

# Benbrook News

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From the Sports Desk with John English

# WHHS and BMHS Basketball Seasons in Full Swing

The Western Hills boys basketball team went 2-3 at the Hillsboro tournament this past weekend, and had some obstacles to overcome for the competition.

"We were a little short-handed again with some injuries and illitem, but there were none." ness, but I thought a few players stepped up and played well," coach Blake Dunson said. "Overall, it was good preparation for approved unanimously. district starting in a few weeks."

"made some great defensive plays and sparked our offense on the other end."

The Cougars will play South Hills tomorrow night, and Dunson said he anticipates an even match-up. (continued on page 2)

Benbrook Council Action by John English

# Dec. 7. Meeting Review

The Benbrook City Council meeting held on Dec. 7 was conducted as scheduled. Mayor Jason Ward called the meeting to order and welcomed a group from the city of Godley residents who were visiting. An invocation was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Time was then allowed for citizen comments on any agenda

Minutes from the previous meeting held on Nov. 16 were then

The first item of the evening was a carryover item from the pre-Brandon Hawkins earned all-tournament team honors and vious council meeting, which was the selection of Mayor Pro Tem. Ward opened up nominations to the position, and Larry Marshall was nominated. The council voted for Marshall unanimously for Mayor Pro Tem.

Next up was a proclamation honoring (continued on page 3)

Around the Town with Denise Honeycutt

# Holly Jolly Holiday Celebration at Benbrook Library

and featured a harpist, reindeer photos, the Uptown Carolers, bal- with hot chocolate and other refreshments were enjoyed by all!

The Benbrook Library recently hosted their ninth Annual Holly loon making, special appearance by Mrs. Claus and a holiday elf Jolly Holiday Celebration. The event was free to the community show. Arts and crafts, laser engraved ornaments, various snacks



The Uptown Carolers performed holiday music throughout the event.



Children listen to Mrs. Claus as she shared a Christmas story. (continued on page 7)

# Sports Desk (continued from page 1)

for us," Dunson said. "We played a close point, and we are competing. We are a seconds," Lofton said. game last year, and I expect it to be very young team this year, sometimes starting as similar."

3-2 in the Lake Worth Tournament this past invaluable." weekend, and coach Blake Mendez said his team continues to improve.

for us," Mendez said. "Coming off a really way they're capable of, and we pulled out dogfight. There won't be any gimmies in some wins against some tough competi- this one." tion."

stood out for the Bobcats.

"Sophomore Brennan Barton had an in- biter. credible tournament for us," Mendez said. "After a slow start against Poly, he carried and forth for the lead," Lofton said. "We us against Lake Worth with a 27-point were able to persevere with our tough degame... the kid is just a winner."

Mendez said he believes the non-district schedule served its purpose for Benbrook.

"Our district is extremely tough, so we ule to get us ready," Mendez said. "We've

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White Settlement ISD reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals.

many as four sophomores, so the experience and Lofton said her team will be busy. Over at Benbrook, the Bobcats finished they're getting against tough competition is

Tournament this weekend, and Mendez ex-"The Lake Worth tournament was good pects another good learning experience.

"The Krum tournament is stacked with tough Abilene tourney last weekend, we state-ranked teams," Mendez said. "It is needed to get some wins under our belt and another one of those tournaments we schedwe were able to do that. We got some kids ule so we can prepare for our top district opback on track that hadn't been shooting the ponents. I expect every game to be a

On the girl's side, Benbrook defeated Mendez said one player in particular Temple Christian 38-36 this past weekend, and coach Leta Lofton said it was a nail-

> "It was a close game with scoring back fense down the stretch."

> Lofton said Benbrook's "team defense was a hit down the stretch," on Friday.

"We were able to hold Temple in their have to schedule a tough non-district sched- final attempt to take the lead in the last 10

"South Hills will be a competitive game played mostly 5A and 6A teams up to this final attempt to take the lead in the last 10

Benbrook plays Dunbar tomorrow night,

"This will be one of the toughest district games of our season," Lofton said. "We will Benbrook will compete in the Krum be facing a very talented and athletic team. We will spend the final week preparing for them."

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# Council Action (continued from page 1)

military career that has been pretty exemplary," Ward said.

