



City of Benbrook ★ A Texas Star City

# Benbrook News

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*From the Sports Desk with John English*

## ***Benbrook MHS and Western Hills HS Cross Country Preview***

Cross Country season is set to get underway in just a few weeks and Benbrook MHS is looking to repeat upon the success it enjoyed last year.

The Bobcats won a district championship on the girl's side and finished second in district on the boy's side in 2022, and coach Syna Donart said things are shaping up well for 2023.

"We are looking strong coming into the 2023 season," Donart said. "We only lost three seniors last year and our top runners from last year are all returning. We gained a lot of experience with our young runners last season. Our goals include both teams going on to the regional meet again and getting more qualifiers to the state meet."

Stronger returning runners from last season include state qualifier Carley Couch, along with Bella Aranda, Ruth Walker, Connor Sandquist, Levi Brawley and Hudson Felker.

Donart said one of the things that is different about this year's program is that the popularity of the sport has grown at Benbrook.

"We have a lot of interest in our program so we will have some new runners including a good group of incoming freshmen who ran in our MS program last year," Donart said.

"Also, our experiences from last year will provide us with some strong leadership, including a great group of seniors to help lead the way."

To have a strong season, Donart said she needs two things from her runners.

"Continued hard work and dedication to the program will lead us to another successful season and help us reach our goals," Donart said.

Donart said Diamond Hill-Jarvis will be "our toughest district opponent for both the boys' and girls' teams."

Benbrook finished first in the district for the girls with a perfect 1-7 finish in 2022.

The Bobcats finished 13th at the Region 2 meet for girls and 16th at region for boys, and Couch finished 13th overall at regionals, earning a chance as a freshman to compete at the state meet.

Over at Western Hills, Emmanuel Nshimiyimana finished third in district, Wilonja Ebula finished 11th and Oscar Guerra was 14th, as the boys finished third overall as a team.

On the girl's side, Kimberly Medellin finished eighth overall and Candice Ndekelengwe finished 13th overall.

Coach Suzette Pritchett could not be reached for comment for this article.

*From the City of Benbrook*

## **Notice of Public Meeting - Hazard Mitigation Action Plan Update**

The City of Benbrook will host a public meeting for the purpose of discussing and updating the City of Benbrook Hazard Mitigation Action Plan.

The public is encouraged to attend and participate in the discussions.

Topics include potential hazards, the severity of natural hazards, and possible mitigation actions to reduce risk.

The current June 22, 2012, City of Benbrook Hazard Mitigation Plan can be found by visiting the City's website at <https://www.benbrook-tx.gov/Document-Center/View/590>.

The public meeting will take place on Tuesday, Aug. 8, at 6 p.m. at the Benbrook Fire Station located at 528 Mercedes Street, Benbrook, TX 76126.

*From Suburban Newspapers Staff Writers*

## ***Benbrook City Council Meeting Tonight***

The Benbrook City Council meets the first and third Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. (with a pre-meeting work session at 7 p.m.) in the City Hall Council Chambers, located at 911 Winscott Road in Benbrook, 76126. The Aug. 3 agenda is available to view [here](#).

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*Benbrook News* sent to your inbox weekly! [Click Here](#)

## Texas City Disaster of 1947 by Dr. Ken Bridges

It started out as a typical spring day for the busy port of Texas City in 1947. It was a growing city that was thriving with peacetime prosperity. As home to many oil refineries, chemical plants, and ports, Texas City had a lot to offer the world and had nearly tripled its population since the beginning of World War II. But a looming disaster lay in their midst. An accident on one ship would lead to a horrible chain reaction of explosions that would leave 547 people dead in the worst industrial accident in American History.

The ship in question was the French cargo ship Grandcamp. The vessel itself was unremarkable. It had only been commissioned five years before as a Liberty ship during World War II. Its original American designation was the Benjamin R. Curtis. It had served faithfully running cargo to various posts across the Pacific during World War II. It had a good safety record, and it was given to France after the war to help the nation rebuild its economy.

