

*Around the Town with Denise Honeycutt*

## VFW Post 10429 Hosts Sixth Annual Holiday Cookie Contest

The sixth Annual Holiday Cookie Contest was recently held at the VFW Post 10429.

Participants brought various recipes of their favorite cookies that were judged by members from the Post. First, Second and

Third Place winners received certificates and a special gift.

All bakers exchanged each others concoctions at the end of the contest. The merry and tasty event was obviously enjoyed by everyone.



Cookie-Bakers are: (l-r) Commander Troy Collum, Kelly Sears, Patty Bravo, Lois Rosenthal, Jamie Bengford, Stephanie Sights, Debbie Hanks, Ashley Hanks, Brian Hanks and Jill Le-Clair.

*From Suburban Newspapers, Inc.*

## Suburban Newspapers Holiday Closure

The offices of Suburban Newspapers, Inc. will be closed from Dec. 25 through Dec. 29, and Monday, Jan. 1, 2024. There will be no newspapers for the week of Dec. 28.

The deadline to appear in the Jan. 4 digital publications is Friday, Dec. 22 at noon.

Offices will reopen Tuesday, Jan. 2 at 10 a.m.



Cookie Judges had the very difficult task of sampling each and every entry!

Pictured left are: Sr. Vice Commander **Paul Sights** (left) and Post Member **Tony Sterling**.

(photos cont'd on page 7)

**Dear Readers,**

We wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! May you and your loved ones have good health, success and joy in 2024.

Thank you for letting us share your accomplishments, preserve your memories and promote your businesses in our newspapers. We truly could not do this without you and look forward to continuing our friendships in the new year.

Sincerely,

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About RMHC of Greater North Texas

Ronald McDonald House Charities of Greater North Texas (RMHC of Greater North Texas), a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization that creates, finds and supports programs that directly improve the health and well-being of children and their families. Our programs are grassroots-driven to enable us to offer help where children and families need it most – right in their own communities. RMHC of Greater North Texas is part of a global network of Chapters making a positive impact on the lives of children and families in 65 countries and regions around the world.



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From the Sports Desk with John English

## WHHS Cougars Defeat South Hills Scorpions, Lady Cougars to Face Wilmer-Hutchins Eagles

The Western Hills boys basketball team defeated South Hills last week, and coach Blake Dunson said his team is still not at full strength.

"We had a great team effort to secure the 61-56 win over South Hills," Dunson said. "We are still battling some injuries and illnesses, but we had a few younger players step up and contribute to the win. I was very pleased with how we played together and were able to withstand the Scorpion's runs throughout the game."

Lyndon Ellis scored 12 points in the game against South Hills, while Jaylen James had 11 points, Brandon Hawkins added 10 points, John Lewark scored 13 points and Robert Jones finished the game with 12 points.

Western Hills competes in the Bridgeport Tournament over Christmas Break.

"We open with Lake Worth and Burkburnett in the Bridgeport tournament," Dunson said. "I expect us to face some tough competition, but it is much needed, as we come back to play Benbrook on Jan. 2."

On the girls side, the Lady Cougars will play Wilmer-Hutchins over the holiday break, and coach Monica Gardner said she ex-

pects her team to have their hands full.

"I think the Wilmer-Hutchins game will be a tough game. It will be our last game until we resume district play against Benbrook. It will give us some good competition going into the break."

As district approaches, Gardner said she believes non-district served its purpose.

"I think our non district schedule was very helpful in preparing us for district," Gardner said. "We played some really good teams and were able to learn a lot about the things we need to work on. Hopefully we can take those lessons into the rest of district."

Over at Benbrook, the Bobcats competed in the Krum Tournament this past weekend.

"We faced some extremely tough competition in this tournament," coach Blake Mendez said. "We played two state-ranked teams and one that was close to a state championship in recent years...we learned a lot this weekend."

Mendez said there were a couple of good efforts in the tournament.

"Two of our bench guys, Logan Goins and Jaelyn Robinson, gave us some big minutes. They did a great job on the board, didn't turn the ball over and gave us a lot of second chance opportunities."

Mendez said he plans to use the holiday layoff to focus on improving.

"We don't play a Christmas tournament, so we will have a lot of extra practice time which we love," Mendez said. "We have played tournaments three straight weekends and with that you kind of have to learn on the fly. We look forward to the extra practice time we're going to get to clean up some of the things we saw over our tournament season."

A tough loss to open district this past week against Dunbar was a good learning experience for the Lady Cats.

