is served by the Weston Water Supply Corporation, we would like to recognize a group of people who braved the cold and snow to keep the water flowing during the worst storm and freeze in 70 years. Tony and Lucy Del Plato, Shannon Burns, Lynn and Tom Shields, John Visage, Epi and Steve Goldstein, Kevin Thompson and Heather and Jim Richardson went above and beyond their duty. These volunteers worked in shifts to manually pump water to keep the system from failure. Weston is so fortunate to have such dedicated neighbors and we offer a heartfelt “thank you” to all who helped.

FIRED UP!



Congratulations to David Henzler as he retires from 18 years of service with the Weston Fire and Rescue. We are thrilled to welcome new fire chief Bart Chambers and are extremely confident he will continue the high standards for the department moving forward.





REMEMBERING WESLEY M. ADAMSON

By Collin Kimball

Collin is the founder of the North Texas Fallen Warrior Portrait project, a local historian, and a member of the Collin County Historical Commission.

On Memorial Day, the last Monday in the month of May, we honor our local heroes who gave their lives in defense of our great nation. One man from Weston, Wesley M. Adamson, gave his life serving in the Great War, known popularly as World War I. Wesley was the youngest child in a family of eight children born to farmer Silas Locke Adamson and his wife, Josephine, in July 1899 in Weston. When Wesley was a young boy, Silas moved the family to a new farm in Hedley, Texas which is in the panhandle southwest of Amarillo. Wesley had one older brother and six sisters. One sister would die in childbirth and another would die at the age of 17 when Wesley was 11.

America was a late entrant into what became known as the Great War in Europe. When Germany invaded France in 1914, England and France stood alone in their quest to repel the invading Germans. In January 1917, Germany's foreign secretary Albert Zimmerman sent a coded message to the German Ambassador of Mexico promising aid and support for Mexico, if they would invade Texas and the Southwestern United States. British intelligence intercepted this telegram and when its contents were reported in the news on March 1st, our nation was outraged. Texans, in particular, felt threatened and they became fighting mad. President Woodrow Wilson, recently reelected due to his staunch support of neutrality in the War in Europe, was now forced to respond. On April 1st an unprepared United States formally declared war on Germany.



Artist: Collin Kimball

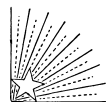
Training for War

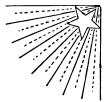
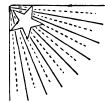
In April 1917, our American military strength stood at 300,000 soldiers. Our army quickly scaled up creating divisions of soldiers (a division consists of between 6,000 and 25,000 Soldiers). The army was organized into the Regular Army, National Army (now known as the Army Reserve) and the National Guard. Texas formed two divisions, the 90th Division and the 36th Division. The 90th was part of the National Army and consisted of draftees and volunteers from Texas and Oklahoma. It still exists as a component of the Army Reserve. The 36th Division was formed for the National Guard and they trained in a quickly built Camp Bowie near Fort Worth. The men of the 36th wore and still wear a distinctive shoulder patch in the shape of an Indian arrowhead with a "T" inside it.

Wesley Adamson volunteered to serve his nation and took his training at nearby Camp Bowie. Many of the initial troops brought into the 36th Division were combat seasoned troops from the 1st Texas Cavalry who had recently participated in the expeditions into Mexico to capture Pancho Villa. Between August and October 1917, over 22,000 troops would come to Camp Bowie from various regions of Texas and Oklahoma to train for war. Wesley was assigned to Company H of the 142nd Infantry Regiment which was composed mostly of men from the Amarillo area of Texas.

The rapid influx of troops, hasty construction, poor sanitation, and the emergence of a Spanish Flu that was an unknown threat at the time, caused great sickness within the camp. Meningitis, measles, and pneumonia spread within Camp Bowie and between October and December, massive quarantines were imposed while as many as 1,800 troops required hospitalization. Slightly more than 200 troops died from illness, most of which came from pneumonia. The respiratory effects of the Spanish Flu, known to have emerged in American military camps, might have been an indication that the Spanish Flu was spreading through Camp Bowie due to the high percentage of pneumonia deaths. By December, conditions improved due to improvements in sanitation in the camp. Wesley Adamson was a hardy soul enduring the great sickness that occurred while he was training for war.

Continued on Page 11





Off to Europe

The 142nd Regiment trained at Camp Bowie and mobilized and shipped to Europe in July 1918. One could imagine the thrill of adventure young Wesley felt while embarking on a four-day train ride from Texas to New York and then transferring onto large ships to transit the Atlantic. The 36th Division would begin their overseas embarkment on July 17th. Adamson would arrive in Brest, France by August 12, 1918.

By the time the regiment landed in France, Americans had little experience fighting compared to the British and French who had been fighting the Germans for three years in bitter trench and artillery warfare. They set up camp outside of Paris and continued to train for war. By September, General Pershing, the Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Forces, would launch a massive offensive near St. Mihiel, France. The 36th Division was held in reserve for this action.

By October, largely due to the success of the St. Mihiel Offensive, the Germans were retreating while trying to inflict as many casualties as possible on the Allied Forces to bolster their negotiations in a peace treaty. Pershing assigned the 142nd Infantry Regiment to the French Army commanded by General Henri Petain. On their march to war, they passed through portions of the previously occupied Hindenburg Line witnessing the death and destruction of recent battles. On October 7th, the 142nd Regiment would take positions outside the village of St. Étienne France where the retreating Germans made formidable machine gun and artillery defenses.

Killed in Action

The Germans had the advantage of air superiority in this region and used their aircraft to strafe, bomb, and call-in artillery on Adamson's regiment. Communication between forces was poor and fighting was tough, as the regiment had to cross open fields as well as the Aisine River to get to the entrenched Germans. Casualties were very high. Private First Class (PFC) Wesley M Adamson would be killed in action in this battle on October, 9, 1918. The 36th Division would continue to support the Allied Expeditionary Forces to victory slightly more than a month later when the armistice to end the Great War to End All Wars was signed on November 11, 1918.

PFC Wesley M. Adamson was initially buried in the cemetery at St Etienne. Most of his fellow soldiers would be reinterred at the American Cemetery in Meuse Argonne, France. Adamson's remains were repatriated back home to Texas and he is buried in the Hedley Cemetery in Hedley, Texas. In addition to the loss of Adamson, Frisco native Private Amber Roderick was also killed in action while serving with the 142nd Infantry Regiment in the Battle of St. Etienne.

Every soldier of the 142nd Infantry Regiment wears a distinctive unit insignia emblazoned with the steeple of the Church at St. Etienne and a red wavy design symbolic of both the Red River and the Aisine River where they received their baptism of fire. The insignia bares the motto "I'll Face You." The motto is attributed to 1st Lt Donald McLennan, a scout officer of the 142nd Regiment, who upon return to friendly lines across the Aisine River under heavy German fire during a scouting mission, yelled, "I'm going back, but I'll face you." Adamson would be decorated by the French Government with the French Croix de Guerre with Silver Star for his gallantry in this battle. His portrait resides on permanent display in the Hall of Heroes in the Russell A. Steindam Courthouse of Collin County.

May he forever rest in honored Peace.

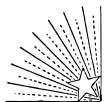
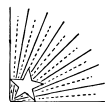


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Coloring Page, Art, and Photo Submissions

Do you like to draw? Do you have any great paintings or photos showing life in Weston? If so, we would like to showcase your art in *The Weston Post*. For coloring pages, we are looking for simple, black and white line drawings with a one sentence statement about the picture. We are hoping to receive submissions featuring local farm life, city buildings, folks enjoying the country life, scenes from our 4th of July parade, and historical pictures.

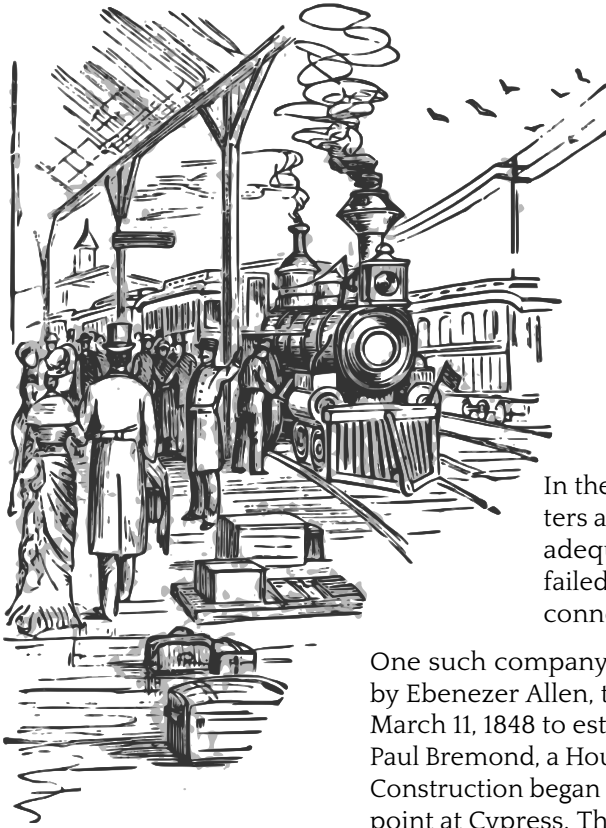
Please email Brittany at thewestonpost@protonmail.com for more information about submissions.



THE HISTORY OF ANNA: PART 1, THE RAILROADS

By Elden Baker

Elden is the Director of the Anna Depot and Museum operated by the Anna Area Preservation Historical Society.



The city of Anna was incorporated in 1913, but our story begins many years earlier. In 1845, Texas joined the United States as the 28th state. Another event occurred in 1845 which was significant to the future of Anna: Asa Whitney, a dry-goods merchant, presented to Congress a plan to create the first transcontinental railroad.

America was growing and, in those days, the only viable means to transport goods and people over a great distance was by water. The Panama Canal would not be completed until 1881, so it would take a fast-sailing ship more than forty days to travel from New York to San Francisco. However, most ships large enough to carry cargo, took more than sixty days to make the journey. A transcontinental railroad would be able to cut travel time to less than a week.

In the years following Whitney's proposal, companies obtained charters and began building railroads with great haste. Many did not have adequate financial support to accomplish their railroad goals and failed within a few years. Others managed to survive and made a rail connection to the fledgling network of railroads.

One such company was the Galveston and Red River Railroad and was founded by Ebenezer Allen, the namesake of the City of Allen. He was granted a charter on March 11, 1848 to establish a rail connection from Galveston to the Red River Valley. Paul Bremond, a Houston financier and entrepreneur, was one of the early investors. Construction began in 1856. By July of that year, the railroad had reached the 25 mile point at Cypress. The company reorganized in September 1856 and the name was changed to Houston and Texas Central Railroad (H&TC).

