

82nd Year No. 51 • 817-246-2473 • 7820 Wyatt Drive, White Settlement, Texas 76108 • suburban-newspapers.com • December 22, 2022

*From Fort Worth ISD*

## ***FWISD Board Approves Chapter 313 Agreement That Could Benefit Students and the Community***

Fort Worth ISD trustees voted Friday, Dec. 16, 2022, to enter into a Chapter 313 agreement that could result in a multi-million-dollar payout to the District in coming years. The agreement is with Hanwha Q Cells Americas Holdings Co. (Hanwha).

In a special meeting, trustees heard a presentation and asked a series of questions about how the agreement could benefit the District and students both financially and in the creation of a future job market with the building of a new solar panel manufacturing facility.

Chapter 313, also known as the Texas Economic Development Act, allows businesses to build or expand their facilities in exchange for a 10-year limitation on their taxable property value. Chapter 313 also allows school districts to share in the benefit of these large-scale economic developments by negotiating a percentage of the tax savings to be paid to the district and ensure it is protected against any financial harm.

Hanwha approached Fort Worth ISD for an agreement for a site the company is considering in Tarrant County and Parker County for a new solar panel manufacturing facility. Hanwha says it will invest approximately \$1.3 billion in a 5.7 million square-foot building and in equipment. Hanwha says it expects the project to create an impactful number of high-quality, high-paying jobs.

Under the agreement, the District will receive direct payments from the company – an estimated \$27 million dollars in the ten-year period between 2026-2035. These supplemental and revenue protection payments may be used by the school district to provide additional funding towards student achievement opportunities in Fort Worth ISD.

If Hanwha selects Tarrant County as the site, they expect to break ground by the second quarter of 2023 and begin production start-up/testing in early 2024. Commercial operations would begin in the fourth quarter of 2025.

*From Suburban Newspapers, Inc.*

## **Suburban Newspapers Holiday Closure**

The offices of Suburban Newspapers, Inc. will be closed from Dec. 26 through Dec. 30. There will be no newspapers for the week of Dec. 29.

The deadline to appear in the Jan. 5 digital publications is Friday, Dec. 23 at noon. Offices will reopen Monday, Jan. 2 at 10 a.m.

**Dear Friends,**

**We wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!**

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## From Benbrook Public Library Library Offering GED Preparation Classes

Weekly GED preparation classes at Benbrook Public Library will resume on Wednesday, Jan. 4 at 6 p.m. Anyone 18 years of age or older who is not currently enrolled in school may register. Attend any class to register and begin preparing to take and pass the GED exams. Students may receive limited financial assistance with the cost of exams.

For questions, contact the library at 817-249-6632.

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Benbrook Council Action

Dec. 15 Meeting Review by John English

The Benbrook City Council meeting on Dec. 15 was conducted as scheduled. Mayor Jason Ward called the meeting to order. An invocation was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. The minutes from the meeting held on Dec. 1 were then approved.

The first item of the evening was to appoint new members to various boards and commissions. According to the agenda, the even numbered positions on the City's various Boards and Commissions will expire on Dec. 30, 2022. There is also an unexpired vacancy in Place 3 of the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) Board of Directors, which expires Dec. 30, 2023. Applications were submitted and received by City Council at their Nov. 17 meeting, and the city council conducted interviews with candidates on Dec. 6.

Council member Dr. Larry Marshall recommended John Logan to place 2 on the Planning and Zoning commission, Brandon Ellison to place 4, Jon Carver to place 6 and Leah Rodriguez to place 8.

For the Zoning Board of Adjustments and Board of Appeals, he recommended Ghias Dean to place 2, Tiffany Ryan to place 4, and Carol Stacy to Alternate B.

For Parks and Recreation, he recommended John James to place 2, Josh Harville to place 4 and Lizzy Sutton to Place 6.

For the EDC, Marshall recommended Dr. Danyelle Ackall to place 2, Thomas Casey to place 4 and Phyllis Harkins to place 6.

He also recommended that the Tax Increment Finance Zone Board be extended one year, and recommended Jeremiah Smith to place 2, David Eason to place 4 and that Kristen Melton be appointed to the unexpired position on the EDC. The motion was approved unanimously.

The next item was to approve an Interlocal Agreement with Tarrant County for Westpark Drive and Timbercreek Drive Reconstruction. In January of 2021, Tarrant County issued a call for transportation projects for the November 2021 bond election, and on Apr. 1, 2021 city council approved the submittal package to Tarrant County.