Langley's incredible accomplishments and dedicated service by designating Boston Avenue, between Camp Bowie and Chapin Road Way," Ward said.

Langley received a standing ovation from everyone present, and photos were taken. Mayor Pro Tem Marshall informed everyone Corps' history. There were a few comments thanking Langley, city council members, city staff and citizens for the proclamation.

Next up was the Floodplain Management Report. According to the agenda, a management plan for substantial damage within the City of Benbrook is a detailed plan, developed before a flood or ital Improvement Program. For fiscal year 2023-24, the community other hazardous event that describes the City's process for evaluating damage to buildings and addressing those that have been substantially damaged, as required under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The plan outlines the responsibilities, identifies available data about buildings in the Special Flood Hazard Area

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General Michael Langley heralding Langley's service. "This is a (SFHA), describes the City's approach to damage estimation and lists the steps the City will take if buildings are determined to be Langly is a former Benbrook resident and Western Hills High substantially damaged. The floodplain management goals are to re-School graduate who has commanded at every level in the Marine duce flood losses and increase the policy count, continue to attend Corps from platoon to regiment. Langly is the first African-Ameri- NFIP/CRS user meetings and continue to develop a city-wide discan, 4-Star General in the 248-year history of the US Marine Corps. aster team. Additional goals are to ensure the flood insurance rate "I, Jason Ward, Mayor of the city of Benbrook, on behalf of the maps are uploaded and maintained, to acquire, elevate and relocate city council do hereby express our sincere admiration for General structures in flood-prone areas, to improve the CRS rating (six) and to design, construct and maintain drainage improvement projects.

Council Member Renee Franklin asked if the information about to include the honorary street name General Michael E. Langley the plan was available on the city website. Director of Public Services Bennett Howell informed it was not at the moment, but that if anyone had any questions about the plan they could contact him.

Council Member Laura Mackey asked about the city of Benpresent that Langley is only the 74th 4-Star General in the Marine brook's rating, which was a six, and Howell informed it was based on a scale of 1-10, with 1 being the best score and 10 being the worst. Howell said only two cities in the country have a rating of 1, and that the highest rated city in Texas is Dallas at 4.

> Next was a motion to consider adopting the updates to the Capfacilities & equipment included the Municipal Complex and replacing two ambulances and associated onboard equipment. The street improvements category for fiscal year 2023-24 includes the annual street overlay program. For the drainage improvements category, a storm drain condition assessment, Dutch Branch Park Drainage Assessment and Improvements, Cedar Creek Townhomes Drainage Project and the Timberline Drainage Project are included. Staff recommended that the council adopt the revised Capital Improvement Program as presented. It was approved unanimously.

> Next up was a proposal to approve the contract for the Cedar Creek Townhomes Drainage Project and Timberline Drive Drainage Project. Staff recommended that the city council approve the design contract with Freese and Nichols, Inc. for the Cedar Creek Townhomes Drainage Project and Timberline Drive Drainage Project for \$124,000. The contract was approved unanimously.

> The next agenda item was informal citizen comments, and Mayor Chris Lenker of the city of Godley approached the podium to thank the City of Benbrook for donating a Christmas Tree to the city of Godley.

> Then resident Terry Roach approached the podium and accused members of the city staff with numerous examples of wrong-doing and with being continuously threatened with arrest "by unlawful government officials."

> Resident Andrea Arabie, the Executive Director of the Benbrook Chamber of Commerce, approached the podium next to thank the council members and staff for their continued support of the Benbrook Chamber of Commerce.

> Time was then allowed for council member and staff comments, and council member Franklin mentioned the Selfie Stations provided by the Benbrook Chamber of Commerce at different locations in the city. The meeting was then adjourned.

# Flu and the Holiday Season: What You **Need to Know**

season is off to an earlier start, with high munity is with vaccination. activity currently across the country. While common, flu is a potentially serious and highly contagious respiratory illness.

In time for holiday travel and festivities, a new American Lung Association campaign aims to educate Americans about the flu and steps they can take to protect themselves and others from severe flu illness. Here's what to know:

• Who is impacted by flu?

Flu can affect anyone, however, certain communities are at higher risk of severe illness and complications, such as those living with chronic medical conditions including chronic lung disease, heart disease and diabetes.