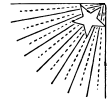
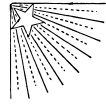
H&TC had reached Millican, 81-miles north from their starting point in Houston by April 1861 but construction was halted due to the Civil War. Following the Civil War, the nation experienced a boom in railroad construction; more than 33-thousand miles of track was laid from 1867 to 1873. H&TC also resumed laying track in 1867, reaching Corsicana in 1871 and Dallas by early 1872. At this time, another key event took place that would soon put Anna on the map.

In those days, the second largest city in Collin County was Mantua (pronounced MAN-choo-way) with a population of about 1,600 people. As work crews surveyed the final segment to complete a route to the Red River, they were looking for land and financial support from the many towns along the route. The townfolks of Mantua figured since the railroad was going to Denison, it would have to pass through Mantua with or without their money, so they decided not to contribute. As a result, H&TC by-passed Mantua to the east reaching Van Alstyne in September 1872 and connected with the Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railroad (popularly known as the Katy) in March 1873. This created the first all-rail route from Houston to St. Louis and, via other connecting railroads, the eastern United States.

Shortly after the line was completed, folks in Mantua, wanting to be near the railroad, began moving to Van Alstyne and future Anna. Within a year, most of the residents of Mantua had moved and, the railroad established a "whistle stop" at mile point 307.6. George A. Quinlan, Superintendent of the H&TC named the unincorporated town after his daughter, Anna (figure 2). A whistle stop is a location established by the railroad where you could raise a flag to signal the train to stop. The engineer would acknowledge seeing the flag by blowing the train whistle and make a brief stop only long enough to quickly load or offload cargo or passengers.

By 1883, more people had moved to the area and Anna got its first post office on May 29, 1883. A plat of streets and lots was recorded at the courthouse in McKinney on November 8, 1883 (figure 1). Construction on the railroad depot was completed in 1885 (figure 3).

The railroad is known as the spark that ignited the town of Anna. However, the Houston & Texas Central is not the only railroad that served the town of Anna. As the population continued to grow, another railroad came through town.



The first interurban service in Texas began in 1901 when the Denison and Sherman Railway Company began service between the two cities. Colonel John Frank Strickland acquired much of the stock of the company while he simultaneously developed the 67 miles long Texas Traction Company between Sherman and Dallas passing through Anna. The first day of operation on this line was July 1, 1908. In 1917, the Texas Traction Company (operating from Denison to Dallas) merged with the Southern Traction Company (Dallas to Waxahachie) and became the Texas Electric Railway. This created the largest interurban railway in the south at that time.

Over the years, there were as many as five independent companies operating interurban railroads in the Dallas area however, they were all collectively known to customers simply as "The Interurban" regardless of what company operated the line. The line through Anna ran parallel to the H&TC tracks (figure 4). The Interurban operated passenger service from 5:30am to midnight and they coordinated their schedules so that trains would arrive in Dallas on the hour and, depart on the half-hour. This allowed passengers arriving in Dallas to be able to take the next train out from Dallas to a neighboring city on the half-hour. Freight service operated 24-hours a day and carried mail, packages, and produce.

The Interurban Line provided a vital link carrying passengers and small freight items throughout the Dallas-Fort Worth area. After World War II, the ability of the average person to own an automobile, and access to improved intercity highway system, caused a significant decline in passenger revenues. The Interurban Line ceased operation at midnight on December 31, 1948.

The Greenville Northwestern Railway was known as Anna's other railroad. Greenville Northwestern Railway started out in August 1912 as the Greenville and Whitewright Northern Traction Company. Their original plan was to build an interurban railroad between Greenville through Merit and Blue Ridge to Whitewright. After a delay of nearly a year, following a stockholder's meeting, they approved a different route and changed the name to Greenville Northwestern Railway Company and construction began in 1913. Freight service between Anna through Westminster to Blue Ridge opened in November 1913 with passenger service following sometime around May 1914.

The twelve miles of track laid between Anna and Blue Ridge is the only track that GNW ever completed and, it came at a high cost of \$122,000. They operated one steam locomotive, one open passenger car, and two freight cars, all of which were purchased from the H&TC. They also operated one passenger motor car (not obtained from the H&TC).

An inspector sent by the Railroad Commission to inspect the line reported, "Their track is the worst I have ever rode over." The Greenville Northwestern never made a profit and went into receivership in July 1916. The line was abandoned in 1920.

The original rail line through Anna is still in operation. Today, the right-of-way is owned by DART and, it is operated by the Dallas, Garland, and Northeastern Railroad.

The Anna Depot and Museum will open to the public in late spring 2021. For more information, you can purchase the book, THE SPARK THAT IGNITED THE TOWN OF ANNA: A collection of stories and pictures of early Anna, by the Anna Area Historical Preservation Society. You can buy the book at the Anna Depot and Museum. Please visit the Anna Area Historical Preservation Society at www.AAHPs.org or call (469) 982-6396.

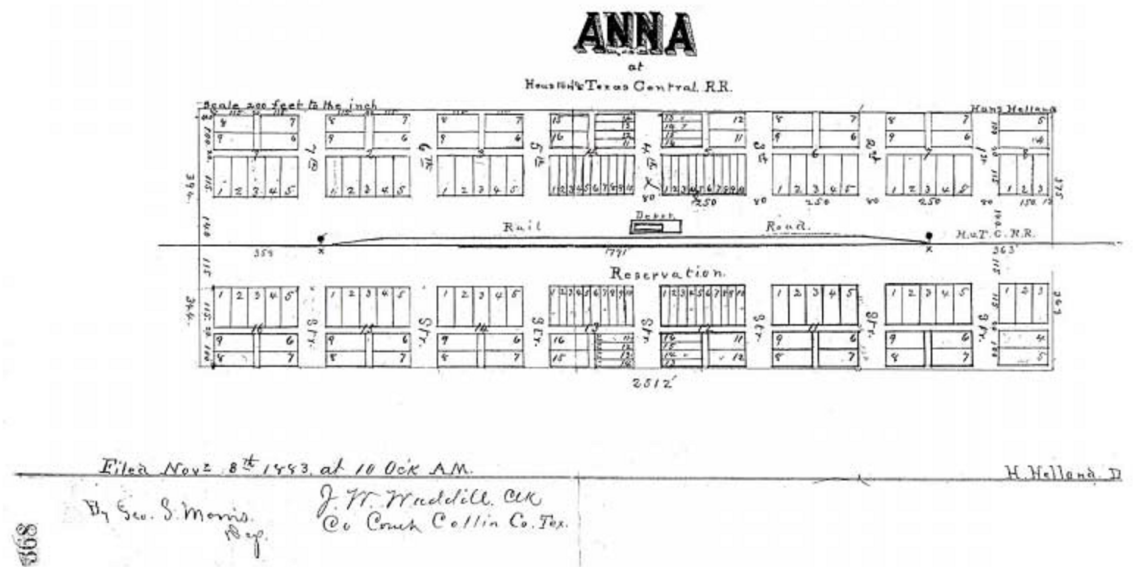
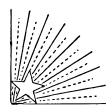


Photo: McKinney County Court

Figure 1: First plat was filed at McKinney Courthouse November 8, 1863. Anna was designed as a 16-block town with the depot in the center. The population of Anna grew to more than 200 people by the time the city was incorporated in 1913.



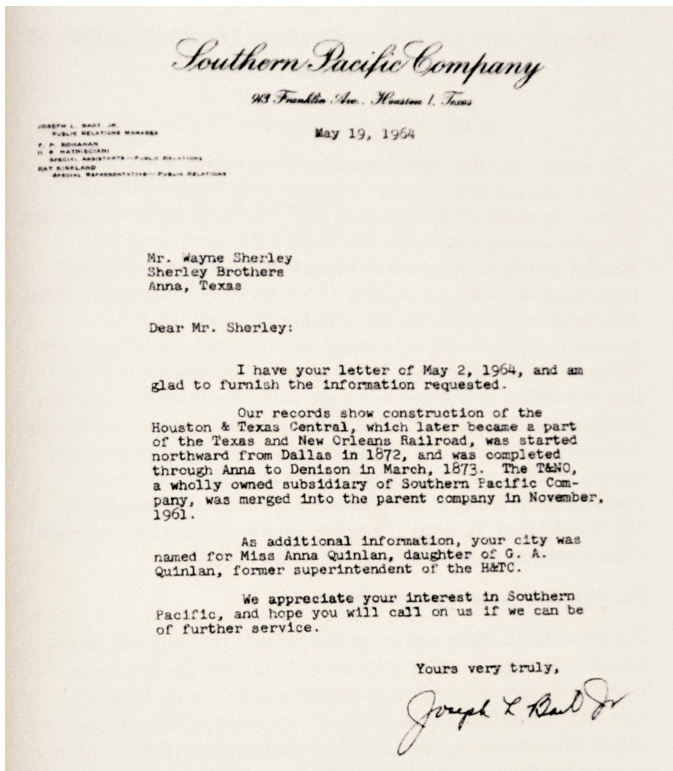
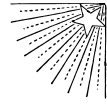
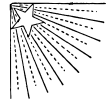


Photo: Anna Area Historical Preservation

Figure 2: Letter regarding the naming of Anna, dated May 19, 1964, from Joseph L. Bart, Jr., Public Relations Manager of the Southern Pacific Company. The Houston & Texas Central was merged into the Texas and New Orleans railroad in 1934 and, the T&NO became part of Southern Pacific in 1961.



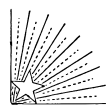
Photo: Elden Baker

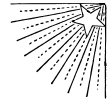
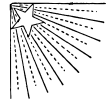
Figure 3: This scale model shows the Anna Depot as it appeared in the early 1900s. The depot was abandoned in the mid-fifties and moved off railroad property in 1960 or '61. It was rescued, relocated and, in cooperation with the City of Anna, restored by the Anna Area Historical Preservation Society. It is now located (across the rails from its original location) at Sherley Heritage Park in Anna. It will open later this spring as the Anna Depot and Museum. Model by Bert Wetherill.



Photo: Anna Area Historical Preservation

Figure 4: Texas Electric Railway, more commonly known as the Interurban, ran between Sherman and Dallas. The railcar seen here is at the Anna station located at 4th Street. The café in the photo is now gone but, it is where Mama Mia's Pizzeria is located today. The date of the photo can be determined by the 1939 Dodge one-ton truck in the photo. The car between the railcar and the café is a 1935 Chevrolet Standard Coupe.





