



Benbrook News

Established 1939 • A Publication of Suburban Newspapers, Inc.

86th Year, No. 14 • 7820 Wyatt Drive, White Settlement, Texas 76108 • suburban-newspapers.com • April 2, 2026

From the Sports Desk with John English

Lady Cats' Standout Season Ends, Foundation Set for Future Success

The season came to an end for the Benbrook girl's soccer season following an undefeated district campaign and trip to the area round of the playoffs.

Benbrook lost 2-1 against Brownwood last week, and coach Kristen Martinez said her team battled hard throughout.

"Brownwood was a tough game," Martinez said. "They have physical girls who play a very different style of soccer than we do. The Lady Cats started out very slow. It seemed like we were nervous or unsure of ourselves. When we didn't get a couple of early calls by the officials that could've been game changers, we knew it was going to be a battle all night. Brownwood scored first and it was 1-0 going into halftime. We made some adjustments to start the second half and were able to tie the game. Unfortunately, Brownwood was able to score another goal with about 15 minutes left in the game and we just couldn't find the back of the net to answer again."

Martinez said the Chavez sisters (Sydney and Lily), "always perform well, but other standouts this game included our sophomore center back, Leah Jimenez, and our freshman goalkeeper, Zoe Clark who led the defense."

Reflecting on the season as a whole, Martinez said her team did a good job at what the team was trying to accomplish.

"It takes time to make a culture shift and get buy in from ev- (continued on page 4)

From the Benbrook News Staff Writers

Benbrook Senior Center Announces Full Slate of April Activities and Events

The Benbrook Senior Center has announced their schedule of activities and special events for April, offering local seniors a variety of opportunities for recreation, socialization and community engagement.

The center, open Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Tuesday and Thursday from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., continues to host a consistent lineup of weekly games and activities designed to keep participants active and connected.

Regular weekly offerings include bridge on Mondays and Thursdays at 9 a.m., as well as Hand and Foot games held every weekday at 9 a.m. Pegs and Jokers is scheduled for Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at noon, while canasta players meet Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9 a.m. Mexican Train dominoes is also offered Tuesdays and Thursdays at noon. Additional options include Mah Jongg on Tuesdays at 9 a.m., dominoes on Wednesdays at 9 a.m., and 42 dominoes on Fridays at 9 a.m.

In addition to its standing schedule, the center has planned several special events

throughout April.

The center will be closed April 3 in observance of Good Friday.

On April 8, participants can start their day with a breakfast outing at 8 a.m. at Cracker Barrel with Cathy and Kathy. Later that same day, at 11:30 a.m., the center will host an Easter rock painting activity. Both events require advance registration.

A highlight of the month is Friday Night Bingo and dinner, scheduled from 6 to 8:30 p.m. April 10.

Later in the month, a field trip luncheon is planned for April 22 at 11:30 a.m., with attendees visiting Dixie House Cafe and Painted Rock Distribution. As with several other events, prior registration is required.

Center officials encourage participants to sign up early for special events, as space may be limited. The April calendar reflects the center's ongoing mission to provide engaging programs that foster connection, creativity and fun for Benbrook's senior community.

From the Benbrook Public Library

Sensory-Friendly Sunday, April 12

The Benbrook Public Library will host a Sensory-Friendly Sunday event April 12 from noon to 2 p.m., offering a welcoming and calming environment for individuals and families with sensory needs.

The event is designed to provide a safe space for participants to explore the library at their own pace. Activities will include

spring-themed crafts and interactive stations throughout the facility.

A special storytime is scheduled for 1 p.m.

Library staff encourage community members to attend and learn more about available programs and resources. For more information, call 817-249-6632.

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These newspapers are published and delivered digitally every Thursday.

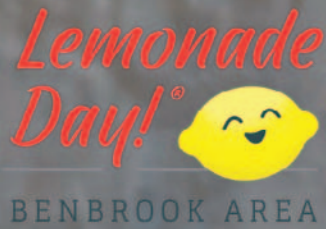
Deadlines are Friday at 4 p.m., prior to the following Thursday's edition.

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Mistakes in stories or ads must be reported by Friday at 4 p.m. following Thursday's edition for corrections. Advertising payments are due by 10 a.m. Monday.