The Grandcamp was being loaded up with a variety of cargo including peanuts and tobacco. Among its cargo were far more volatile products, including 872 tons of ammonium nitrate, a common fertilizer, and 1,600 tons of sulfur. The ammonium nitrate had been shipped by train from Nebraska and had been sealed for protection. Transport and loading had been uneventful.

Sometime in the early morning of April 16, the ammonium nitrate began to react. Just before 8 a.m., longshoremen inspecting the cargo noticed some of it was starting to smoke and immediately tried to put it out, using what fire extinguishers and water was available. No effect. After a few minutes, the Grandcamp captain ordered the men to leave and ordered the hold sealed and began pumping in steam to try to smother the flames and save the ship. But the effort was useless, and the growing pressure in the hold caused the hatches to pop off by 8:30, causing the orange smoke of nitrogen oxide to erupt into the air.

Firefighters were called, but Texas City only had a volunteer department and the small firefighting team of the Republic Oil Refinery. Desperate attempts were made to put out the growing fire, but their best efforts were failing.

Then at 9:12, the ship exploded. A horrible fireball engulfed the port, spreading two thousand feet in every direction, mercilessly destroying everything in its path, including a ship docked 600 feet away. The shockwave wrecked ships throughout the bay. More than a thousand buildings were destroyed, with windows blown out ten miles away, as far as Galveston. More than 500 homes were destroyed. The blast left every car in a parking lot a quarter mile away a burning ruin. The nearby Monsanto Chemical Plant was also destroyed, leading to more explosions and leaving one-third of its 450 employees dead. Twenty-seven firefighters were killed. Fires raged on ships throughout the night, leading to more blasts the next day.

More than 5,000 people were reported injured. Fires across the city raged throughout the day, with fire departments from nearby cities joining the fight to save the city. Property damage was estimate at more than \$100 million (or nearly \$1.4 billion in 2023 dollars), one of the highest totals ever. Court cases raged for years, but Congress eventually stepped in and made nearly 1,400 pay-

ments to individuals through 1957.

The Grandcamp's two ton anchor was later found 1.6 miles away. It is still on display as part of a memorial to the victims. Dozens of bodies could never be identified and were later buried at a nearby cemetery established for the victims. No clear cause of the fire was ever identified, but a series of human errors has been most often identified by scholars and officials.

The city rebuilt and new safety procedures were enacted. The Texas City Fire Department was quickly transformed into a full-time department. The city never forgot the horrors of April 16, 1947.

### Legal Notice

Notice to Creditors : In the estate of Leona Anderson, of White Settlement, Texas, deceased. All claims against the above estate, duly verified by statutory declaration and with particulars and valuations held, if any, must be sent to the undersigned before the 11th of August, 2023.

Gail Tompkins, 8305 Wycombe Ridge Way, Wake Forest NC 27587



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# State Sales Tax Holiday Aug. 11 - 13

This year's sales tax holiday begins Friday, Aug. 11, and goes through midnight Sunday, Aug. 13.

The sales tax exemption applies only to qualifying items you buy during the sales tax holiday. Items you buy before or after the sales tax holiday do not qualify for exemption, and there is no tax refund available.

## Qualifying Items

[Click Here](#) to view the list of clothing, footwear and other qualifying items.

[Click Here](#) to view the list of school supplies.

Items can be purchased tax free from a Texas store or from an online or catalog seller doing business in Texas.

From Fort Worth ISD

## Bus Routes Live on FWISD Website

Parents, it's crucial to be in the know about your child's school bus route. Find your school bus route at <http://www.infonderi.com/ifi/?cid=FWI18M6GE5V4>.

Remember, it's essential to have your child at the bus stop 5 minutes before the scheduled time to avoid any chance of mis-

sing the bus.

They should be clearly visible and in plain sight for a smooth pick-up process.

For Special Needs Transportation, please contact us at 817-815-7900, as those routes are not listed online.

From the Project Linus Blanketeers

## First Monday Quilt Club - Project Linus Volunteers Needed

Come join the fun and fellowship with the Quilt Club volunteers while you make a difference in our community and bless others by making quilts for Project Linus.