KENNETH COWAN'S LEGACY

By Michael Hill

Michael Hill lives in Weston and currently serves as alderman on the Weston city council.

One of the city council's goals is to work toward gaining recognition of some of Weston's historical buildings. Accordingly, the story of Kenneth Cowan's Garage is worth sharing as for many years this place was important to the community. Cowan's Garage is on the southeast corner of the north-south part of Main Street so important to Weston. Even though the building may need some work, the name and story of it reminds us of the living breathing essence of Weston civic life.

Being born and raised in a house on South Street less than a few hundred feet from the garage, Kenneth grew up learning from his father who, since 1923, ran the garage. Prior to being a garage, the building itself had been a hardware store. Along with general motor repairs, tractors would have been fixed there along with Ford Model T's and A's.

Kenneth spent time in the service after WWII but came back to work with his father and, eventually, took over when his father died in 1959. He managed his family's business with his wife, Mary Sue, and three daughters who helped out at the garage regularly. Kenneth ran his business with the kind of integrity that can be in short supply these days. He took care of his friends and neighbors in a fair and honest way that kept loyal customers returning.

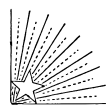
If it was only his work as a businessman, Kenneth would still be an important piece of Weston lore. However, it was his dedication to the service of Weston that set him apart. Kenneth served 18 years as mayor of Weston and was instrumental in the founding of the Weston Fire and Rescue, spending many years as department chief. He also served with our local water utility, Weston Water Supply Company, serving as board president for many years. Sometimes, he volunteered as Weston mayor, fire department chief, and water board president all at once.

Mary Sue said he loved this town and he certainly showed that in his commitment to keeping Weston alive during the trying times of the town's decline as a farming and ranching hub. Kenneth knew Weston was bound to face the pressure of population growth that we are now beginning to witness today. Due to the pressures of new growth, it is essential that we begin to formally document and recognize our town's history. We look forward to working with the Collin County Historical Commission to meet these goals and we hope to someday recognize Cowan's Garage as an important local site.



Photos: Steve Goldstein

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PRESERVING COLLIN COUNTY'S HISTORY

By Janet Samuels

Janet serves on the State Marker and Awards Committees and is chair of the Educational Programs Committee on the Collin County Historical Commission.

Did you know there is a Collin County Historical Commission? Well, yes there is! So what do they do? Who are they? How big is the Commission? Do they get a salary? Let's get started and find out!

The mission of the Collin County Historical Commission (CCHC) is to help preserve and educate residents in the rich history of our county by:

- Initiating and conducting programs and activities for the preservation of our historical heritage
- Marking, interpreting, preserving, and accumulating information on our history and landmarks
- Serving as an umbrella organization for all public and private historical groups in Collin County in order to encourage, support, and promote these groups' activities.

Wow! That's a lot! How do they do that? They work to document Collin County's rich history by working through the state and county marker programs. With over 200 state markers and over 50 county markers, as well as local markers in some cities, nearly every community has markers which tell the stories of Texas history. The CCHC submits all state historical marker applications to the Texas Historical Commission (THC).

The Texas Historical Commission is an agency dedicated to historic preservation within the state of Texas. It administers the National Register of Historic Places for sites in Texas. The Commission also identifies Recorded Texas Historic Landmarks and recognizes them with Official Texas Historical Marker medallions and descriptive plaques. The commission identifies state archeological landmarks and historic Texas cemeteries. A quarterly publication, *The Medallion*, is published by the agency and includes news and advice about preservation projects, Texas' historic sites, and heritage tourism opportunities. The agency also maintains the online Texas Historic Sites Atlas featuring more than 300,000 site records, including data on official Texas historical markers and the National Register of Historic Places properties in Texas. Their website is www.thc.texas.gov.

Is that the only thing the commission does? Well, another thing the CCHC does is put together a Speakers Bureau. This bureau helps organizations and individuals find subject matter experts and authors to speak at meetings and workshops.



Photo: Jan Samuels

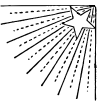
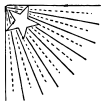
The Bradley Cemetery, McKinney

Also, there is a Historic Texas Cemetery (HTC) designation which documents a cemetery that is over fifty years old. The designation helps protect historic cemeteries and serves to alert present and future landowners who own property adjacent to the cemetery of its existence by recording cemetery boundaries in county deed records.

Does the CCHC encourage preservation of old homes in the county? You bet they do! One of the ways is through what is called Historical Property Tax Abatements. The commission is tasked with the authority to accept applications for historical tax abatements, inspect the properties to determine eligibility for an abatement and recommend to the Collin County Commissioners Court which properties should receive this benefit. The Commissioners Court allows county property tax abatements to qualifying historical properties.

Continued on Page 17





Are there other groups in the county who are preserving our local history? There certainly are. Once per quarter, the CCHC meets with a coalition of other historical groups to share ideas and what each group is doing currently.

Does the group have fun together reviewing all that has been done annually? Each year the Collin County Historical Commission hosts an event that celebrates the historic preservation and education efforts in Collin County. Part of that celebration is the recognition of outstanding individuals and groups that have distinguished themselves in such efforts. The Preservation Celebration brings together individuals and organizations dedicated to the history of Collin County. It is an invitation-only event that is held at a different location each year. Past events have been held in McKinney, Farmersville, Frisco, Plano, Anna, Prosper, Celina and Murphy. The awards given are:



Photo: Jan Samuels

Forest Grove Christian Church, Lucas

Collin McKinney Achievement Award: Recognizes outstanding achievement of a Collin County historical organization or museum that has promoted the heritage of the county with projects, museum education, historical tourism, the erection of tributes to the past and/or the preservation of buildings, publications or records of historical significance.

Excellence in Historical Education Award: Recognizes an individual or organization that has promoted historical education about Collin County, Texas, through teaching and/or preservation programs benefiting schools, community organizations, and/or the general public.

Leadership in Preservation Award: Recognizes an exemplary Collin County city/town, business or developer that has promoted a respect for the county's past through historical projects and/or renovations of historic buildings or sites.

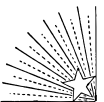
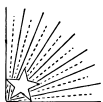
Living Legacy of Collin County Award: Recognizes the outstanding achievement of an individual citizen of Collin County who has significantly enriched our cultural heritage through a lifetime of dedicated service to the ideals of preservation, education and respect of our rich past.

Young Visionaries Award: Recognizes an individual of 18 years of age or less or a youth organization that has significantly contributed to the preservation of Collin County, Texas' historical heritage. Noteworthy activities could include: oral preservation projects, portrayals of living history, promotion of historical tourism, creation of historical education programs, service hours for a museum, historical organization or program, and/or other related volunteer efforts.

Currently, the Commission is made up of 19 volunteers who meet monthly to report on the various projects and their progress of the previous month. They meet in McKinney.

Do you want to learn more about these organizations? For the Collin County Historical Commission go to www.collincountytx.gov/historical_commission/Pages/default.aspx. Go to www.thc.texas.gov for more information on the Texas Historical Commission. Information for this article was gleaned from both of these websites.

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FIRE SAFETY MESSAGE FROM WESTON FIRE AND RESCUE

Weston Fire and Rescue wants to make sure you are keeping fire safety in mind as the weather heats up. From indoor cooking safety, to wildfire prevention, to fireworks safety, please consider the following advice to keep you protected from fire dangers as we head from spring to summer.

Cooking with fire

Cooking-related fires are the number one cause of home fires resulting in serious injuries and deaths. The leading cause of these fires is unattended cooking. Working smoke alarms in your home and fire extinguishers handy in the kitchen are a fire safety must-have. Most cooking-related fires can be avoided by respecting the following cooking safety tips.

Keep your area around the stove clear of clutter, especially combustible items, and be mindful of cooking while wearing loose clothing. Always remain within sight or reach of the cooking area and turn pot handles away from the stove's edge. In the event of a small fire in a pot or pan, turn off the heat source and cover with a pot top. Many of us love the convenience of cooking with our InstantPot but be mindful of steam hazards when using slow-cookers and pressure cookers. When you're done, unplug your electrical appliances. Do not use metal in microwaves and avoid cooking with excessive temperatures, or when tired or impaired. In the event of an oven fire, turn off the power, and leave the door closed.

When in doubt, GET OUT and call 911. If you need to leave your home due to fire, remember to have two ways out and ensure everyone knows where your meet-up point is located.

Uncontrolled fire knows no frontiers

Wildfires are unplanned fires that burn in natural areas like forests, grasslands or prairies. These dangerous fires spread quickly and can devastate not only wildlife and natural areas, but also communities. Every year, wildfires burn millions of acres throughout the United States and more and more people are living within the wildland urban interface.

The National Fire Protection Association states "... more than 72,000 U.S. communities are now at risk" for wildfires. Through programs such as Community Risk Reduction and the Community Wildfire Protection Plan, we can reduce these risks not only on private lands but public lands as well. These collaborative efforts will make our community safer from wildfire.

Weston residents, especially, have to think about the potential for wildfires. While many of us need to burn our yard waste, we have to be mindful to keep our fires controlled. Keep these firefighter rules-of-thumb in mind to safely burn your in your yard. The wind speed, including wind gusts, should be less than 10mph. Burn brush and tree limbs only between 9a.m. and 4p.m. and plan for the burn pile to be completely out one hour before sunset. The diameter of the burn pile should be small enough to be able to manage effectively.

Keep the burn area away from your house, fence line, tree line or creeks or streams. Be sure to clear an area twice the diameter of the burn pile from any combustible material and have a hose and water supply on hand to prevent growth of burn pile beyond controlled area. Any heavy oils, asphaltic materials, items containing natural or synthetic rubber, or any materials other than plant growth which produce unreasonable amounts of smoke may not be burned. Be careful with outdoor activities that generate sparks or fire such as welding and grinding. These activities should be avoided during dry and high wind conditions. Before you light your fire, please check to see if a county burn ban is in effect.

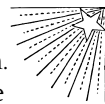
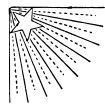
Going the Extra Mile

Here are some additional steps we can take as homeowners to prepare before a wildfire strikes. Clearing leaves and other debris from gutters, eaves, porches and decks can reduce embers from igniting your home. Remove dead vegetation and other items from under your deck or porch, and within ten feet of the house. Furthermore, screening or boxing-in areas below patios and decks with wire mesh can prevent debris and combustible materials from accumulating.

Remove flammable materials like firewood stacks and propane tanks within 30 feet of your home's foundation and outbuildings, including garages and sheds. If it can catch fire, don't let it touch your house, deck or porch. Wildfire can spread to trees. Limb trees so the lowest branches are 6 to 10 feet from the ground. Keep your lawn hydrated and maintained. If it is brown, cut it down to reduce fire intensity as dry grass and shrubs fuel wildfires.