On Nov. 2, 2021, voters approved the bond program, and a total of 196 projects from 24 municipalities were submitted, with 33 projects being selected. The project Tarrant County selected for Benbrook was the reclamation of Westpark Drive between RM 2871 and Lakeway Drive, and Timbercreek Drive between the bridge and Timberline Drive, East of Park Drive. It is a 50 percent cost share between the City of Benbrook and Tarrant County, with Tarrant County only providing a total of \$875,694 for the project. Tarrant County will fund the project in the third and fourth quarter of fiscal year 2022-23. The project was approved unanimously.

Next up was to approve an Interlocal Agreement with Tarrant County for FY 2022-23 for an asphalt overlay program. The funding for the Interlocal Agreement (\$305,000) will come from the general fund and is budgeted for FY2022-23. A separate contract for the milling operation will be brought before City Council for approval after the first of the year. The motion was approved unanimously.

The next item was informal citizen comments and Benbrook resident Phyllis Harkins said she had two comments to make. The first was to thank the city council for the holiday display near the YMCA with the trees lit up along Benbrook Blvd.

Harkins then said the new stop sign heading Westbound along Vista Way is almost never stopped at by drivers and expressed her concerns.

"In the morning, I see people blow through it and in the evening I see people ahead of me blow through it," Harkins said. The Benbrook resident requested that the police do a little more work at the intersection, or put some signage up because "people just aren't aware of it."

Then resident Terry Roach approached the podium to express his disapproval about the Benbrook Police Department's denial of access to body cam footage of a prior encounter between Roach and the Benbrook PD.

Time was then allowed for council member comments, and Renee Franklin wished everyone a happy holidays and reminded residents of closure dates for the city offices, which are Dec. 23, Dec. 26 and Jan. 2, 2023.

The meeting was then adjourned.

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From StatePoint

Tips to Assess Your Furnace and Save on Heating Costs

Now that cooler weather is here, homeowners are advised to evaluate their furnace to see if it needs to be serviced or replaced. By planning ahead, you can potentially save money on heating bills or dodge a breakdown in the middle of a cold snap.

According to the experts, here's what you need to know about your home's heat source:

### Maintaining Your Furnace

Undue strain can shorten the lifespan of your furnace. Regularly replace the air filter as recommended by the manufacturer, as dirty, clogged filters can restrict airflow, making the furnace work harder and for longer hours.

An annual furnace tune-up from a heating and ventilation professional can also go a long way towards minimizing issues caused by dirt and debris buildup. What's more, inspections allow your contractor to monitor longer-term issues and take proactive steps to help prevent premature failure or inconvenient breakdowns during the heating season.

Keeping your home properly insulated and sealed can also help by preventing thermal loss and cold air infiltration and may reduce heating bills this winter. Finally, maintain thermostat settings at Department of Energy recommendations or try a degree or two lower.

### Replacing Your Furnace

Regardless of how well the furnace is made and how well you maintain it, the day will come when it's reached the end of its usefulness. You'll know it's time to replace your furnace when you're making frequent service calls, dealing with expensive repair bills, or when your unit is blowing cold air, making unusual noises or not operating as efficiently as it once did.

In a challenging economy, it can be tempting to buy the cheapest model, however a furnace replacement is a decision that can affect your family's comfort and energy bills for years. So how do you make a sound choice?

The first thing to know is that there are many types of heat sources for your house, including gas furnaces, electric heat pumps and newer variable refrigerant flow (VRF) systems. Your easiest, and probably least costly path, will be picking a furnace that uses the same fuel source as your current one.

If energy efficiency is a priority, you're in luck. Comparison shopping is easy today, as all furnaces sold domestically are required to display estimated annual operating costs on the energy guide label. Beyond reduced energy bills, federal tax credits for high efficiency equipment have been extended into 2023. Check with your utility company or manufacturer to see if they offer a rebate. All combustion-type furnaces are rated according to annual fuel utilization efficiency (AFUE). The minimum allowed rating for any furnace in the United States is 80 percent, however, some of the most efficient models available go well beyond that.

Another factor to consider is heating capacity. Improperly sized furnaces can result in loss of comfort, loss of efficiency and even reduce the lifespan of the furnace. Be sure to have a qualified heating and ventilation professional assess your square footage, number and quality of windows, insulation and other factors to make a recommendation.

Beyond the basics, today's furnaces offer new comfort-enhancing, energy-saving features that could help you reduce your heating costs.

