

From the Sports Desk with John English

Basketball: Benbrook Bobcats and Lady Cats Head to Playoffs



The Benbrook boy's basketball team defeated Diamond Hill-Jarvis by a score of 50-37 last Friday, and coach Blake Mendez said his team struggled to get things going.

"We came out in this one and couldn't get anything to fall. We've been shooting the ball well but this game seemed like there was a lid on the goals. It took us until the fourth quarter to get going, but once we did we were able to pull away."

Mendez said Jayden Hall ended the game with 20 points and played great defense.

"We say his name a lot; we rely on him and he always shows up for us," Mendez said.

With the playoffs about to get underway, Mendez said his team needs to remain focused on the task at hand.

"You never want to get complacent or satisfied," Mendez said. "We know we have played well, but we don't have the wins to show

for it so that keeps us motivated to keep working."

On the girl's side, the Lady Cats picked up two must-win games last week to punch their ticket to the post-season.

Coach Leta Lofton said several players stepped up for Benbrook in the victories.

"The season was a learning experience for such a young team," Lofton said on Saturday. "Our Captains (Grace Klaerner and McKinzie Brookshier) in addition to our junior (Juliana Velasquez, Mary Carnegie, and Camilla Rivera) had to step up big time in order for us to be successful in the end. Great effort and commitment was evident in every aspect of the season. We are looking forward to the big test we will face in playing ranked Bridgeport (on Monday night). Hopefully our effort, commitments and determination will help us persevere and get the victory."

(continued on page 5)

Benbrook Council Action by John English

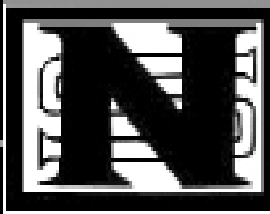
Feb. 6 City Council Meeting Review

The Benbrook City Council meeting was held on Feb. 6 as scheduled. Mayor Jason Ward called the meeting to order. An invocation was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Time was then allowed for citizen comments on any agenda item, but there were none.

The minutes for the meeting held on Jan. 16 were then approved unanimously.

The first item of the evening was a motion to approve the finance report ending on Dec. 31, 2024. For the General Fund, revenues for the month of December totaled (continued on page 5)

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From 4PAWS & Benbrook Animal Shelter

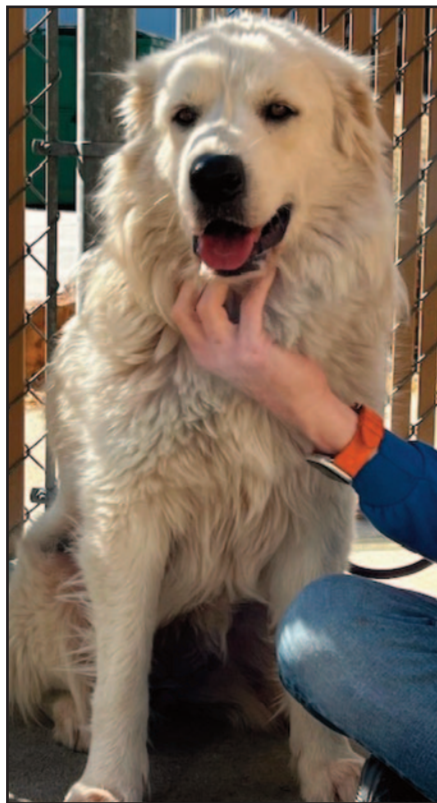
Dog of the Week!

Grace is a one-year-old, 63-pound Great Pyrenees mix. She is gentle and sweet and will be a wonderful companion!

She is available for adoption at the Benbrook Animal Shelter, located at 469 Winscott Road.

Adoption hours are Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, and 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Sunday.

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 dogs available.



Around the Town by Denise Honeycutt

VFW Post 8235 Attends Veterans Appreciation Day at FWSSR

Tarrant County Commissioner 4, Manny Ramirez hosted a Veteran's Appreciation Day event at the Fort Worth Stock Show & Rodeo (FWSSR) on Monday, Feb. 3. VFW Post 8235 was proud to be invited to attend and have a display in the vendors area.

The FWSSR has a long history of supporting veterans on this special day. It gives patrons the chance to realize the personal sacrifices and risks veterans made for the benefit of the nation.