During past flu seasons, approximately 90 percent of flu-related hospitalizations were among adults with at least one underlying medical condition.

During the 2022-23 flu season, approximately 30 percent of hospitalizations were among adults with chronic lung disease. People from certain racial and ethnic the holidays, take steps to protect them minority groups are also at higher risk for being hospitalized with flu compared to non-Hispanic white adults.

• What will this year's flu season look sible. like?

Flu activity was relatively low the last two flu seasons, but it causes a significant burden every winter.

Seasonal influenza activity is already elevated and continues to increase across the country. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that as of early December, there have been at least 8.7 million illnesses and 78,000 hospitalizations.

• How can I protect myself?

While covering your cough, washing your hands frequently and staying home when you're sick can help stop the spread

December through March is typically of flu, the very best way to protect yourpeak influenza (flu) season, though this self, your loved ones, and your com-

> The flu shot is recommended on an annual basis for everyone six months of age and older and can be given at the same time as COVID-19 vaccination.

> Flu vaccination is especially important for people with chronic lung disease and other chronic health conditions.

> Speak with your healthcare provider to learn more about influenza and annual vaccination.

• When should I see a doctor?

If you do get sick, call your doctor as soon as possible for diagnosis and treatment, especially if you're at high risk for complications.

You should also consult your doctor if you have complications such as difficulty breathing, chest pains or a cough persisting for weeks or months after other symptoms go away.

To learn more, visit Lung.org/preventflu.

Before you gather with loved ones for from flu.

Practice good health habits and get your annual vaccination as early as pos-

# **Food and Clothing Pantry:**

The Joseph Storehouse, located at 10180 Rolling Hills Dr. in Benbrook

is available for individuals and families in need.

There is also a formula and diaper bank on site.

Apply online here.

From the Klassy Kloggers

# Free Beginner Clogging Lessons in January

The Klassy Kloggers will offer free beginner clogging lessons during the month of January! The classes will be held at 5:45 p.m. each Monday starting on Jan. 8 at Harberger Hill Community Center located at 701 Narrow St., Weatherford, 76086.

For those interested in signing up, contact Instructor/Director Shirley Anderson at 254-246-1972, or just show up.



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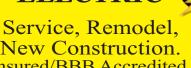
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Texas History Minute by Dr. Ken Bridges

# NASA Engineer and Flight Director, Christopher Kraft



In the 1960s, the United States entered a new era of exploration as NASA began sending astronauts into space. It took the combined efforts of thousands of people to make each mission successful. The direction from the ground was critical given the complexity of spaceflight and how the slightest mistake could be fatal. Chris Kraft served as NASA flight director for these early missions, becoming a revered figure in Houston and across the nation.

He was born Christopher Columbus Kraft, the namesake of his father, in what is now Hampton, Virginia, in 1924. He grew up in the coastal community and in the shadow of the Langley Aeronautical Laboratory, established by the federal government just a few years before he was born as a center to design and test aircraft.

When he graduated high school in 1942, several months after the United States entered World War II, he attempted to enlist in the navy just as many other men his age were doing. Kraft hoped to become a pilot, but a burn injury from his childhood caused him to be rejected for the service altogether. Instead, he enrolled at Virginia Tech and graduated with a degree in aeronautical engineering in two years.

Kraft initially hoped to move away from Hampton, but in 1944, he won a position with the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics which promptly assigned him to the Langley Research Center. President Dwight D. Eisenhower transformed NACA ministration in 1958. Kraft was then chosen NASA reaching new heights in manned exas one of 35 engineers to design what became the Mercury program, the first American manned space mission.

the flight program – organizing the launch, the process, he became the first flight director. He oversaw a team of engineers and rewould require rigorous testing and then constant monitoring during flight as well as a team of experts to correct any problems.

1961 and 1963 put a small one-man capsule into low orbit. Kraft made sure nothing was left to chance. He quickly developed a reputation for precision and perfection. He personally oversaw each detail of each mission. But as demanding as he was, he also fostered an environment of trust. In the end, the craft and the missions were so complicated that the astronaut, flight director, and the army of engineers behind it all had to trust one another. Because he insisted on having the last word with any aspect of the mission, he often clashed with senior NASA administrators and astronauts.

each mission had special problems that could have turned these flights into deadly tragedies. The coordination that Kraft developed inspired the creative thinking and expert analyses needed to avoid disaster.