"The Dunbar game was an expected tough game," Lofton said. "Dunbar has sharp shooters from three-point range and their athleticism was tough to match. Our preparations were tested as we attempted to adjust to each Dunbar athlete and their hot shooting. We were able to break their press and advance to the bucket for points but fell short in the half court defensive battle in covering their shooters."

Lofton said Sharon Mpinda plays well in the game, adding "her aggressive moves to the basket and her shot-blocking capabilities," made a difference.

Benbrook will compete in the Castleberry Tournament over Christmas break.

"As we celebrate the Christmas holiday, we are looking forward to tweaking our mistakes as we participate in the Castleberry Tournament in preparation for the next part of district play," Lofton said.

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*From Texas Department of Licensing & Regulation*

## Christmas and New Year's Drivers Urged to Move Over or Slow Down for Tow Trucks and Other Emergency Vehicles

If you see tow trucks and other emergency vehicles stopped on the side of the road with their emergency lights activated, do you know what to do?

Texas law requires drivers to slow down at least 20 miles per hour under the posted speed limit or, if able, to change lanes when they're passing a first responder stopped on the roadside.

Large numbers of travelers are expected on Texas roads during the Christmas and New Year's holidays and chances are, they may break down, get involved in crashes or be stopped by law enforcement. Pay attention to what's happening around you and be prepared to react quickly.

TDLR regulates tow truck companies and tow truck drivers, driver education and driving safety courses, and motorcycle safety courses, and as always, the agency asks all drivers to please slow down or move over when you see emergency vehicles stopped on the side of the road.

Tow truck drivers work hard every day to help people who are stranded on the side of the road. And, like everyone else, they are

anxious to return home safely each night. Holiday memories are made when family gathers. Please do your part to make that happen for all.

Safety tips for driving this holiday season:

- Slow down and pay attention to what you're doing. If you get tired, pull over in a safe spot and walk around to re-energize.
- Don't drink and drive, even a little bit.
- Designate a (sober) driver.
- Stay off the mobile phone – this includes texting. Designate a “co-pilot” to oversee the phone while you're driving so you can concentrate on the task at hand.
- Buckle up – all occupants of the vehicle, every trip – no matter how short. Most traffic crashes happen close to home.
- Traveling by motorcycle? Wear a helmet.
- Stay weather-aware. If it's snowy or icy, you'll need to slow down significantly so you don't slide on unexpected icy spots. If it's raining heavily, turn around and don't drown if water is running across the road. Only two feet of rushing water can sweep away a vehicle.
- Leave plenty of time to get to your destination. Roadways are likely to be crowded. Drive friendly – the Texas way!

*From Suburban Newspapers Reader Submissions*

## Local Girl Scouts Shop for Angel Tree Gifts

Girl Scouts from Troops 2508, 2518, 2528, 2578 and 2588 recently shopped for Angel Tree gifts. They learned how to stretch their dollars and stay within a budget.

Shopping Scouts include: (back row) **Paulina, Lucy, Georgie, Kassie, Nadia**; (front row) **Ena, Emma, Maliah, Swayze and Terrwyn**.



*From Tarrant Area Food Bank*

## TAFB to Host Mega Mobile Distribution Event Dec. 21 at Weatherford High School

Tarrant Area Food Bank (TAFB) will be hosting a Mega Mobile Distribution in Parker County, ensuring neighbors in need can get food for their families to prepare a nice holiday meal. The event follows Tarrant Area Food Bank's recent Mega Mobile Distribution in Tarrant County at Dickies Arena which served more than 2,000 families, exceeding the Food Bank's projections.

To date, TAFB has served more than 16,000 families through its Holiday Mega Mobile Distributions.

The Tarrant Area Food Bank West Branch will host a Mega Mobile on Thursday, Dec. 21 from 4 to 6 p.m. at Weatherford High School parking lot, located at 2121 Bethel Road Weatherford 76087.

Attendees of the mobile distribution can expect to receive food for both a holiday meal, as well as non-perishable items to sustain them throughout the holiday season to help families in need while kids are out of school for Winter Break.

No identification or documentation is required. All are welcome to receive food at this distribution opportunity.



Texas History Minute by Dr. Ken Bridges

# Christmas Traditions



Millions of people around the world rejoice as Christmas approaches. It is a time of family, friendship, gifts, and songs. In 2022, Americans spent \$178 billion on Christmas. This year, more than 115 million Americans are expected to travel to celebrate the holiday. In the United States, Christmas traditions have changed steadily over the years; and millions still hold faithful to the original purpose of veneration of the birth of Christ and celebrating the message of peace and harmony.