The First Monday Quilt Club will meet at Bethany Christian Church located at 1500 Meadow Park Drive in White Settlement from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Monday, Aug. 7. Ladies may bring brunch or snack foods to share with others if desired.

Project Linus is a non-profit service organization. The members of this group are Tarrant County Chapter Project Linus volunteers who create handmade quilts and blankets that provide love, warmth, and comfort for local children who have suffered trauma, tragedy, or illness. Volunteers also make coverlets for veterans, nursing home residents, and the homeless. Unfortunately, the need for these blankets increases each month. They desperately need volunteers with portable sewing machines to help assemble the quilts.

No experience is needed - there is a

place for you. Anyone can help if you can follow instructions, sew, tie a knot, crochet a blanket, or tell a good joke. Volunteers have lots of fun and develop fantastic friendships. High school students can receive community service credits for participating. Materials (fabric, batting, thread, and yarn) are provided.

Donations of fabric, yarn, thread, sewing machines, sergers, or money to purchase materials are greatly appreciated.

Come join the fun and enjoy fellowship with the Quilt Club volunteers while you make a difference in our community by being a blessing to others.

For more information about the mission of Project Linus, visit [www.projectlinus.org](http://www.projectlinus.org). For more information on this group and meetings, call Virginia Biela at 817-244-1263.




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From Tarrant County Fire Marshal

# Disaster Declaration Issued Due to Ongoing Wildfire Threat

Due to the continuing threat of wildfires caused by extreme drought conditions in Tarrant County's unincorporated areas, Tarrant County Judge Tim O'Hare issued an additional Disaster Declaration for Tarrant County.

High temperatures are expected to exceed 100 degrees for the remainder of the week. The extreme heat, combined with low humidity and gusty winds, have created the need to take extraordinary measures to protect the lives and properties of the residents of the unincorporated areas of Tarrant County.

This declaration prohibits general outside burning in the unincorporated areas of Tarrant County. Outdoor cooking, welding and the use of firepits for social gatherings are not prohibited.

A violation of the Disaster Declaration is a Class C Misdemeanor and punishable by a fine up to \$500.

During this Declaration there will be no authorized controlled burning without the approval of the Tarrant County Fire Marshal's Office, excluding cooking, welding and the use of firepits as described above.

For information on Outdoor Cooking and Welding Guidelines, go to [www.tarrantcountytx.gov/burnban](http://www.tarrantcountytx.gov/burnban).

The Tarrant County Fire Marshal's Office urges all residents of Tarrant County to help us during this time and be aware of the conditions around you at all times.

The Fire Marshal's Office strongly suggests that property owners keep a 30-foot perimeter mowed around your home and outbuildings to prevent a fire from reaching your structures.

To report someone illegally burning outdoors, call the Tarrant County Regional Communications at 817-232-9800 or the Tarrant County Sheriff's Office at 817-884-1315.

The authority to conduct outdoor burning under this regulation does not exempt or excuse any person responsible from the con-

sequences, damages or injuries resulting from the burning and does not exempt or excuse anyone from complying with all other applicable laws or ordinances, regulations and orders of governmental entities having jurisdiction -- even though the burning is otherwise conducted in compliance with this regulation.

From City of Benbrook

## 15th Annual Benbrook Heritage Fest Sept. 30: Vendors Wanted!

The City of Benbrook will host Heritage Fest on Saturday, Sept. 30 from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. at Dutch Branch Park.

Vendors will be provided the opportunity to display and sell their products.

If you are interested in participating, contact Sydney Turner at [sturner@benbrook-tx.gov](mailto:sturner@benbrook-tx.gov) before Sept. 2 to book your place - space is limited.

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING TONIGHT | 7:30 PM**

**WATCH THE MEETING LIVE FROM HOME**

Tune in to Spectrum cable channel 190, or visit [www.benbrook-tx.gov](http://www.benbrook-tx.gov) and click the TV icon.