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From Benbrook News Staff Writers Building Accessible Community Events for All

In small-town communities, local events are more than just gatherings, they are the heartbeat of connection. From festivals and parades to library programs and school functions, these moments bring neighbors together and strengthen community bonds. But for many families, especially those with members who have disabilities, these events can feel out of reach.

Creating accessible and inclusive events is not just a thoughtful gesture; it is an essential part of building a truly connected community.

For individuals with autism, sensory sensitivities can make traditional events overwhelming. Loud music, crowded spaces, bright lights and unpredictable environments may create barriers that prevent participation. For nonverbal individuals, communication challenges can also make navigating public events difficult without proper accommodations or understanding from others.

As a result, families often make the difficult decision to stay home.

This absence is not due to a lack of interest, but rather a lack of accessibility. Over time, repeated experiences like this can lead to feelings of isolation, not just for the individual with a disability, but for the entire family. Parents, siblings and caregivers may also feel excluded from the very community they are a part of.

Small changes can make a big difference.

Event organizers can take meaningful steps to create inclusive environments. Offering sensory-friendly hours, reducing noise levels, or designating quiet spaces allows individuals with autism to participate comfortably. Clear signage, visual schedules and trained volunteers can help support nonverbal attendees and those who communicate in different ways.

Accessibility also extends beyond physical and sensory needs. It includes fostering a culture of patience, understanding and acceptance. When community members are educated about different abilities and communication styles, interactions become more welcoming for everyone.

Importantly, inclusion benefits more than just those with disabilities.

When events are designed with accessibility in mind, they often become more enjoyable for all attendees. Families with young children, seniors and individuals with temporary limitations also benefit from thoughtful accommodations. Inclusive communities are stronger, more compassionate and more resilient.

For families who have felt excluded, even small efforts can be life-changing. The opportunity to attend a holiday celebration, watch a parade or participate in a community fair without fear of judgment or discomfort can restore a sense of belonging. It sends a powerful message: you are valued, and you are welcome here.

Local organizations, schools, libraries and businesses all play a role in making this vision a reality. By listening to the needs of families and working collaboratively, communities can create events that truly reflect the diversity of their residents.

Inclusion is not about perfection, it is about intention. As small towns continue to grow and evolve, prioritizing accessibility ensures that no neighbor is left behind. Because at its core, community is about showing up for one another, and making sure everyone has a place to belong.

Sports Desk (continued from page 1)

everyone,” Martinez said. “I’m super pleased with how willing this group was to jump right in and go to work from day one. Was it disappointing that we didn’t make a deeper playoff run? Of course. But, we will be back.”

Martinez said she hopes her players take away a sense of accomplishment from this season.

“Even though we didn’t make it as far as we had hoped in playoffs, I saw tremendous growth from many athletes, both mental and physical,” Martinez said. “I also hope they take with them the friendships that were formed and solidified. We had a close group with little drama and it was enjoyable to coach.”

Martinez said she has “high hopes” for next season as well.

“Our returning group will come back stronger and ready to play at an even higher level,” Martinez said. “We say goodbye to 10 great seniors, but we still have 11 returning players from the varsity group on which to continue to build.”

On the diamond, Western Hills won it’s fifth straight game with a 17-1 victory over Eastern Hills last week.

“The girls came out Friday night and took care of business against a well-coached Eastern Hills team,” coach Tyler Sutton said. “We played to our standard and it led to a smooth and dominant win with every player that was active contributing in some way.”

Sutton said standouts included senior outfielder Sophia Castellanos, who hit an inside the park home run, which was the first of her career scoring three runs.

“She scored three runs herself as well,” Sutton said. “Senior second basemen Vivian Hernandez hit her first triple of the season, which cleared the bases scoring three runs. She scored three runs as well. Senior Pitcher Addison Dudley was dominant, striking out nine and only allowing one hit.”

The Lady Cougars improved to 6-1 in district with the victory, and with the first half of district play under it’s belt, Sutton said he is feeling pretty good about how his team is competing.