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Inspect your shingles or roof tiles and replace or repair those that are loose or missing to prevent ember penetration. Cover your exterior attic vents with metal wire mesh no larger than 1/8 inch to prevent sparks from entering the home. Also, enclose under-eave and soffit vents or screens with metal mesh to prevent ember entry.

Plan + preparation = safety

It's wise to assemble an emergency supply kit and place it in a safe spot. Remember to include important documents, medications and personal identification with your kit. Develop an emergency evacuation plan and practice it with everyone in your home, especially children, and plan two ways out of your neighborhood and designate a meeting place.

Don't forget to think about your pets in case of a disaster. If you have a plan in place for you and your pets, you will likely encounter less difficulty, stress and worry when you need to make a decision during an emergency. If officials ask you to evacuate, that means your pet should evacuate too. If you leave your pets behind, they may end up lost, injured, or worse.

In the event you are unable to get to your pet, have a neighbor, family member, or friend ensure your pets are accounted for and safe for evacuation. You may want to consider microchipping your pet. If you are separated from your pet, microchipping may be the key to happily reuniting with your furry loved one.

Just as you do with your family's emergency supply kit, think first about the basics for survival, such as food and water for your pet. Have two kits; one larger kit if you are sheltering in place and one lightweight version if you need to evacuate. Review your kits regularly to ensure that their contents, especially foods and medicines, are fresh.

Large animals and livestock need an evacuation plan, too. Ensure all your animals have some form of identification. Whenever possible, evacuate animals earlier and map out primary and secondary routes in advance. Make available vehicles and trailers needed for transporting and supporting each type of animal and also make available experienced handlers and drivers. Ensure destinations have food, water, veterinary care and handling equipment. Lastly, if evacuation is not possible, animal owners must decide whether to move large animals to a barn or turn them loose outside.

You can't start a fire without a spark.

Let's not forget about our favorite patriotic American pastime: 4th of July fireworks. Each Independence Day, thousands of people, mostly children, are injured while using consumer fireworks. Few people are aware of the associated risks involved resulting in burns, dismemberment, other injuries, fires and even death.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, fireworks started an estimated 19,500 fires in 2018, including 1,900 structure fires, 500 vehicle fires, and 17,100 outside and other fires. These fires caused five deaths, 46 civilian injuries, and \$105 million in direct property damage.

In 2018, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's 2018 Fireworks Annual Report stated that U.S. hospital emergency rooms treated an estimated 9,100 people for fireworks related injuries; half of those injuries were to the extremities and 34% were to the eye or other parts of the head. Children younger than 15 years of age accounted for more than one-third (36%) of the estimated 2018 injuries.

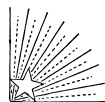
Remember, the presence of any fireworks within Weston city limits is a violation of city ordinance 2010-06-01 and is declared a nuisance. It is an offense for any person to use, possess, manufacture, assemble, sell, or offer for sale, any fireworks of any description within the city's corporate limits. However, it is legal to discharge fireworks on your private property or on private property of another with the owner's permission in the unincorporated areas of Collin County.

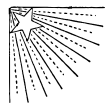
We want this time of year to be enjoyable with family and friends and not a catastrophic event that takes away from the joys we have celebrating this special day. As we prepare to celebrate our nation's birthday this summer, please check the Weston Fire and Rescue website westontxfd.org for any updates about restrictions on fireworks and other fire safety news.

Want to learn more about Weston Fire and Rescue? Join them at the Weston Fire Station "Coffee with the Chief" on May 15th and June 12th from 9a.m. to 11:30a.m. They will address the community's fire protection, community fire prevention programs and its future. Follow them on Facebook, too.



Photos: First Responders Photography





COMMUNICATING BY DESIGN

By Morgan Taber

Morgan Taber is a senior at Collin County Community College. She studies graphic design and specializes in posters and logos.

Growing up, I always enjoyed drawing. At age 16, I remember buying my first Wacom drawing tablet which sparked my love for digital art. A light bulb lit up in my head and I knew I wanted to pursue an artistic career; I just had no idea what to do with my creativity. I was on the Collin College website when I discovered their graphic design program. After doing some research, I knew this program was the path for me.

Collin County Community College has offered their visual communication program for over twenty years. This department includes graphic design, animation/game art, and video production. The visual program provides academic classes taught by wonderful professors with many years of field experience. These courses allow students to expand their creative abilities, master technology (mainly using Adobe Creative Cloud and Office 365) and prepare themselves for their future career. Collin College offers both weekend seminars to help students learn more about their chosen field and clubs to help students gain practical experience.

The past two and a half years at Collin College have been the absolute best. Each semester, I take around four classes, which has allowed me to master Adobe software while broadening my knowledge of the history of typography and design. Throughout these years, I have built a portfolio, met some wonderful people, and learned from some fantastic professors. As a graphic designer, I create visual concepts to communicate ideas. These designs include posters, logos, website banners, book/cd covers, etc. For my future career, I would love to work in a multimedia studio. Along with working in a professional design environment, I hope to continue freelancing from the comfort of my at-home studio where I am currently working on digital illustrations and a comic book.

Want some graphic design help? Reach out to Morgan at mktaber22@gmail.com to answer your graphic design questions.

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SWEET TREATS FROM JOLLY ACRES FARMS

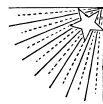
By Laurie Hudgins

What began as a means to provide fresh goat milk for my family evolved into something so much more as I began a love affair with caramel. After honing this craft in my home kitchen for years, I was finally convinced to begin selling at local farmers markets. You can find caramel from Jolly Acres Farms at the Railcar Farmers Market of Van Alstyne, the Mckinney Farmers Market at Chestnut Square, Luscombe Market in Anna, Around Town Artisans, and Lakewood Village Farmers Market in Dallas. Our caramels can also be found in storefronts across the DFW area.

We make caramels in the traditional manner using copper pots, wooden spoons, and patience. We never use corn syrup in our caramels. Instead, we've partnered with a local honey farm and use clover honey and cane sugars to do all the sweet talking. Our products include caramels of various flavors, solid caramel spoons for your hot beverages, cajeta (Mexican dulce de leche), caramel pretzel bark, and more!


After outgrowing our previous kitchens, we moved into a kitchen that includes a storefront in the heart of historic downtown Van Alstyne at 120 S. Main Drive. The Jolly Good Shop is a specialty foods store that focuses on Texas-made products. We sell local meats, eggs, and produce, baked goods, local honey, pickles, jams, marmalades, soaps, and so much more! And, of course, we offer our caramel products. When the weather warms up we'll be making ice cream, sorbet, and gelato to sell by the pint.

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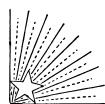
Artist: Morgan Taber

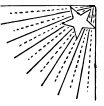
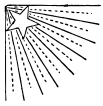
Attention Citizen and Student Writers!



Do you want to write an article about a cool project or tell us about farm life? Interested in contributing a piece about homeschooling or local history? Want to cover a current event or have an announcement to share?

The Weston Post wants to hear from you. We are very interested in showcasing your writing and we encourage student journalism. Please contact thewestonpost@protonmail.com for more information.





SPRING CLEANING

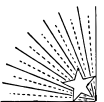
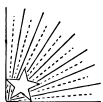
Held in conjunction with the *Great American Clean Up* and *Don't Mess With Texas*, Weston's volunteer Beautification and Conservation Committee sponsored its own spring Trash-Off. On Saturday, April 17, volunteers across Weston and the surrounding area came out to tidy the town and clean up the roadways. Folks picked up their cleaning supplies and personal protective equipment in the morning, tidied up the downtown or local roadside, and then brought their full trash bags back to the Community Center in the afternoon. Thank you to Donna and Robbie Estep for the use of their dumpster.

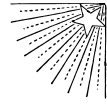
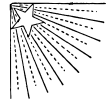
Our community collected a total of 40 bags filled with roadside litter. Alderman Maria Whitworth notes, "from what I saw, it was mostly cans, plastic and glass bottles from beer, soft drinks, and energy drinks; lots of cigarette packages, too. The strangest finds were a steering wheel cover and satellite dish." Alderman Heather Richardson "was so pleased to see Weston Fire and Rescue engage with the kids—what a positive message to send to our community." Missed out on the spring trash off? Stay tuned—there will be another cleanup day in the fall.



Photos: Maria Whitworth & Heather Richardson

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CELEBRATION OF BLOOMS

On Saturday, April 24, the Chambersville Tree Farm hosted Bloomdango: its annual celebration of blooming trees, shrubs, and plants. Families enjoyed the cool spring weather and had fun enjoying the beautiful gardens, playing yard games, drinking Caudalie Crest's delicious wine, eating frozen treats from Kona Ice, listening to live music, and buying creative treasures from local artists, including *The Weston Post's* coloring page illustrator, Cate Robbins.

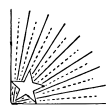
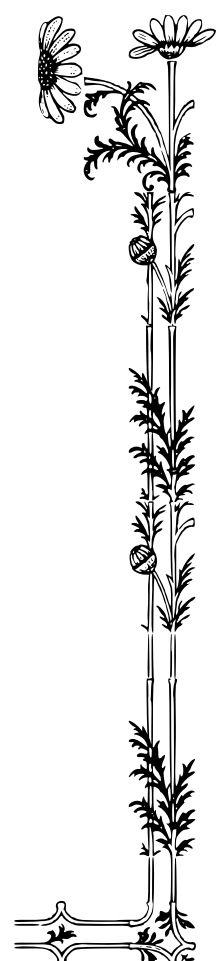
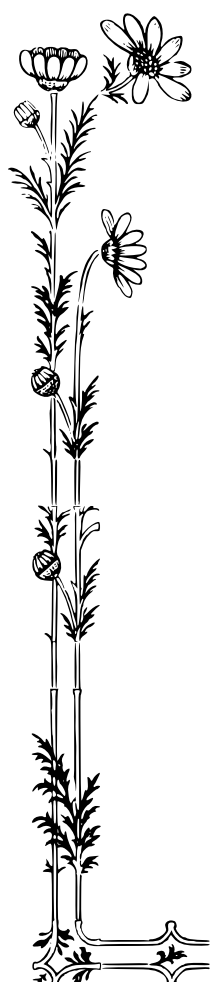
Weston Fire and Rescue also showed up for the day and hosted lots of fun demonstrations. They showed off their new addition to the fleet, a fully restored 1938 Ford Truck with original 85 horse powered flathead V8 engine. What a beauty!