No one wants to be dealing with a furnace repair or replacement when demand is high and temperatures are low. Take steps now to ensure you're set for a cozy, comfortable winter season.



# Cougars and Cats Looking for Wins Going into District Play

The Western Hills girl's basketball team came up just short last week against the Young Women's Leadership Academy by a score of 41-39 in what coach Avante Smith described as a "hard fought game."

"They have a really good post player who I think is going to be a star in the future," Smith said. "She's close to 6'4", but is very skilled in the post and a great rebounder. She was the difference in the second half and got our bigs in foul trouble. We lead for big chunks of the game, but couldn't pull it out in the end."

Smith said that Jayla Massengale and Anjell Smith had strong efforts in the game. The Lady Cougars were 0-2 following the loss to the YWLA, but the two losses have come by a combined total of four points.

"We are still learning how to lock-in and make winning plays at the end of close games," Smith said. "I'm really proud of how far our young ladies have come, especially overcoming our rough non-district schedule start. Taking lumps against teams like Alvarado, Lubbock High, and North Side earlier this year has made us a better team. These close losses in district should motivate us to continue to put in the work and get better."

Over at Benbrook, the Lady Cats lost to Dunbar on Friday and coach Leta Lofton said it was a tough loss.

"We had a tall order when meeting up with Dunbar at this time of injury and sickness," Lofton said. "We were no match for their quickness and athleticism."

Zoey Smothermon led the team with her scoring, shot blocking and "flashy moves" in the game against Dunbar. Lofton said she feels that the non-district schedule did a good job of getting her team ready for district play, but added that the biggest thing Benbrook needs right now is to get healthy.

"We were hoping to be very prepared by playing a tough pre-district schedule, only to be foiled by injuries and sickness of four starters," Lofton said. "I may be forced to move a few JV athletes up for a few district games."

On the boy's side, Western Hills came up short against South Hills last week, losing 60-57 to the Scorpions, but coach Blake Dunson said he was impressed with what he saw from his team.

"I was very pleased with the effort we played with last night," Dunson said on Saturday morning. "We got off to a fast start with a 15-0 run to begin the game. Towards the end of the first half, South Hills was able to get back in the game by way of the free throw line. We struggled to keep them off the offensive glass in the second half and missed some open shots during crunch time."

Stephun Williams led both teams in scoring with 22 points, while Malik El-Amin added 15 points for the Cougars.

"Keyon Butler did a great job on defense by collecting several deflections and steals," Dunson said. The Western Hills coach said that he believes non-district was a good experience for his team.

"Although we have struggled as far as our record goes, we have seen tremendous growth in our young team," Dunson said. "We will use the experience we've gained throughout our non-district schedule to give us the best chance to be successful. You have to come to play and compete every night in 9-4A and I believe our team will be ready for the test."

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## Christmas Around the World, Through the Years by Dr. Ken Bridges

For generations, Christmas has been a time of magic and wonder for millions. In the rush of modern America, that is sometimes forgotten in the maddening swarms of crowds at stores, mistaken orders from online retailers, and even near-riots over special discounts. Christmas is celebrated around the globe, and each corner of the Earth has its own special traditions that go along with the season. 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.

Many American Christmas traditions are a mix of different cultures thrown in with stories and songs that have grown in adoration over the years. Some of the most famous Christmas carols are centuries old. As more immigrated from Europe to the United States, the different Christmas traditions so adored by these new families began filtering through the nation.

Early Christians celebrated Easter more with the death and resurrection of Jesus as the embodiment of Christian ideals. However, by the fourth century, the birth of Jesus also began to be noted with special church observances also. The Christmas Eve mass or communion service is still an important Christmas tradition for many American families.

By the 16th century, Christmas slowly became more than a church service. 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 18th century.

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.

The tradition of the Christmas tree originated in Germany in the 1500s when candles were attached to evergreen trees. It was not until the late 1700s that Christmas trees were introduced to the United States by German settlers.

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.

Santa Claus went through many changes in the process. The original St. Nicholas was an early bishop from modern-day Turkey in the fourth century known for his generosity toward the poor and children.

The Catholic feast day celebrating St. Nicholas always fell on Dec. 6, but Protestants merged the holiday with Christmas over the years. Santa Claus emerged from the St. Nicholas stories in Holland before becoming part of American lore in the late 1700s.