“Winning a district Title is our No. 1 goal for this season,” Sutton said on Saturday. “After the first half of district, we have placed ourselves in a position to achieve that goal with it being all in our control. After a tough loss to current first place Benbrook earlier this month, the girls have been playing with a fire that can’t be extinguished. With arguably the biggest game of the season on Tuesday, the girls are prepared to embrace the challenge with energy, tenacity, and confidence. They are excited for the opportunity to share control of first place with a win on this upcoming Tuesday night.”

In baseball, Benbrook swept its series with Western Hills, winning by scores of 13-0 and 15-0, and coach Justin Chavez said he received excellent pitching from his team.

“We played Western Hills this past week and threw two no-hitters,” Chavez said. “We had five pitchers throw combined no-hitters for both games and Daniel Stiefvater and Sebastian Martinez got the wins. We hit the ball all the way around pretty good and played good defense when we needed to.”

The Bobcats came up short on Saturday to Iowa Park, a top five team in the state, and Chavez said the 6-4 loss was a hard one to swallow.

“We had the bases loaded in the last inning and one more base hit would have tied up the game,” Chavez said. “However, we didn’t play a complete game as we should have to win that game. We have a couple more Saturday games that will definitely help us get ready for the playoffs. We are now 6-0 in district and 13-8 overall.”

The Bobcats recorded their 200th win as a program on Friday night.

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From the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

TPWD Launches First All-Digital State Wildlife Action Plan in the Nation

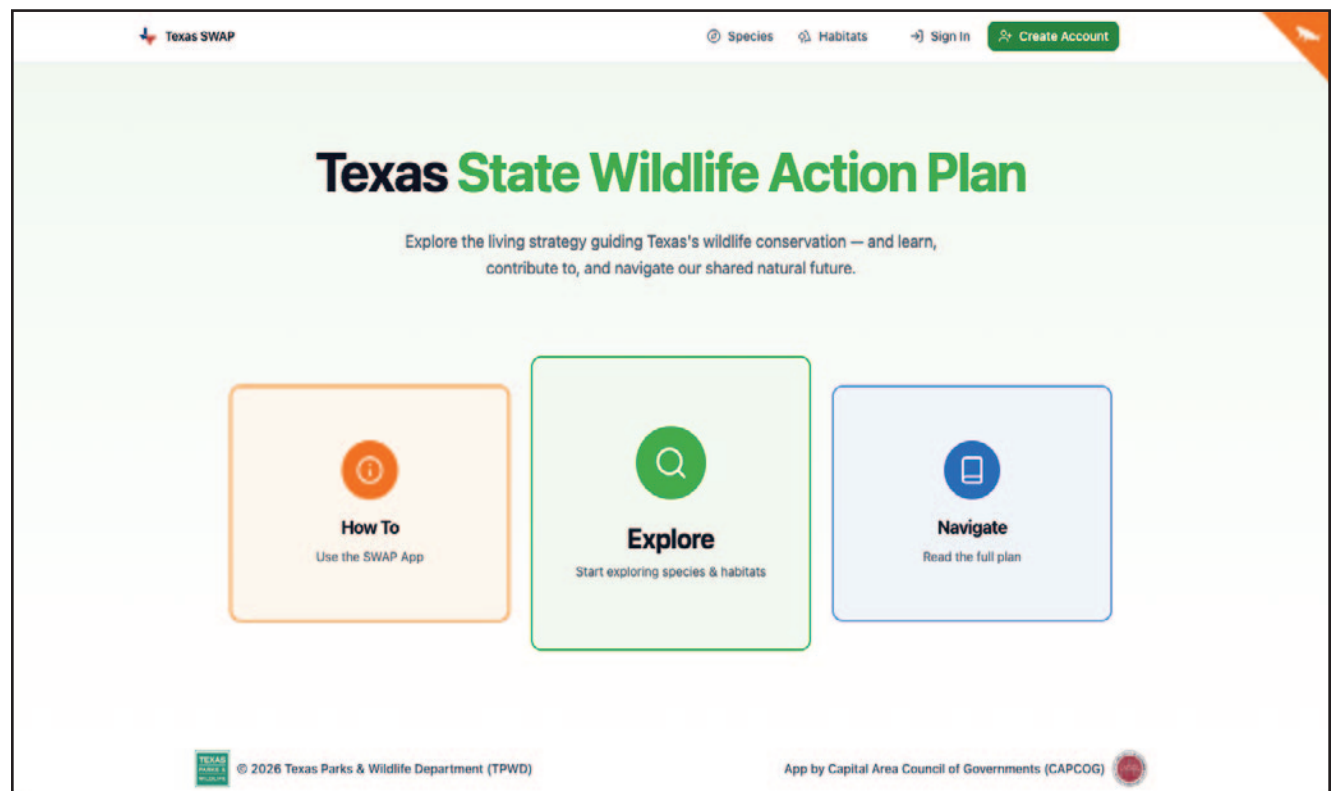
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) has launched the nation's first all-digital State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP). The SWAP is Texas' statewide conservation roadmap for Species of Greatest Conservation Need and their habitats.