Julia Poempitana and her family had a blast. She says, "The fire department guys were amazing...they really loved the kids and it showed. The whole [event] was beautiful and serene and a great escape from the city."

Do you need some trees, plants, and shrubs for your yard? Visit www.chambersvilletreefarms.com and check out their selection. They can deliver and plant your trees, too!



Photos: Mitch Levine





COLLIN COUNTY HISTORY ESSAY COMPETITION

The Collin County Historical Commission is hosting an essay competition for all K-12 students. We encourage all students to participate, including homeschoolers. A cash prize of \$100 will be offered to the best elementary, middle, and high school essays. Winners and runner-ups will also have their essay published in *The Weston Post* and on the Historical Commission's Facebook page.

Along with using proper grammar and spelling, we encourage students to research and use evidence to support their thesis. Your essay needs to be a minimum of 500 words, double spaced, and typed in Times New Roman font size 12. Please include a title and list your name, age, grade, school, contact phone/email and add a bibliography page. Note: these items are NOT included in the word minimum for your essay. Submissions are due by midnight on September 30, 2021. Please email your submission to Jan Samuels at windmillc@aol.com.

Please write an essay on ONE of the following topics:

1. Climate, geography and natural resources play a large role in the development of a civilization. How did these factors help shape the history of Collin County?
2. Explain how Collin County history is significant to the history of the state of Texas, as a whole.
3. Collin County is experiencing major population growth as people relocate from other parts of the country and the world. Given this trend, do you think it is more important for students to study local, national or world history? Explain.
4. Select a person who played a noteworthy role in Collin County history. Describe your historical figure and explain why he or she is significant. Consider writing about one of the following people:

James Webb Throckmorton, Audie Murphy, Kathryn "Katie" Heard Craig, Ray Roberts, Collin McKinney, Robert Cannon Horn, Augustus 'Gus' Wilson, Joseph 'J.B' Wilmeth, Henry Oliver Hedgcoxe, Sam Rayburn, Ebert Wiley 'E.W.' Kirpatrick, Sam Bass, Bess Heard, Ammie Wilson, Russell A. Steindam, Kiowa chief Spotted Tail, John Abston, Raymond Hamilton, Ralph Fults

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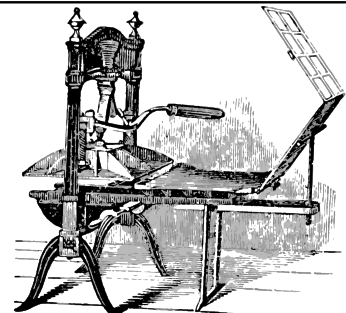
Gotta Have Faith



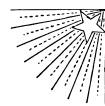
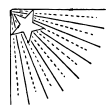
If you don't have a local faith community, then consider contacting one of Weston's three churches: Calvary Chapel Honey Creek (www.calvarychapelhoneycreek.org); First Baptist Church of Weston (www.fbcwestontx.org); or First Christian Church of Weston (www.firstchristianweston.com).

Donation Appreciation!

Thank you to the Goldstein family, Legacy Print Group, the Levine family, Jim Marischen, and the Whitworth family for your contributions to Classroom Counterpoints and keeping this print edition of *The Weston Post* alive.



Thank you Legacy Print Group for supporting the print edition of *The Weston Post*. Legacy Print Group is owned by Weston residents. Shop local and visit legacyprintgroup.com for your printing needs.



NORTH TEXAS FORAGING

By Courtney Taylor

The following piece is adapted from Courtney's ebook *Edible Wild Plant Basics*. She has been interested in foraging for many years and taught foraging classes to hundreds of students. Courtney now lives in Weston with her husband and children.

My knowledge of wild edible plants has evolved little by little over the years, and will continue to develop. I have referenced many wild food identification books, and received instruction from several experienced foragers over the course of a decade, and it actually took quite a while for much of it to sink in, because it's so much more than just memorizing the characteristics of edible wild plants.

Developing the skill of foraging requires closely observing nature; the more I have observed nature, the more activated my senses have become, and the easier it is for me to notice and identify nature's subtleties. To most modern people, wild plants (and most things in nature) all look very similar, because the things we're used to looking at all day in our culture have bold, brash, stimulating colors and dramatic movements that are designed to easily catch and hold our attention. It will take some time for our senses to calm down from this overstimulation, and begin to discern the subtle nuances of the natural world. I noticed that my nature awareness skyrocketed soon after I moved onto some acreage in the country, and was walking in nature daily.



Photo: Lacey Miller

My primary advice to new foragers is to have a LOT of patience with yourself in your learning process and focus on your enjoyment of the journey itself. It is healthy to have goals and to desire a certain level of proficiency. However, the main thing about foraging that will really hook you in is the extremely satisfying, rhythmic, meditative experience of the day-to-day exploration process. I find that in this process, for me, I get so lit up with any little new discovery I make and it becomes a highlight of my day!

Your Responsibility

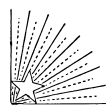
Now that you know it may take a while to become a proficient forager, even with just a few plants, it is important to remember to invest a lot of time in your observation and studies, BEFORE even beginning to eat the plants that you think you've identified on your own as edible. The subtle differences of plants require some fine tuning of your awareness. At first, a lot of plants will look the same as other plants. Clover may look "just like" wood sorrel to a beginning forager. With most plants, mistaking it for a different plant is harmless: at worst, it will taste bad and you will have to spit it out. But there are a relatively small number of plants that do have very toxic "look-similars" (which can harm you with even a small taste), and because of this, it's not worth the risk of guessing.

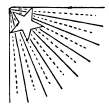
The most important foraging rule is *be completely certain* that you have positively identified an edible wild plant, *before* you even try a taste of it. This will require thorough identification: make sure it looks like pictures of that plant at the seasonal stage it's at and fits the description from multiple sources (online or in books). Always double and triple check when you're first identifying a plant, because some sources may have inaccuracies.

Once you have truly identified a plant, and become very familiar with it, you will develop what foraging expert Samuel Thayer calls a "search image" of it: kind of like how when you see your parents, you don't have to study all their distinguishing characteristics to know they're your parents; you just KNOW. That's because you have a "file" in your mind that contains a huge amount of information of all the characteristics (and possible variations) of your parents' appearance.

It's the same way with each plant you "befriend". Once you have gotten to know it, you will see it all over the place, and instantly recognize it, whether it's just sprouting, in its flowering stage, gone to seed, or has dried up! Once you have done this with a few plants, it gets easier and quicker to do it with more and more plants. So even though it may seem like a lot of work before you can even eat your first wild plant on your own, it is only at first, and gets astonishingly easier and faster as your proficiency develops! Patience is definitely a virtue with foraging.

Continued on Page 25





Foraging Etiquette

There are specific ways to harvest wild edibles that are most respectful to the plant you're harvesting, the ecosystem around it, and other foragers that may come after you. Only harvest the amount you need. When you're harvesting leaves, break each leaf off cleanly without stressing the plant (pinching it off between your thumbnail and first finger works great), and only take a few leaves from each plant, so it can easily continue its growth to maturity. Only harvest from plants that already have a thriving population in that area (if there's just one or two plants of that type, leave it alone and come back next year).

Always ensure it is acceptable to explore and harvest plants from the land you're on; if it's private property, obtain permission first from the land's owner. A common nature exploration saying is "leave no trace". My upgrade to this slogan is "leave each place better than when you found it". This means I will often pick up litter, prune dead branches and rotten fruits from fruit trees I'm harvesting from, and whatever else this specific piece of nature seems to be asking for. Even if land I'm foraging from is not technically my land, I enjoy feeling a sense of "stewardship" for it for the brief time I'm there.

Introducing Chickweed

The following information is not meant to serve as an identification guide and I will not list all of the distinguishing characteristics of chickweed, or any of the things you will need to know to identify it correctly, or show pictures of it at all stages. This information is all on the internet, as well as in many excellent books. My purpose is to *introduce you to a new friend*. As with all friend introductions, I can introduce you, but it is up to you to develop your own relationship with the plant. This is an enjoyable process that takes time, care, and attention to detail! I purposely kept the description short and my language as plain as possible. It is meant as a bridge for a new forager into the deep, complex world of foraging.

One of the tastiest wild greens, chickweed is a favorite of wild food fans everywhere. Appearing in late winter or early spring, chickweed loves growing in partially shady, disturbed areas. When the plant is young (before or during flowering stage), the entire plant (leaves, stems, flowers) is edible and is delicious when eaten raw. It is one of my favorite wild greens to graze on while enjoying nature. It is mild, tender, and also makes a wonderful salad green. It is rich in minerals, especially iron and potassium, and in vitamins A, C, B's, and D. Herbalist Susun Weed prizes chickweed for helping to burn excess fat for those who require it, thanks to the small amounts of saponins it contains.



Chickweed (*Stellaria media*)

Chickweed is a low-growing herbaceous plant that often acts as a trailing groundcover. The leaves grow in opposite pairs and are pointed ovals. The flowers are tiny and white, with thin, pointed petals that notch so deeply that it looks like many petals. The stems are rounded, with a single-file line of fuzz on the stems between each node (which moves to the opposite side between the next node).

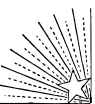
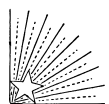
Be aware that chickweed looks similar to a plant called scarlet pimpernel (*Anagallis arvensis*), which is said to be mildly to moderately toxic. The differences are scarlet pimpernel usually has reddish flowers (although it can occasionally have white flowers) with rounded petals, square stems, a bitter flavor, and no stem fuzz at all. Chickweed does not have milky sap; if you break a stem or leaf and see white sap, it isn't chickweed.

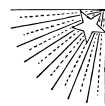
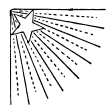
Final Thoughts

Use common sense, and understand that there is a learning curve for us modern people. This huge learning curve didn't exist for native peoples, nor does it exist for my 10 year-old son, who has been interacting intimately with nature since he was born. Even though it may seem like a huge learning curve for those of us who have grown up spending most of our time interacting with the artificial world, I believe that developing finely tuned nature awareness is one of the most valuable skills we can have at this time of living on our planet. We may really require these skills soon. The artificial system is unsustainable, because it ignores the laws of nature, and that means it will either change or get composted, I believe sooner rather than later. I have found a deep level of empowerment and comfort in familiarizing myself with the natural world we are actually living in!

Want to learn more about foraging? Email Courtney at chocotrixie@gmail.com to get her ebook and request to join the Wild Foraging North Texas facebook group to learn more about this skill.