Early Christians celebrated Easter more with the death and resurrection of Jesus as the embodiment of Christian ideals. However, by the fourth century AD, the birth of Jesus also began to be noted with special church observances also, quite literally, the "Christ Mass." However, it was a matter of some debate when it should be observed. Some marked the birth of Christ on March 28, while others noted November 18. Neither the Roman Empire nor Hebrew officials in Judea kept birth records, so there was no certainty as to the particular day. In the early centuries after the crucifixion of Christ, Christians faced brutal persecutions, torture, and executions for their faith, so the message of Christ's birth and the promise of God became more important than the particular calendar day.

After the legalization of Christianity within the Roman Empire in the fourth century, Pope Julius I declared around AD 350 that Dec. 25 would be the official observance, but it was only a special church service and not seen as a gift-giving occasion. The Christmas Eve mass or communion service is still an important Christmas tradition

for many American families and Christians worldwide.

By the sixteenth century, Christmas slowly became more than a church service. The tradition of the Christmas tree origi-

nated in Germany in the 1500s when candles were attached to ever-green trees. In Germany especially, the day became a celebration noted for singing, parties, feasts, and drinking. The Puritans who arrived in New England in the early 1600s were appalled by such displays, which they considered sinful. As a result, Puritan leaders banned observances of Christmas well into the eighteenth century. In Massachusetts, Christmas was against the law for more than 20 years in the late 1600s.

In fact, it was knowledge of the differences by which New Englanders and Germans typically observed the day that inspired George Washington to cross the Delaware River on Christmas Night 1776 to stage a surprise attack on the Hessian outpost at Trenton, New Jersey. After a brutal series of losses that summer and fall, Washington knew he had to turn the war around. He knew the German mercenaries the British had hired to pursue them would be too distracted by their own Christmas parties to suspect an attack during winter. At dawn on Dec. 26, he surprised and overwhelmed the exhausted and hungover Hessian revelers to change the course of history.

German settlers brought many Christmas traditions to the United States, particularly Christmas trees, by the late 1700s and a number of notable Christmas carols, such as "*Silent Night*" and "*O Christmas Tree*," were originally German.

But Christmas as a holiday emerged slowly. Louisiana was the first to declare Christmas a state holiday in 1837, and only a handful of states followed suit within the next few years. It did not become a federal holiday until 1870.

Even the tradition of exchanging gifts did not emerge quickly. However, the gift-giving tradition expanded rapidly in the 1820s and 1830s, with merchants quickly looking to capitalize on the holiday. Writers such as English novelist Charles Dickens with "*A Christmas Carol*" (1843) and American writer Clement Clarke Moore with "*A Visit from St. Nicholas*" (1823) helped popularize Christmas as a gift-giving time. Christmas trees began to be sold widely across the North in the 1850s, with the first electric Christmas lights sold in 1882, but many families did not have Christmas trees until the early 1900s and most ornaments were handmade.

The day's message of peace was not lost. On Christmas Eve 1814, American and British diplomats signed a peace treaty ending the War of 1812. A century later, on Christmas Day 1914, Allied and German troops staged an impromptu cease-fire during World War I to mark the spirit of Christmas.

Christmas is celebrated today even in non-Christian households as the spirit of giving and peace has transcended its original religious meaning for some. Far from the shopping crowds, Christmas still has a magical place in the hearts of young and old alike. In a quiet moment, many remember that Christmas is still a time of generosity for others.

And Christmas is still a time of peace in our hearts and in the world, as we are reminded of the gift of one precious life, of brotherhood, and of the harmony for which the holiday was born.



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From National Society Daughters of the American Revolution

# Mary Isham Keith Chapter, NSDAR Dedicates Tree

Pictured right are: **Jim and Elizabeth Harvey, Dianne Rubenkoenig, Cecelia Van Donselaar, Dr. Martha Johnson, Laura Tauzel, Regent Charlsey Holler, Carol and Max Kassera, Lisa Evans, Penny Gault, Honorary Regent Dawn Needles, Cathy Schmersahl, Michele Elekes, Betty Coe Manuel and Latrina Lorenzen.**

Mary Isham Keith Chapter, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, dedicated its America 250 Liberty Tree at Fort Worth's historic Botanic Garden on Nov. 28.

The Ornamental Magnolia was planted adjacent to the flag pole that the chapter placed in the garden in 1938.

Bob Byers, Executive Vice President of the Botanic Garden, spoke of the resilience of the magnolia, which was brought to America by its first European settlers. This tree, the first of two to be planted, was purchased with the aid of a one-time \$500 grant from the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, and is part of the chapter regent's project Liberty Trees Times Two. The location of a second Liberty Tree is yet to be determined.