The Gemini and Apollo missions required a more advanced flight control center, leading to the creation of what is now the Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center in Houston in 1963. Kraft joined the move and became a per- 95. manent resident. With the continuing success of the space program, Kraft became almost as famous as the astronauts themselves. In 1966, his home town of Hampton, Virginia, named its new elementary school in his

NASA moved him into more senior positions with the Apollo lunar missions. Ultimately, NASA promoted him to director of the Manned Spacecraft Center in 1972.

In the 1970s, Kraft helped develop the into the National Aeronautics and Space Ad- conceptual design for the space shuttle. With ploration, the shuttle seemed the next logical step. Kraft and others at NASA fully believed that lunar exploration would become The group tasked Kraft with designing increasingly common and that the shuttle would bring astronauts to a future orbiting flight, and landing of the space capsules. In space station. Then other craft would take them to the Moon, Mars, and beyond. NASA projected it would send men to Mars alized that the complexity of the equipment by 1985 before a wave of budget cuts ended lunar landings after 1972.

In spite of the cutbacks, Kraft kept NASA's focus on the mission of exploration. The seven Mercury missions between He oversaw the first four shuttle launches in 1981 and 1982, inspiring many Americans with the nation's return to manned flight. The success of the shuttle missions showed the importance of astronomical discoveries and the importance of studying the effects of zero gravity environments. By 1982, he decided it was time to retire from NASA.

> Still only 58 years old, Kraft worked for several years as a consultant. worked for the Houston Chamber of Commerce.

Kraft spent several years travelling and speaking about space exploration. He wrote his autobiography, "Flight: My Life in Mis-In spite of the preparation and expertise, sion Control in 2001" reflecting on the development of the space program and his thoughts about its future.

> In 2011, NASA renamed the flight control room at the Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center after him.

> Though he had never been a pilot or astronaut himself, the Aviation Hall of Fame inducted him in 2016.

> He died in Houston in July 2019 at age

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Application has been made with the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission for a Wine and Malt Beverage Retailer's On-Premise Permit with Food and Beverage Certificate by Louisiana Seafood and Fish Mkt, LLC dba Louisiana Seafood and Fish Mkt, to be located at 1505 E Berry St, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, TX 76119. Officer of said LLC is Keith Armand – Manager

From the National Fire Protection Association

# NFPA Urges Added Caution this Holiday Season: Christmas Day and Christmas Eve Among Leading Days for U.S. Home Fires

Many hallmarks of the holiday season, including Christmas trees, holiday decorations, and festive meals present potential fire hazards that contribute to an annual increase in U.S. home fires at this time of year. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), Christmas Day and Christmas Eve are among the something that could catch fire. leading days of the year for home fires.

"December is a leading month for home fires, in large part because many of the activities we engage in during the holiday season reflect leading causes of home fires year-round," said Lorraine Carli, NFPA vice president of Outreach and Advocacy. "Plus, as colder temperatures impact much of the country, use of heating equipment increases significantly."

Fortunately, Carli notes, the majority of winter fires can be prevented with a little added awareness and planning.

"By knowing where potential fire hazards exist and taking some fires. basic safety precautions to prevent them, people can enjoy a festive, fire-free holiday season," said Carli.

The NFPA Winter Holidays page offers a wide variety of tips and resources to reduce the risk of fires, while the latest NFPA statistics underscore the increased risk of fire during the holiday season and beyond:

## **Christmas Trees**

- An estimated average of 160 home fires involving Christmas trees caused two civilian deaths, 11 civilian injuries, and \$12 million in direct property damage per year between 2016 and 2020.
- Some type of electrical distribution or lighting equipment, including decorative lights, was involved in more than two of five (44 percent) of home Christmas tree fires. Nearly one in five Christmas tree fires (19 percent) were started by decorative lights.
- The majority (74 percent) of Christmas tree fires occur in December and January.

## **Decorations**

- An estimated average of 790 home fires that began when decorations (other than Christmas trees) caught fire caused an average of one civilian death, 26 civilian injuries and \$13 million in direct property damage per year between 2015 and 2019.
  - One in five home decoration fires occurred in December.
- Year-round, 35 percent of home decoration fires began with candles; in December, the number jumped to 45 percent.
- In more than two of every five fires (44 percent) involving decorations, the decoration was too close to a heat source such as a candle, cooking or heating equipment.