Christmas trees began being sold in large numbers by the 1850s in the North, with decorations, almost all homemade, steadily becoming more elaborate. Though some families still used candles on trees, many opted not to do so for the obvious safety reasons of not exposing flame near a drying tree. The first electric lights were used on trees in 1882, not long after the invention of the light bulb. As electricity became more widely available in the early 20th century, colored electric lights became popular and safer alternatives. Still, most American families did not have Christmas trees in the early 1900s. In fact, the National Christmas Tree at the White House did not become an annual tradition until 1923.

Rudolph was added to the sleigh team as part of a poem written in 1939, but country singer Gene Autry popularized his story with his rendition of “*Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*” in 1949 and was followed by his equally-popular “*Frosty the Snowman*” in 1950.

Songs and stories surrounding Christmas became even more popular in the 1960s as new television specials introduced them to a new generation. A *Charlie Brown Christmas* became an instant classic in 1965 as Charlie Brown looked for the real meaning of Christmas, upset that Christmas had become way too commercialized, even in the mid-1960s. His dismissal of the aluminum trees popular at the time in favor of a real tree was connected with the collapse of the aluminum tree’s popularity by the end of the decade.

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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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.

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From National Crime Prevention Council

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Financial fraud can be difficult to recognize. This type of fraud can include identity theft, fake check and wire transfer scams, investment and credit card fraud, and bogus online charitable solicitations. Unfortunately, only one in five of these crimes are reported.

## The National Crime Prevention Council offers the following tips:

- It's shrewd, not rude to hang up on a suspicious telemarketer.
- Don't give personal information to people you don't know unless you initiated the contact.
- Don't let yourself get pressured into a verbal agreement or signing a contract.
- Be skeptical of online charitable solicitations and other online offers. If interested, ask to receive the information in the mail and check to be sure the company is legitimate.
- Never agree to pay for products or services in advance.
- Get estimates and ask for references on home repair offers and other products or services.

If you suspect fraud, contact your local law enforcement agency immediately.

To learn more about protecting yourself from financial fraud, visit the National Crime Prevention website at: [www.ncpc.org](http://www.ncpc.org).

# HOME BURGLARY PREVENTION TIPS

Home burglaries occur every 15 seconds in the United States. The Westworth Village PD wants to provide our citizens with some tips to help protect their homes from these incidents.

1

**LOCK UP**

Lock all outside doors, windows, and garage and/or shed doors, even if you will be gone for a short time. Install deadbolts on all outside doors. Install specialty locks for sliding glass doors. Make sure your window locks are secure. Secure pet doors.

2

**MAKE THE HOUSE LOOK OCCUPIED**

Leave lights and a television or radio on if possible. If you are away for an extended time, make arrangements to have mail, packages, and newspapers collected, your lawn cared for, and notify the police department for extra patrols.

3

**LIGHTING**

Keep your house well-lit, particularly around entrances. Add extra lighting with motion detectors around entrances and dark corners of your home.

4

**SECURITY SYSTEM**

If possible, consider getting a security system. There are many varieties currently on the market. If you have a system in place, always keep it activated. Do not keep the pin number near the key pad.

5

**INVENTORY**

Photograph your valuables in their locations around your home and make a list of the make, model, and serial numbers. If possible, engrave your Driver's License number on them for identification purposes. Photocopy important documents and the contents of your wallet and keep them in a safe deposit box or with a relative.

6

**ADDITIONAL TIPS**

Keep grills, tools, toys, etc. stowed away and out of your yard. Get to know your neighbors. Do not keep spare keys outside. Keep safes bolted down. Shred documents before throwing them out and breakdown packaging of newly purchased valuables before disposing of them.

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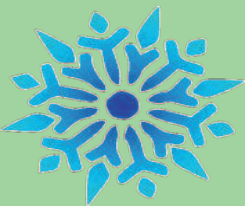


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## Three Day Weekend Forecast



### Friday, Dec. 23:

**AM** - Mostly sunny and cold; high near 25. N/NW wind 10-15mph, with gusts as high as 20mph.  
**PM** - Mostly cloudy; low around 18. N/NW wind 5-10mph.



### Saturday, Dec. 24:

**AM** - Mostly sunny; high near 34. N/NW wind around 5mph.  
**PM** - Partly cloudy; low around 22. Calm wind becoming W/SW around 5mph.



### Sunday, Dec. 25:

**AM** - Sunny; high near 45.  
**PM** - Partly cloudy, with a low around 32.

**Extended Forecast [Click Here](#)**