Maintaining an approved SWAP keeps Texas eligible for about \$3 million annually in federal State and Tribal Wildlife Grants, which support conservation research and on-the-ground actions in communities across the state through university and conservation partners.

"We are so excited to debut the country's first all-digital State Wildlife Action Plan," said Kelly Simon, State Wildlife Action Plan Coordinator for TPWD. "Our hope is that making the plan accessible through an intuitive webpage will encourage Texans to utilize this tool and make it easy for them to find what they need, understand priorities and take the next step. The SWAP is Texas' conservation roadmap for rare and declining wildlife, and the web tool makes that roadmap practical and accessible, whether you're staff, a partner, or a member of the public."

The update to the SWAP modernizes and improves usability, transparency and public access. The public-facing web tool allows Texans to explore conservation priorities for rare and declining wildlife and the habitats they rely on. The web page is optimized for use by most devices, which allows users to navigate seamlessly through the plan. Users can also narrow down their search through several categories including taxonomic group (birds, amphibians, reptiles, etc.), by federal and state protection status, and habitat type, just to name a few.

"We built this to be a working system, not a once-a-decade document," added Simon. "Partners and Texans can contribute information year-round, and staff will review it so the plan can stay current. If you manage land, teach students, do research, or just care about wildlife, this gives you a straightforward way to see what species



need and what actions can help."

The online plan also links species information to threats, recommended conservation actions and monitoring considerations. Additionally, it includes science-based decision-support tools such as Knowledge Gap Analysis and Conservation Opportunity Areas, which help clarify priorities and identify where conservation actions can have the best chance of success.

"Conservation dollars are limited, and Texas has incredible natural heritage, so this tool helps us be transparent about importances and tradeoffs, and the logic we used to set priorities," said Simon. "The Knowledge Gap Analysis helps us answer a basic question: do we need more targeted research or are we ready to move into on-the-ground conservation action. It's a way to focus effort where it can matter most. Conservation Opportunity Areas help with the 'where' question. They highlight places where conservation work has a strong chance of success, and they help with project planning and site selection."

The SWAP is designed for broad use by landowners, land managers, students, researchers, conservation partners, and the public. It also supports year-round participation through features that allow partners

and Texans to contribute field-based insights.

Anyone can submit Nature Notes without creating an account, and researchers and conservation partners may request Partner Access to contribute more directly through the SWAP Workbench.

"What success looks like for me is pretty simple," said Simon. "If this helps people design better projects, target effort more effectively, and improve outcomes for species over time, then it's doing its job."

To explore the Texas SWAP online, visit www.txswap.org.



From the Suburban Newspapers Staff Writers

Common Foods That Can Harm Pets: What Dog and Cat Owners Need to Know



For many pet owners, sharing food with a beloved dog or cat can feel like a natural extension of the bond they share. However, veterinarians caution that some common human foods can pose serious health risks to pets. While an occasional treat may seem harmless, certain ingredients can lead to illness, toxicity or even life-threatening conditions.

Understanding what not to feed pets is just as important as knowing what keeps them healthy. Here is a closer look at five foods dog owners should avoid, followed by five that are especially dangerous for cats.

The following is a list of the top five foods you should never feed dogs:

- Chocolate is one of the most widely known dangers for dogs, and for good reason. It contains theobromine and caffeine, both of which dogs cannot metabolize effectively. Even small amounts can cause vomiting, diarrhea, rapid heart rate and, in severe cases, seizures or death. Dark chocolate and baking chocolate are especially toxic due to higher concentrations of these compounds.