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BEING “GOOD NEIGHBORS” TO LOCAL WILDLIFE

The following piece is an interview conducted by Maria Whitworth with Chris Jackson, the creator of DFW Urban Wildlife.

Collin County and, specifically, the northern area around Weston is home to a variety of wildlife, including raccoons, opossum, armadillos, skunks, rabbits, deer, wild boar, frogs, skinks, copperheads, rat snakes, water snakes, ribbon snakes, spiny lizards, tarantulas, orb weavers, wolf spiders, bats, barred and great horned owls, Cooper’s hawks, great blue heron, roadrunners, turkey vultures, mourning doves, bobcats, coyotes, and the occasional mountain lion (plus a plethora of songbirds, pollinators, and other insects!).

What are some benefits of living with these critters?

All of these animals have their own particular roles to play. All are important. Just as in any habitat, an urban or suburban environment has ecological niches that need to be filled—predators, prey, scavengers, pollinators, etc. Every animal on the list makes meaningful contributions to the local ecosystem, and their benefit comes from the fulfillment of their specific roles.

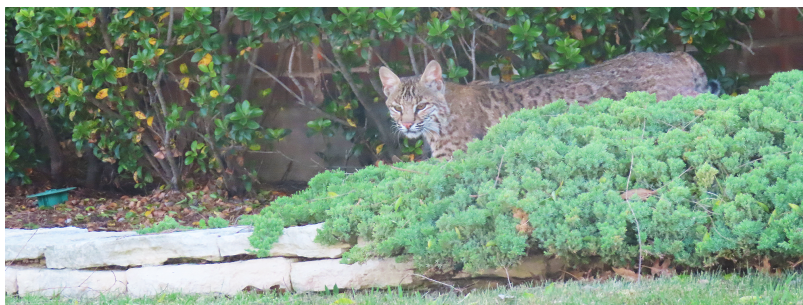


Photo: Chris Jackson

For people living in proximity to urban wildlife, many feel that the most important positive they derive is simply that these animals offer a way for them to stay connected to nature. We delight in the butterflies that visit our flower beds. We love listening to the birds singing in our trees. We get excited when we catch a rare glimpse of the neighborhood bobcat or a patrolling coyote family group. We enjoy watching the clownish antics of raccoons and squirrels. People often value having wildlife around for no other reason than because they appreciate that window into another world.

How can humans live as good neighbors to these critters, especially as more and more “citified” people move into this growing rural area?

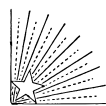
Texans are sometimes surprised to learn just how much wildlife can be found in our neighborhoods. Urban and suburban environments are not generally thought of as good habitats for wildlife, but in many cases they actually can be. It is important to remember that wild animals cannot exist in places where there are not adequate resources. If there are wild animals living in a particular community, it is because they are able to find what they need to survive there.

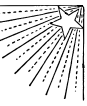
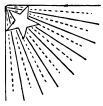
Flexibility and adaptability are important traits for urban wildlife, and many of the animals on your list have these key characteristics. Additionally, people tend to surround themselves with abundance, and many of our more adaptable species have found ways to leverage this to their advantage. The quality and quantity of food, water, and shelter that we inadvertently provide has allowed many of these critters to not only exist in developed areas, but to thrive there as well.

It also appears that people’s attitudes about coexisting with urban wildlife have changed significantly over the last several decades. It seems that many people have become much more receptive to the idea of accommodating wildlife whenever possible. Fortunately, not much effort is required ordinarily, as urban wildlife seldom causes serious problems. The vast majority of us will be able to enjoy the birds that pass through our yards, the insects pollinating our gardens, the lizards and toads living in our landscaping, and the occasional sighting of mammals like raccoons, coyotes, and bobcats without ever having reason for concern.

Even so, some of the animals we find in our neighborhoods are more popular than others. Many are revered, while others are reviled. It should be noted that all wild animals have the potential to come into conflict with the people when they live in close proximity. Conversely, all wild animals can be enjoyed and appreciated by anyone who is open to recognizing what each species has to offer. There is something special about every form of wildlife that lives in North Texas.

If and when serious wildlife conflicts do occur, it is reasonable for these issues to be dealt with in whatever ways are determined to be legal, ethical, and effective, but there is little to be gained from blanket vilifications of any species. In the rare case when nuisance wildlife must be addressed, many people are now willing to look for creative, ethical, and humane solutions. To that end there are many resources available online—several operating out of the DFW metroplex—that offer useful advice regarding how best to coexist with urban wildlife.





What should we do with an injured or orphaned visitor?

This is a good question, especially during this time of year. Spring is referred to as “baby season” by wildlife rehabbers because of the sheer number of wild orphaned babies they are called on to assist with. And, of course, animals with serious injuries can be encountered at any time of the year. Fortunately, there is a well-established network of skilled and licensed wildlife rehabbers in and around the DFW metroplex that can provide help.

The most important thing to do when concerned about the wellbeing of a wild animal is to first make a clear assessment of whether intervention is really warranted or not. Sometimes an injury is not as serious as it might first appear. For instance, a limping coyote may simply have a sprain or minor injury that will resolve on its own in just a few days. Many folks mistake fledgling birds—immature birds that are out of the nest but still unable to fly well—as needing assistance. But this is just a normal stage of a young bird’s development. The baby bird’s parents are still providing care for the fledgling, and in this case no intervention is necessary. Juvenile animals are always better off in the care of their parents.

Contacting one of our local wildlife hotlines is the right place to begin when a distressed animal is encountered. These services offer advice about when and how intervention should be attempted, and they can put you in touch with an appropriate wildlife rehabber. It should be noted that these services are volunteer based. Patience may be required to allow time for associates to return calls and provide information. Wildlife rehab can also be an expensive proposition. A befitting donation to help offset the cost of the care of a rehabbed animal is always appreciated.

DFW Wildlife Hotline www.dfwwildlife.org (972) 234-9453

Blackland Prairie Raptor Center www.bpraptorcenter.org (469) 964-9696

Rogers Wildlife Rehabilitation Center www.rogerswildlife.org (972) 225-4000

Animal Help Now www.ahnow.org (303) 543-0755

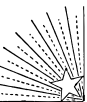
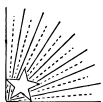
Please tell us a little about your background, and what inspired you to create DFW Urban Wildlife?

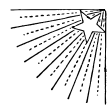
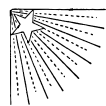
I began DFW Urban Wildlife a little over 15 years ago. I created the web site as a way to indulge my budding interests in a couple of key areas—namely: website design, photography, writing, and wildlife in general. Once the website was up and running it quickly took on a life of its own. DFW Urban Wildlife has continued to grow over the years, and as such it has afforded me the opportunity to conduct many interesting projects and to make a number of exciting discoveries. These days, I use DFW Urban Wildlife as a venue for sharing the things I discover about urban wildlife with other like-minded people, which is perhaps the most fulfilling aspect of the endeavor.

Interested in learning more about Chris Jackson’s DFW Urban Wildlife? Please visit www.dfwurbanwildlife.com for more information.



Photos: Chris Jackson





TEXAS DANDELION WINE

By Mitch Levine

This recipe specifically uses Texas dandelions (*Pyrrhopappus pauciflorus*). They are in season in Weston from mid April to late June. Peak season is early to mid May. The final yield is 4 × 1 liter bottles.

Ingredients:

- 8 cups (11 oz) Texas Dandelion Petals
- 2 lbs 11 oz Sugar
- 1 Lemon (zest and juice; no pith)
- 4 Oranges (zest and juice; no pith)
- 1 gal Water
- 1 g Champagne Yeast

Directions:

1. Boil the water.
2. Pour boiling water over petals, cover with cloth or lid, and let steep for 18 hours to 1 day.



Photos: Mitch Levine



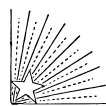
3. Pour back in pot and boil.

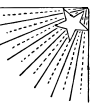
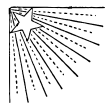


4. Add zest and boil for 10 minutes.



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5. Strain into vessel with the sugar and mix to dissolve.



Photos: Mitch Levine

6. When it has cooled down (around 95–100°F) add the juice and yeast. Let yeast acclimate for 20 minutes.

7. Put in a sanitized fermentation vessel with an airlock.



8. Place in a temperature controlled, dark place like a closet with something underneath in case the fermentation is too strong and it bubbles over. Rack and bottle into sanitized bottles when the wine clears and bubbling stops/fermentation ceases (about 4–5 weeks).

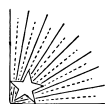
9. Wait 6 months before tasting. Best after 1 year—it's worth the wait.

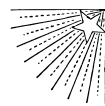
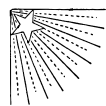
Notes:

Pick the dandelions in the morning before they close. They usually close between 10a.m. (sunny, warm day) and 1p.m. (cooler, overcast day). Do not take too many from one area. Leave most for the oligolectic and polylectic pollinators and seed for next year.



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Photos: Mitch Levine

I find that I spend just as much time picking as I do processing the dandelions. Keep this in mind so you can pace yourself.

When separating the petals from the green base, bunch the petal tips together with one hand, pinch the back of the green base with the other hand, and gently pull. Make sure to not add any green parts, as they will impart a bitter taste.



If you cannot collect the full amount of petals in one picking session, put the petals in a bag in the freezer until you can collect enough.

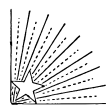
An enameled cast iron pot works great for steeping the petals and dissolving the sugar. You can use a 1 gal glass jug as the fermentation vessel and seal with a drilled rubber stopper and double bubble airlock. For final bottles, 1 liter swing top glass bottles work great.

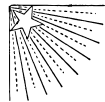
Sanitize absolutely all equipment that touches your wine, after you add the yeast, with a brewing sanitizer like Star San. This prevents other microorganisms from proliferating in your wine and creating undesirable flavors.

Don't forget to label your fermentation vessel and finished bottles with the contents and date of bottling.

Make sure that fermentation has ceased before bottling or your **bottles will explode!**

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This is what it looks like after 1 day of fermentation.



The one on the right was made that day and the left one is 5 days old.



Photos: Mitch Levine

What is the alcohol content? I did not measure with a hydrometer, but the yeast I used could survive up to 18% alcohol content. It certainly tastes like I got close to that proof.

The dandelion petals are yellow but when you pour boiling water on them, the water turns crimson red. Then you add lemon juice and the acidity turns it a disappointing brown, but when you ferment the wine, it returns to yellow. Go figure.

Do you have a great family recipe you'd like to share with us? Email thewestonpost@protonmail.com and let us know about it!