GOVERNMENT RESIDENTS VISITORS BUSINESS COVID-19 INFO

**Benbrook**

### Legal Notice

The White Settlement Independent School District (WSISD) is accepting proposals for Professional/Consulting Services for Special Education. The Request for Proposal document RFP #2224-001 can be obtained on the WSISD website, [www.wsisd.com](http://www.wsisd.com) and go to: Business Services/Purchasing/Bid Information/Current Offline Bid Opportunities. Please contact Nancy Escobar at [nancy.escobar@wsisd.net](mailto:nancy.escobar@wsisd.net) for inquiries. The deadline for inquiries and questions is August 14, 2023 by 2:00 pm. Proposals are due by August 17, 2023 by 2:00 pm. Proposals must be sent to: White Settlement ISD, Attn: Nancy Escobar, 8224 White Settlement Road, White Settlement, TX 76108. Faxed or e-mailed proposals are not accepted. White Settlement ISD reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals.

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From the Texas Department of Transportation

# ***TxDOT Urges Drivers to be Alert As Children Return to School***

As millions of Texas children head back to school, the Texas Department of Transportation is reminding drivers to stay focused and drive safe in and around school zones and bus stops. This includes adhering to a new Texas law that requires drivers to stop and yield to pedestrians in crosswalks.

Everyone has a responsibility to keep children safe on their way to and from school. TxDOT offers these safety tips for drivers, parents and students:

## **Tips for Driving in School Zones**

- Be aware that traffic patterns around schools may have changed since the last school year.
- Stay alert and put your phone away. Using a handheld electronic device while driving in an active school zone is against the law.
- Always obey school zone speed limit signs. Remember, traffic fines increase in school zones.
- Drop off and pick up your children in your school's designated areas, not the middle of the street.
- Keep an eye on children gathered at bus stops.
- Watch for children who might dart across the street or between vehicles.

## **Tips for Drivers Sharing the Road with School Buses**

- Follow at a safe distance, keeping in mind that school buses make frequent stops.
- Always remain alert for children around buses and remember that they may not always look for vehicles before crossing the street.
- Stop for flashing red lights or a stop sign on a school bus, regardless of which direction you're headed. Continue your trip once the bus has moved, the flashing lights stop flashing or the bus driver signals it's okay to pass.
- Violations can lead to a fine of up to \$1,250 for a first offense.

## **Tips for Children Walking or Biking to School**

- Always use sidewalks. If there's not a sidewalk, walk on the left side of the street facing traffic.
- Cross the street at intersections or marked crosswalks. Look left, right and left again before proceeding.
- Always obey crossing guards.
- Make eye contact with drivers before crossing the street. Never assume a driver sees you.
- Look for traffic when stepping off a bus or from behind parked vehicles.
- Always wear a helmet when riding a bicycle.
- Don't be distracted by electronic devices that take your eyes and ears off the road.
- Follow all traffic rules, signs and signals.

"Be Safe. Drive Smart." is a key component of #EndTheStreakTX, a broader social media and word-of-mouth effort that encourages drivers to make safer choices while behind the wheel to help end the streak of daily deaths. Nov. 7, 2000, was the last deathless day on Texas roadways.



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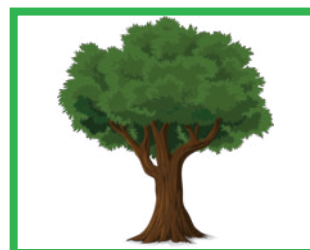
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Three Day Weekend Forecast



Friday, Aug. 4:

AM - Sunny and hot, with a high near 105. S/SW wind around 10 mph.  
PM - Mostly clear, with a low around 81. South wind 15 to 20 mph, with gusts as high as 25 mph.



Saturday, Aug. 5:

AM - Sunny and hot, with a high near 106. S/SW wind around 15 mph, with gusts as high as 25 mph.  
PM - Mostly clear, with a low around 81. S/SE wind around 15 mph, with gusts as high as 25 mph.



Sunday, Aug. 6:

AM - Sunny and hot, with a high near 106. S/SW wind around 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.  
PM - Mostly clear, with a low around 77.

Extended Forecast Click Here