- Though small and seemingly harmless, grapes and raisins can cause sudden kidney failure in dogs. The exact substance responsible remains unknown, but even a small quantity can trigger symptoms such as lethargy, vomiting and decreased appetite. Immediate veterinary care is critical if ingestion is suspected.

- These common kitchen staples, whether raw, cooked or powdered, can damage a dog's red blood cells. Over time, this can lead to anemia. Symptoms may not appear right away but can include weakness, pale gums and reduced energy levels. Repeated exposure, even in small amounts, increases the risk.

- Found in sugar-free gum, candies, baked goods and some peanut butters, xylitol (an artificial sweetener) is extremely dangerous for dogs. It can cause a rapid release of insulin, leading to a sudden drop in blood sugar. In severe cases, it can also result in liver failure. Pet owners should always check ingredient labels carefully before sharing foods.

- Alcohol affects dogs much more quickly and severely than humans. Even small amounts can lead to disorientation, vomiting, difficulty breathing and potentially fatal drops in blood pressure or body temperature. This includes not just beverages, but foods prepared with alcohol as well.

While cats are often more selective eaters than dogs, they are not immune to dietary dangers. In fact, their unique metabolism makes cer-

tain foods even more hazardous.

Here is a list of the top five foods you should never feed cats:

- Like dogs, cats are highly sensitive to compounds found in onions and garlic. Even more concerning, cats are particularly prone to developing anemia after exposure. Foods seasoned with onion or garlic powder should never be shared.

- Feeding raw foods may seem natural, but uncooked eggs and meat can harbor harmful bacteria such as Salmonella and E. coli. Additionally, raw egg whites contain avidin, which can interfere with the absorption of biotin, an essential B vitamin important for skin and coat health.

- Cats are less likely to eat chocolate than dogs, but the risk remains. The same toxic compounds, theobromine and caffeine, can cause serious health issues, including muscle tremors, heart problems and seizures.

- Beyond chocolate, caffeine is found in coffee, tea, energy drinks and some medications. Even small amounts can overstimulate a cat's nervous system, leading to restlessness, rapid breathing, heart palpitations and muscle tremors.

- Contrary to popular belief, most adult cats are lactose intolerant. Milk, cheese and other dairy products can cause digestive upset, including diarrhea and stomach discomfort. While many cats may enjoy the taste, it does not mean it is safe or beneficial.

Pet owners play a critical role in protecting their animals from preventable harm. While it can be tempting to share table scraps or treats, veterinarians emphasize the importance of sticking to pet-safe foods specifically formulated for dogs and cats.

In addition to avoiding harmful foods, owners should store potentially dangerous items out of reach and educate family members, especially children, about safe feeding practices. When in doubt, consulting a veterinarian is always the best course of action.

From 4PAWS & Benbrook Animal Shelter

Tiny Maggie Needs a Home



Maggie is a loving Chihuahua looking for a forever home.

She is 2 years old, weighs eight pounds, is fully vetted, and is chipped. She just wants a comfortable lap and snuggles on a couch.

Adoptions are available at the Benbrook Shelter, located at 469 Winscott Rd., on Tuesday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., or on Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Visit www.4pawsinc.org or call 4 PAWS volunteers, Ursula at 817-262-3086, or Lynda at 682-279-0760 to set up a meet-and-greet or to get more information about any of the available dogs.

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Texas History Minute by Dr. Ken Bridges

East Texas General Led Troops With Honor in World War I



Honor matters. In any organization, military or civilian, the importance of integrity, loyalty, and dedication are beyond question.

It is these principles that led the United States to victory in World War I, a war now a century in the past. Millions of Americans served in this war, some giving everything for their country, including Texans.

One of the men leading American troops into battle was Gen. Robert Howze, a career officer from East Texas who served with quiet dedication and honor throughout his 38-year career.

Robert Lee Howze was born in Overton, a small community just east of Tyler, in 1864. He was born in the midst of the Civil War as the Confederate effort neared collapse. His father, James Howze, served as a captain in the 14th Texas Cavalry. Growing up, he was inspired by his father's own wartime service to seek a military career of his own.