VFW Post 8235 has also been a part of Fort Worth's history, established on March 18, 1970. The Post recognizes area veterans that bring positive values and characteristics back to their community and many find a home at VFW Post 8235. It's been noted often that the camaraderie, hard work and dedication of Post members is the secret to success.



Pictured (l-r) at the Fort Worth Stock Show Rodeo on Feb. 3 are: Member Bob Cook, Past Commander Martin Agee, Commander Randall High and Quartermaster Philip Casey.

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From the American Red Cross

Donors Needed Now to Build Up the Blood Supply

The American Red Cross urges donors to give blood or platelets to help build up the blood supply after thousands of donations went uncollected last month. People of all blood types, especially those with type O negative blood, are encouraged to make and keep their donation appointments so hospitals can continue to ensure critical care for patients this winter. As February continues, so does the potential for additional weather systems to disrupt blood drives. Flu and other seasonal illnesses are spreading, which could also force more people to cancel scheduled donation appointments, compounding the impact to collecting lifesaving blood products.

Give with your whole heart this month. To book a time to give blood or platelets, use the Red Cross Blood Donor App, visit RedCrossBlood.org or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

As a thank-you, all who come to give through Feb. 28, 2025, will get a \$15 e-gift card to a merchant of choice.

Upcoming blood donation opportunities:

Arlington

• Thursday, Feb. 13: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Family Healthcare Associates, 1300 S Fielder Rd.

• Thursday, Feb. 20: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Cooper Street YMCA, 7120 S Cooper Street

Bedford

• Friday, Feb. 28: 12 p.m. to 6 p.m., Bedford YMCA, 2801 Forest Ridge Dr.

Benbrook

• Friday, Feb. 14: 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Benbrook Community Center YMCA, 1899 Winscott Road

Carrollton

• Thursday, Feb. 27: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Carrollton Regional Medical Center, 4343 N. Josey Lane

Corinth

• Wednesday, Feb. 26: 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., CoServ, 7701 S. Stemmons

Dallas

• Thursday, Feb. 20: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Dallas County Records Building, 500 Elm St.

• Friday, Feb. 21: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saint Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church, 8011 Douglas Ave.

• Friday, Feb. 21: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., American Red Cross, 2055 Kendall Dr.

• Tuesday, Feb. 25: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Royal Lane Baptist Church, 6707 Royal Ln.

• Friday, Feb. 28: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., American Red Cross, 2055 Kendall Dr.

Denton

• Friday, Feb. 28: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Medical City Denton-Professional Building, 3537 South Interstate 35 E

Flower Mound

• Saturday, Feb. 15: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Trinity Presbyterian Church, 5500 Morriss Road

Fort Worth

• Thursday, Feb. 13: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Texas Wesleyan University Nicholas Martin Hall, 1309 Wesleyan St.

• Friday, Feb. 14: 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., American Red Cross, 6000 Western Place, Ste. 100

• Wednesday, Feb. 19: 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Medical City Fort Worth, 900 8th Ave.

• Wednesday, Feb. 19: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Texas Christian University, 2901 Stadium Drive

• Friday, Feb. 21: 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., American Red Cross, 6000 Western Place, Ste. 100

• Saturday, Feb. 22: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church, 5953 Bowman Roberts Rd.

• Thursday, Feb. 27: 1 p.m. to 6 p.m., Hulen Mall, 4800 S Hulen St. **Granbury**

• Friday, Feb. 14: 11:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Hood County YMCA, 1475 James Road

Grand Prairie

• Thursday, Feb. 27: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Grand Prairie Family YMCA, 4556 S Carrier Parkway

Highland Village

• Tuesday, Feb. 25: 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Highland Shores Community Center, 1 Community Center Rd.

Mansfield

• Saturday, Feb. 15: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Mansfield YMCA, 78 Regency Parkway

Mesquite

• Saturday, Feb. 22: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Wildwood Baptist Church, 531 S Walker St.

• Thursday, Feb. 27: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., St Stephen United Methodist Church, 2520 Oates Dr.