# **Candles**

• An estimated average of 7,400 home fires (2 percent) started by candles caused an average of 90 civilian deaths (three percent), 670 civilian injuries (6 percent), and \$291 million (4 percent) in

direct property damage per year between 2015 and 2019.

- Candle fires peak in December and January with 11 percent of candle fires in each of these months.
  - In three of every five candle fires, the candle was too close to
- Christmas is the peak day for candle fires with roughly 2.5 times the daily average; Christmas Eve ranked second.
- Falling asleep was a factor in 10 percent of the home candle fires and 12 percent of the associated deaths.

## **Cooking**

- Cooking is the leading cause of reported home fires (49 percent) and home fire injuries and the second-leading cause of home fire deaths.
- Unattended cooking is the leading cause of home cooking
- Thanksgiving is the peak day for home cooking fires, followed by Christmas Day and Christmas Eve.

Fires caused by heating equipment, the second-leading cause of U.S. home fires year-round, peak during the winter months, when temperatures drop and more people use heating equipment to keep their homes warm. Put a Freeze on Winter Fires, an annual NFPA campaign with the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA), works to educate the public about ways to stay safe during the colder months, offering tip sheets and other resources to help reduce the risk of heating fires and other winter hazards.

About the National Fire Protection Association® (NFPA®)

Founded in 1896, NFPA is a global self-funded nonprofit organization devoted to eliminating death, injury, property and economic loss due to fire, electrical and related hazards. The association delivers information and knowledge through more than 300 consensus codes and standards, research, training, education, outreach and advocacy; and by partnering with others who share an interest in furthering the NFPA mission. For more information, visit www.nfpa.org. All NFPA codes and standards can be viewed online for free at www.nfpa.org/freeaccess.

The offices of Suburban Newspapers, Inc. will close for the holidays Monday, Dec. 24 through Friday, Dec. 29 and Monday, Jan. 1.

There will be no newspapers on Dec. 28.

The deadline to appear in the Jan. 4 digital publications is Friday, Dec. 22 at 4 p.m. The office will reopen Tuesday, Jan. 2 at 10 a.m.

# Around the Town (continued from page 1)



Library staff donned their Christmas shirts for the event. They are: (front, l-r) Library Assistant **Krystal Curry**; (back) Library Assistant **Jenny Johansson**, Youth Services Page **Allotin Hodges**, Librarian **Michael Hardrit** and Catalog Specialist **Krystal Hunter**.



Enjoying the holiday cheer are: (1-r) Amiyah Burrell, Marceves Hicks, Chad Burrell and Brittany Lowry.

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Around the Town with Denise Honeycutt

# Benbrook Police Deptartment Hosts Annual Holiday Toy Drive

Several individuals from the community and various organizations came out recently to support the Benbrook Police Department's Holiday Toy Drive.

Hundreds of toys were collected throughout the day to be distributed to children in the area for Christmas presents that will be under someone's tree!



Representing the Benbrook Police Dept. are: (l-r) Cpl. Harlan, Officer Miller and Sgt. Matlick.



Mrs. Claus (**Jennifer Crow**), Police Officers Association President **Noah Blumenthal** and Santa (Detective **Mike Crow**) shared holiday cheer throughout the event.

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# Three Day Weekend Forecast



# Friday, Dec. 15:

<u>AM</u> - Rain. High near 52. East wind around 10 mph becoming north northeast in the afternoon. Chance of precipitation is 80%.

**PM** - A 40% chance of rain, mainly before midnight. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 43. North northwest wind 5 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.



# Saturday, Dec. 16:

<u>AM</u> - A 20% chance of rain before noon. Partly sunny, with a high near 53. North northwest wind around 15 mph, with gusts as high as 25 mph.

**PM** - Partly cloudy, with a low around 36. North northwest wind 10 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.



# Sunday, Dec. 17:

**AM** - Sunny, with a high near 56. North northwest wind around 10 mph. **PM** - Mostly clear, with a low around 37.

# **Extended Forecast Click Here**