Howze graduated from Hubbard College, more of a college-preparatory school, in 1883. He was awarded an appointment to the United States Military Academy at West Point. When he graduated in 1888, he earned a commission as a lieutenant and was assigned to the Sixth Cavalry in the New Mexico Territory.

In 1890, the army grew concerned about the growth of the Ghost Dance religion at the Black Hills Indian Reservation in South Dakota and the associated ceremonial dances.

Fearing a rebellion was about to erupt, army units across the West were sent to the reservation to restore order. What resulted was the mass shootings of unarmed civilians, culminating in the Wounded Knee Massacre in December 1890 in which 150 Sioux were killed. Howze and his unit were not involved in that incident, and actions against the Sioux continued. Howze was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his actions in an engagement with a group of Sioux in January 1891. The medals awarded during the campaign, however, have become increasingly controversial since that time.

By 1905, now a lieutenant colonel, Howze was named commandant of cadets at West Point. He emphasized honor and integrity as commandant. When one cadet was ostracized by his entire class for reporting a hazing incident in 1907, Howze threatened to expel the entire class. He would go on to serve with Gen. John Pershing's punitive expedition into Mexico in 1916 against Pancho Villa. Howze was then assigned to Fort Bliss in El Paso and promoted to brigadier general in 1917.

America was being drawn into the Great War in Europe. President Woodrow Wilson had attempted to stay neutral in the fighting and even tried to negotiate a peace settlement since the war started in 1914. In 1917, after Germany threatened to attack American ships and attempted to incite Mexico to attack the US, America declared war on Germany. Quickly, millions of men were drafted into the service in a war to, as Wilson said, "make the world safe for democracy."

He was given command of the 38th Infantry Division, training as many new recruits as possible before sending them to France. The fighting was fierce. American casualties surged. He was promoted to major general and given command of the Third Division in the decisive Meuse-Argonne Offensive in October 1918. American troops fought with great courage under Howze's command. The offensive finished off the exhausted Germans, who asked for a cease-fire after years of battle and millions dead across Europe. The war officially ended on Nov. 11, 1918, a day remembered afterward as Armistice Day and today known as Veterans Day.

Howze and his forces stayed in Germany

until 1919 as an occupational force. Germany was in the midst of revolution after the war, and the Allies stayed to maintain order. He was then returned to Fort Bliss.

In America, Billy Mitchell, a decorated army general, saw a new war coming on the horizon and tried to warn the nation. Mitchell desperately sought support for developing the Army Air Corps and new aviation technology and foresaw the serious deficiencies in American defenses in Hawaii. However, Mitchell's bitter and public criticisms of army preparedness and air technology development led to his demotion and reassignments to an army camp in San Antonio by 1925. His continued criticisms led to charges of insubordination and a court martial by early 1926.

Gen. Howze presided over the board of judges hearing the court martial of Mitchell. It would be his last major duty for the army. In the widely-publicized hearing, Mitchell was found guilty and suspended for five years from the service.

The general passed away quietly in Columbus, Ohio, in September 1926, a little more than seven months after the Mitchell trial. His two sons, both West Point graduates themselves, would serve honorable careers in the army, both reaching the rank of general.

The army remembered the service of Howze and honored his memory by naming Camp Howze for him in 1941. The camp was an army training center near Gainesville, near the site of the modern-day municipal airport, before it closed in 1946.

Another Camp Howze was established in South Korea before it was turned over to South Korean command in 2005.

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April 2 agenda

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Weekend Forecast



Friday, April 3:

AM - A 40% chance of showers and thunderstorms, mainly after 1pm. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 81. South wind 15 to 20 mph, with gusts as high as 30 mph.
PM - Showers and thunderstorms, mainly after 1am. Low around 55. S/SE wind around 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph. Chance of precipitation is 80%.



Saturday, April 4:

AM - Showers and thunderstorms. High near 68. West northwest wind 15 to 20 mph. Winds could gust as high as 30 mph. Chance of precipitation is 80%.
PM - Partly cloudy, with a low around 49. North wind 5 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.



Sunday, April 5:

AM - Partly sunny, with a high near 68. North northeast wind 5 to 10 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.
PM - Partly cloudy, with a low around 47.

Extended Forecast [Click Here](#)