The America 250 Liberty Tree has a two-fold purpose. The first is to commemorate and celebrate America's upcoming 250th anniversary in 2026 and the patriots that achieved American Independence.

Mary Isham Keith Chapter is dedicated to re-discovering, restoring and re-dedicating Revolutionary War-related monuments, plaques, gravesites, and other memorials in Fort Worth and the surrounding communities.

The second purpose is to honor the service and sacrifice of all Vietnam veterans. The chapter is a Commemorative Partner with the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War Commemoration, and is committed to conducting events or activities each year through 2025 that will recognize, thank, and honor Vietnam veterans and their families. Regent Charlsey Holler presided over a cer-



emony honoring two Vietnam veterans and the spouses of two deceased Vietnam veterans.

She said, "It is a privilege to recognize you today and to give thanks and honor for your service, valor, and sacrifice when our country needed you. On behalf of a grateful nation, we thank you for your service. Welcome home."

More than one million women have found purpose and passion in DAR membership. If you are interested in exploring membership, please email mikregent2023@gmail.com.

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Pictured below are: Vietnam veteran **Max Kassera, Regent Charlsey Holler, Honorary Regent Dawn Needles, Vietnam veteran James Dan Harvey, Mrs. Penny (Donald) Gault and Mrs. Michele (John) Elekes**





From Suburban Newspapers Staff Writers

# The WARM Place, a Grief Support Center for Children

## How to Refer a Family to The WARM Place:

Children who are referred to The WARM Place may have experienced the death loss of: a parent, a sibling, a grandparent, an aunt, uncle, cousin, a close friend or a classmate.

### Steps to follow:

- The legal guardian of the child/children contacts The WARM Place. Call any time after the death loss to schedule an intake/interview appointment.

- Families can call any time during office hours (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) if they need to talk to someone. The family comes to The WARM Place for an in-take/interview. The intake/interview is during the day and lasts about 1-1/2 to 2 hours. All family members, including children and legal guardian(s), must be present at the intake.

### The Objective of the Interview:

The family can share their death loss experience. The tour of the facility alleviates possible fears of coming to The WARM Place. The intake/interview is conducted by a counselor and time is spent with adult(s) and children separately. The family is assigned a group night based on who has died in the child's life.

Support groups for children offered at The WARM Place are:

- Parent loss — includes step-parent
- Sibling loss — biological or step-sibling
- Grandparent loss — cousin, aunt, uncle, friend, or any other significant death loss

Each night the support groups meet, the children are divided by age: children, ages 5 to 8; preteens, ages 9 to 12 and teenagers, ages 13 to 18. The guardian(s) must attend with the children.

### General Information:

Groups meet every other week. Families attend The WARM Place for as long as it is necessary to resolve death loss issues.

Additional groups are provided for Young Adults, ages 19 to 25. Groups are available for preschoolers, ages 3- 1/2 to 5.

Groups are led by facilitators who have had extensive training in the grief process and group dynamics.

There is never a fee for families to participate in The WARM Place program, located at 809 Lipscomb St. Call 817-870-2272, email to [info@thewarmplace.org](mailto:info@thewarmplace.org), or go to their website: [www.thewarmplace.org](http://www.thewarmplace.org) for more information.

## Around the Town (continued from page 1)



The Cookie Contest winners, with the judges, are: (l-r) Cookie Judge and Post Member **Tony Sterling**, First Place Winner **Kelly Sears** with Cherry Pistachio Cookies, Second Place Winner **Jill LeClair** with Pecan Bourbon Chocolate Chip, Cookie Judge and Sr. Vice Commander **Paul Sights** and Third Place Winner **Jamie Bengford** with Pecan Toasted Chocolate Chip.

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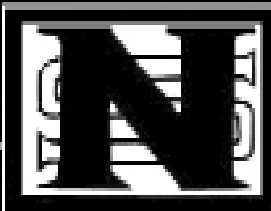
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# Three Day Weekend Forecast



## Friday, Dec. 22:

**AM** - A chance of showers and thunderstorms. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 65. South wind 10 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph. Chance of precipitation is 40%.

**PM** - A 20% chance of showers. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 54. South southeast wind around 10 mph.



## Saturday, Dec. 23:

**AM** - A 50% chance of showers. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 67. South southeast wind 10 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.

**PM** - Showers, with thunderstorms also possible after midnight. Low around 56. Chance of precipitation is 80%.



## Christmas Eve • Sunday, Dec. 24:

**AM** - A 50% chance of showers and thunderstorms. Partly sunny, with a high near 69.

**PM** - A 20% chance of showers. Partly cloudy, with a low around 49.

[Extended Forecast Click Here](#)