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Photo: LMM Photography

Spring in Weston is such a beautiful time of year. Sarah and Charlotte had fun wearing their flower dresses and posing in the bluebonnets. Thanks to Lindsay Morrison for the great picture! You can find LMM Photography on Facebook.

Help Print the Post

The Weston Post is a civics engagement project of the 501(c)(3) charity Classroom Counterpoints. Classroom Counterpoints and, by extension, *The Weston Post* is funded entirely by donations. If you are interested in contributing a tax-deductible donation to support this project, then please consider donating through our website classroomcounterpoints.org/donate or mail us a check, made payable to Classroom Counterpoints, to the following address:

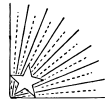
Classroom Counterpoints
P.O. Box 216
Weston, TX 75097

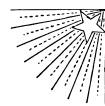
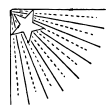
Thinking about Homeschooling?

Many families are new to the homeschool world. Weston has a thriving homeschool community that is willing to help you meet your learning goals. If you need help navigating curriculum or locating enriching activities locally, then please contact Brittany at classroomcounterpoints@protonmail.com.

Looking Good!

The Goldsteins are looking for a great Weston t-shirt design and plan to get shirts made in the upcoming months. Got a great idea for a cool Weston t-shirt? Submit your design to epi@dfwair.net by June 1 to have your design considered.





GARDEN SHOWCASE

Barbara Emmons grew up as one of twelve children and began gardening at a young age. She says, “We had a huge garden. We all worked in the garden helping with the weeding and picking of vegetables. So my gardening started early.” Her passion to grow her own food continues to this day. Currently, she is enjoying her cold weather vegetables like radishes, lettuce, and onions. She’s also growing potatoes, tomatoes, English peas, beans, and cucumbers and soon will plant squash and other warm weather vegetables. Later in the season, she plants okra and corn and then some acorn squash, pumpkins, and more.

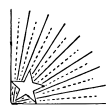
Her garden is organic and she has some tricks to encourage growth and limit pests. Barbara explains, “When planting my tomatoes, cucumbers, etc. I put a fish under each one. The fish is so good for the plant; the Indians taught the Pilgrims this [trick] when they came to America. When I plant potatoes, I use bone meal in each hole. When they get growing, I make sure I mulch heavily with leaves and/or hay. That way, potato bugs won’t be a problem... They cannot get up through the mulch... This year there are a lot of pill bugs. They can mow down your crop and hard work in a night. I have tried placing pie tins with beer in them. This does work but I have so many potatoes that I really needed more than this. I tried a product called SLUGGO PLUS... Just sprinkle it on the plants and around the bottom. It has certainly worked for me...”

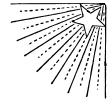
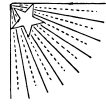
Barbara also shares her garden’s bounty with those in need. She says, “Lots of people are hurting during this pandemic and are in need. Anytime I can help someone with what I have, I feel I should be doing that. That is what the Bible says I should do.”

Barbara recommends that new gardeners start a compost pile, mulch dead leaves in the fall, and check out Youtube for growing tips. Happy gardening!



Photos: Mitch Levine





JOIN OUR TEAM

Volunteering with the Weston Fire and Rescue is your chance to truly make a difference in your community and get involved in something rewarding and meaningful.



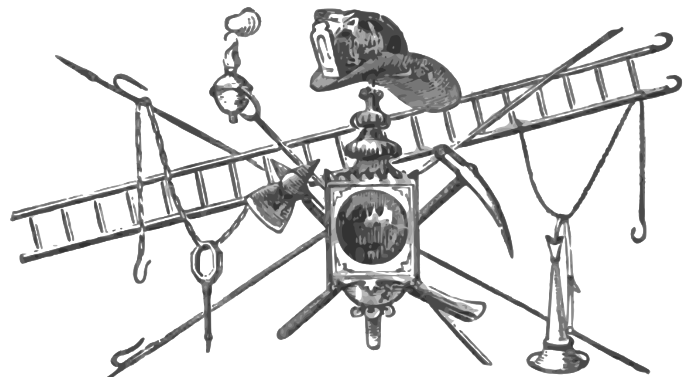
Weston Fire and Rescue is currently asking the residents of Weston Fire District to become volunteers. You will receive training in firefighting or emergency medical services. All the training provided to you is FREE of charge and is always ongoing. Your responsibilities as a member will include responding to emergencies (either fire, rescue, or ambulance calls), attending monthly meetings, and training exercises.

If you think you are ready to take the next step, visit westontxfd.org/services/ and complete the application. You are also encouraged to attend one of our bi-monthly meetings on the first and third Tuesday of each month at 7p.m. at the Weston Fire Station just behind the Weston Community Center.

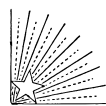


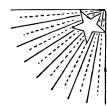
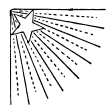
Photos: First Responders Photography

You must remember that you will be volunteering your time and that we provide emergency service 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In becoming a volunteer you will be providing the residents of your community, possibly your friends and neighbors, with an outstanding and dedicated fire department. You can make a big difference in your life and the lives of others by volunteering your time.



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THE GOOD OL' DAYS

Weston has always been a safe and peaceful place, but every once in a while, crime strikes our serene community. The following article from 1936 describes an attempted home robbery in Weston that caused quite the local stir. Bottom line: it is wise to keep your doors locked.

The Celina Record

VOLUME THIRTY-FOUR

CELINA, TEXAS, THURSDAY, JANUARY 23, 1936

NUMBER 30

Attempted Robbery At Weston Fails

An attempt to rob W. J. A. Hurst, who resides on his farm just west of Weston, Sunday night about 8:30 failed.

Mr. Hurst, 81, and his wife had retired, while Joe Frair and his wife, who live with the aged couple, had gone to the home of Charlie Stiles, about fifty yards distant, about twenty minutes before the attempted robbery.

Mr. Hurst heard the robber enter the house and fumble around in the room, but supposed it was Mr. Frair, and asked him what he was looking for. The culprit replied in a coarse voice: "I want your pocketbook."

Mr. Hurst rose to a sitting posture and said: "I'll cut your throat." This seemed to frighten the intruder and he fled. In doing so he made a noise and Mr. Frair and his wife heard it and returned to the Hurst home to ascertain what caused it.

It has been generally understood in the neighborhood that Mr. Hurst usually kept sums of money about the house. He was robbed of \$100 by someone, last summer, and had money this time, but it was in the pocket of his nightshirt.

There was no light in the room when the man entered other than that afforded from the grate in which a fire flickered, but Mr. Hurst said he could see well enough to tell that the intruder wore a mask made of a bag slit from the top almost to the bottom, with holes cut

for arms and eyes, which had been slipped on over the head.

Constable Betty of Weston and Sheriff Walker of McKinney were called and arrived a little later, Sheriff Walker bringing his deputy, Stony Allen, with him.

Mr. Hurst and Mr. Frair heard no car and believe the man attempting the job was on foot. This was borne out by an investigation made by the officers. Tracks across the field, far apart, indicating the maker of them was running, were followed to the Celina-Weston pike, and it could be seen that he took the Celina end of the pike. But the tracks could be followed no further, due to the hard surface of the road and the fact that snow that had fallen Saturday had been blown off the surface of the highway.

About a quarter of a mile from the Hurst residence the sack worn by the man who attempted the robbery was found.

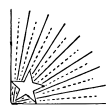
An attempt was made by the officers investigating to secure bloodhounds from Sherman, but the sheriff there had none.

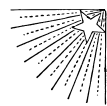
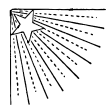
One home in the community, near which the tracks passed, was entered by the officers and members of the family questioned. No evidence was found that any member of the family had anything to do with the attempted robbery.

It is believed by officers that the guilty person resides in Weston or nearby.

Source: <https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph774007/m1/1/>

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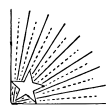


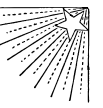
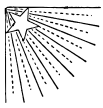
COLORING PAGE



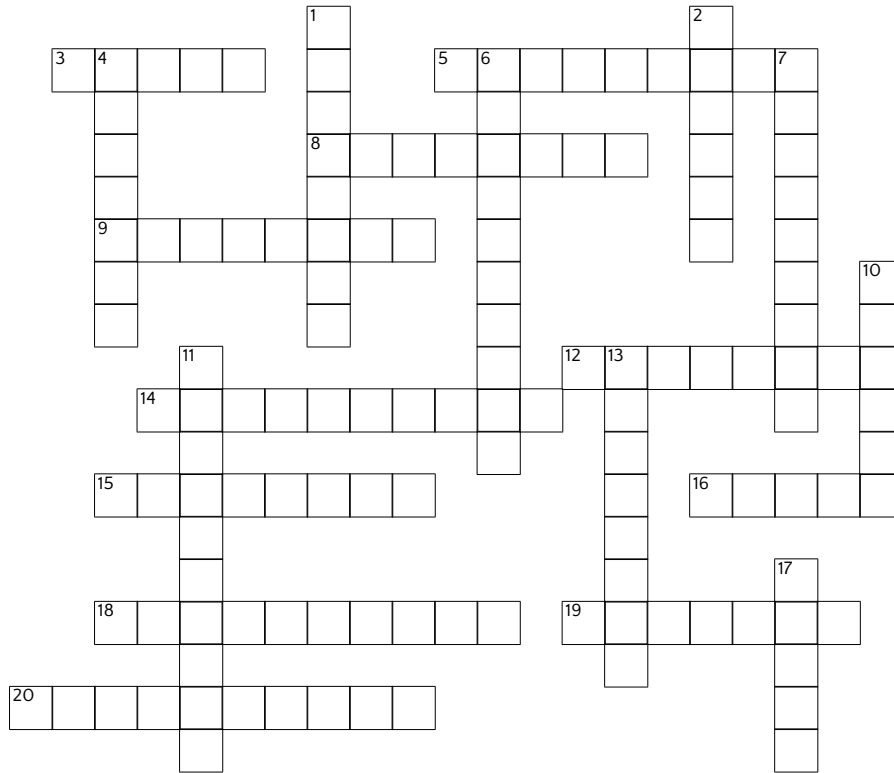
But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay."

Matthew 28: 5-6





CROSSWORD



Across

- 3 Studying graphic design at CCCC
- 5 Early spring edible
- 8 Prevents water from freezing
- 9 David's boyhood job
- 12 Weston spring cleaning event
- 14 Snake found in Weston area
- 15 Chris Jackson's DFW Urban _____
- 16 Spanish flu ran through Camp _____
- 18 Alderman and WWSC board member
- 19 The people's building
- 20 _____ of States

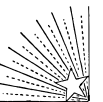
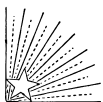
Down

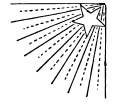
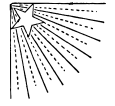
- 1 Weston's new fire chief
- 2 Emergency water filter
- 4 Local WWI Hero
- 6 Collin County _____ Commission
- 7 Wine making flower
- 10 _____ with the Chief
- 11 Local caramel artisan
- 13 Influenced Anna's history
- 17 Legendary Weston mayor

Answers found at bottom of last page.

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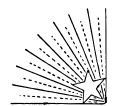
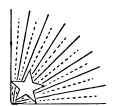
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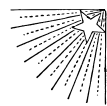
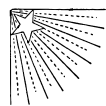


BLUE BONNET & FRIENDS

By Cate Robbins
www.caterobbins.net

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WORD SEARCH



Find the 20 solutions to the crossword hidden in the word search.

C G C K Z J T G E C M B X I F G R Y A W H F G
 U N Q S T Q Y V M O U O C F Q C E N E W R F W
 K O S C C Y O Q X P K W H O S T G W M L U F R
 X S L H N A W O C P T I I X N R D C G Z N O T
 S D A I T G B I U E C E C C B V M H J V T H Z
 H R C C S N S E W R H R F M E O E T S K Q S N
 E A I K E P D F C H A A D O R U K N T Z R A Z
 P H R W R W A I A E M X A L K M C M T G V R V
 H C O E C S O L P A B T N A E J M S G I U T A
 E I T E A L R D I D E D D S Y T R O O J O E G
 R R S D Y I L L T O R S E S R M S M R T Y N L
 D L I D L R I I O P S N L E L W C Y E N Q Z C
 J P H O L U A W L O B V I S L S Z I B B C K R
 U D L T O C R E R J L B O R G A N W A R Z J E
 W B M F J T P I D L F O N A M Z P F T I E B B
 W U U W V E E F F O C G K A D A M S O N X K V

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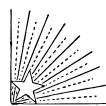


SUDOKU

		9		2		8	3	
3			9	8			6	1
7						5		2
4	6	3		5			7	
		8			1		2	
			4	6				
		7			4			
	9							
6			5	3		2		



Answers found at bottom of last page.

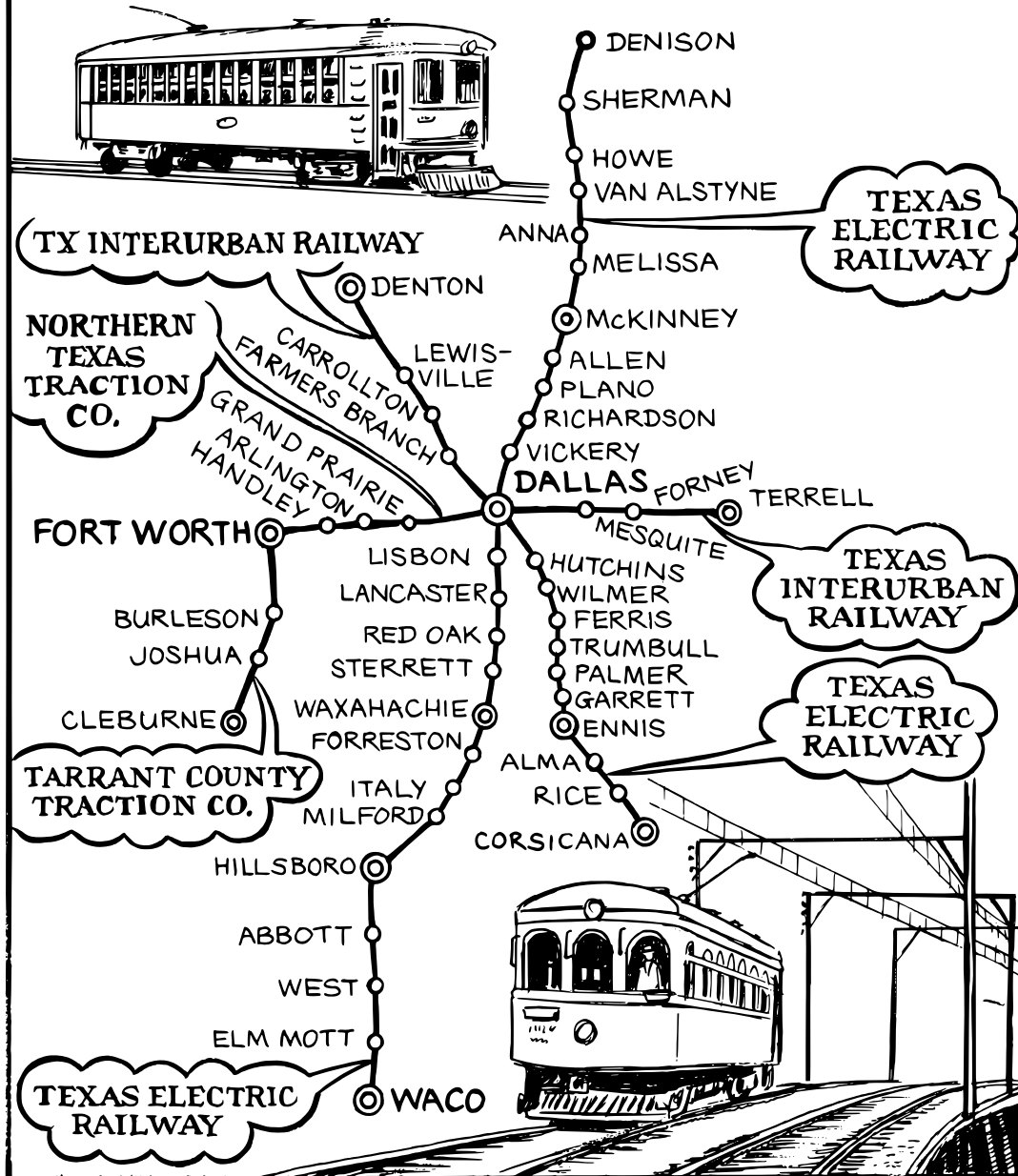


TEXAS LORE

by Patrick M. Reynolds

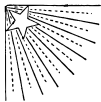
AT THE TURN OF THE 20th CENTURY, STEAM RAILROADS COULD NOT, OR WOULD NOT, KEEP UP WITH THE INCREASED DEMAND OF FREQUENT INTER-CITY TRAVEL. FEW PEOPLE COULD AFFORD AN AUTOMOBILE. TO FILL THIS VOID, SEVERAL COMPANIES BUILT ELECTRIC RAILWAYS - INTERURBANS - TO LINK CITIES AND TOWNS, AND DALLAS WAS THE HUB OF ONE OF THE

Finest Interurban Systems.



For 20 years, Patrick M. Reynolds researched, wrote, and illustrated *Texas Lore*, which appeared weekly in *The Dallas Morning News* and other publications. Reynolds has given *The Weston Post* permission to use his images.

You can purchase his illustrated *Texas Lore* books at www.redrosetudio.com/texas.html.



UPCOMING EVENTS

- ★ **May 11** Weston City Council Meeting at City Hall 7:30p.m.
- ★ **May 15** Coffee with the Fire Chief at Weston Fire Station 9-11:30a.m.
- ★ **May 31** Memorial Day
- ★ **June 8** Weston City Council Meeting at City Hall 7:30p.m.
- ★ **June 12** Coffee with the Fire Chief at Weston Fire Station 9-11:30a.m.
- ★ **June 19** Emancipation Day
- ★ **July 3** 4th of July Parade, 10a.m.
- ★ **July 4** Independence Day
- ★ **July 13** Weston City Council Meeting at City Hall 7:30p.m.
- ★ **August 10** Weston City Council Meeting at City Hall 7:30p.m.

Gardening Tip



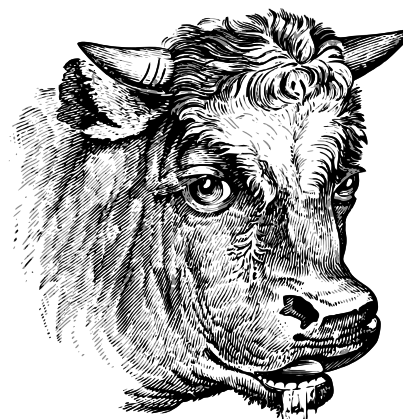
It's about that time of year when gardeners start getting itchy from chigger bites. To keep chiggers at bay, keep your grass cut—chiggers thrive in long, shaded grass. Also, lay down some sulfur pellets in your yard and dust from your knees down with a sock full of sulfur powder.

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FILING DEADLINES FOR NOVEMBER 2, 2021 GENERAL ELECTION

Do you want to serve your community as mayor or as a member of Weston's city council? If you live within the city limits, then consider running for election. The City of Weston will hold an election on November 2, 2021, for mayor and two aldermen.

- ★ **July 17** First Day to File for Place on the General Election Ballot
- ★ **August 16** Last Day to File for Place on the General Election Ballot
- ★ **August 20** Last Day to File a Declaration of Write-in Candidacy
- ★ **October 4** Last Day to Register to Vote
- ★ **November 2** Election Day



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Meeting Schedule



Weston Fire and Rescue
1st and 3rd Tuesday
7p.m.
203 Main Street



Weston Water Supply Corp
Last Monday
7p.m.
406 Chicken Street

5	1	9	7	2	6	8	3	4
3	2	4	9	8	5	7	6	1
7	8	6	1	4	3	5	9	2
4	6	3	2	5	9	1	7	8
9	5	8	3	7	1	4	2	6
1	7	2	4	6	8	9	5	3
2	3	7	8	9	4	6	1	5
8	9	5	6	1	2	3	4	7
6	4	1	5	3	7	2	8	9

"A human being should be able to change a diaper, plan an invasion, butcher a hog, conn a ship, design a building, write a sonnet, balance accounts, build a wall, set a bone, comfort the dying, take orders, give orders, cooperate, act alone, solve equations, analyze a new problem, pitch manure, program a computer, cook a tasty meal, fight efficiently, die gallantly. Specialization is for insects."

—Robert A. Heinlein

Answers: 1. CHAMBERS 2. BERKEY 3. TABER 4. ADAMSON 5. CHICKWEEDE 6. HISTORICAL 7. DANDELION 8. MOLASSES 9. SHEPHERD 10. COFFEE 11. JOLLYAGRES 12. TRASHOFF 13. RAILROAD 14. COPPERHEAD 15. WILDLIFE 16. BOWIE 17. COWAN 18. RICHARDSON 19. CAPITOL 20. CONVENTION