Plano

• Friday, Feb. 28: 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Medical City Plano, 4001 West 15th Street

Prosper

• Friday, Feb. 14: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Atmos Energy, 471 Industry Way

• Friday, Feb. 21: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Prosper, 970 N Coit Road

Richardson

• Saturday, Feb. 15: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Canyon Creek Project, 2800 Custer Parkway

Rockwall

• Thursday, Feb. 13: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Hyatt Place Dallas/Rockwall, 1600 La Jolla Pointe Dr.

Southlake

• Tuesday, Feb. 25: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Timarron Country Club, 1400 Byron Nelson Pkwy

Stephenville

• Thursday, Feb. 20: 12 p.m. to 6 p.m., Tarleton State University Thompson Student Center, 1452 W Jones St.

How to Donate Blood: Download the American Red Cross Blood Donor App, visit RedCrossBlood.org, call 1-800-733-2767. All blood types are needed to ensure a reliable supply for patients. A blood donor card, a driver's license or two other forms of identification are required at check-in. Individuals who are 17 years of age in most states (16 with parental consent where allowed by state law), weigh at least 110 pounds and are in generally good health may be eligible to donate blood. High school students and other donors 18 years of age and younger also have to meet certain height and weight requirements.

Sports Desk (continued from page 1)

On the mat, Benbrook had a strong showing at the regional wrestling tournament last weekend and coach Wade Cribbs said he had some really good efforts.

“The kids wrestled really strong and performed well,” Cribbs said. “We had a couple bad breaks, but overall we held our own against a really tough Region 1. This is our first time out here and the kids wrestled their hearts out. We had nine kids who got to compete at regionals. Five of those made it to the second day as regional finalists, four of them were regional placers, and two qualified for state.”

Landry Wilkinson got second and Jacob Carpenter finished fourth to advance to the state tournament.

Kas Stevens and Nataliegh Zapata both placed sixth and Dominic Nunez placed seventh.

“This will be Jacob’s first time competing at state and we’re excited to see what he can do on the biggest stage,” Cribbs said. “Landry Wilkinson is looking to improve on his fourth place finish last year and is eyeing a state championship.”

Cribbs said the state tournament is going to be a serious challenge, but is confident his guys will compete.

“It’s a battleground down there in Houston, but I would take Landry Wilkinson against anyone,” Cribbs said.



On the pitch, the Benbrook girl's soccer team defeated Eastern Hills by a score of 6-0 last week and coach Luz Castillo said it was a complete effort from her team.

“We are so proud of the team’s performance against Eastern Hills with another shutout win from our defense,” Castillo said. “Offensively, it was a collective effort, scoring six goals from five different players spoke volumes about our depth and teamwork. Each player brought their best, and the versatility in our attacking options was on full display in a dominant performance.”

Castillo said she had a few players who particularly stood out with exceptional performances.

“One was midfielder and captain Sydeny Chavez,” Castillo said.

“She showcased an exceptional vision and play-making ability, setting up an assist and scoring two goals. Both Lily Chavez and Grace Klaerner, forwards, were relentless in attacking, with each hitting a goal and an assist that set the tone for the match. On the defensive end, Kira Cleveland, Brooke Moreno, Fiona Chan and captains Lily Carias and Jessica Anzaldúa were brick walls, making steals and intercepting passes, which helped maintain our clean sheet. A highlight play of the night was Lily Carias scoring a goal from a corner kick from captain Randee Slater. These standout performances, alongside the collective effort of the entire team, were key to our success. We are ready to keep the winning streak going.”

Council Action (continued from page 1)

\$7,758,514 and year-to-date totaled \$10,203,044, while expenditures for the month of December totaled \$2,352,174 and year-to-date expenditures totaled \$6,368,084.

For the Economic Development Corporation, revenues for the month of December totaled \$197,467 and year-to-date totaled \$610,271, while expenditures for the month of December totaled \$43,132 and year-to-date expenditures totaled \$109,732.

The finance report for the period ending Dec. 31 was accepted unanimously.

The next item was a motion to accept the quarterly investment report for the period ending on Dec. 31. Investments for the City of Benbrook totaled \$32,801,631, and for the EDC totaled \$6,860,717. The quarterly investment report for the period ending Dec. 31 was accepted unanimously.

Next was a motion to accept confirmation of appointments to the Civil Service Commission. State law requires the City Manager to appoint three members to the city's Civil Service Commission with the appointments confirmed by the city council. The commission consists of three members serving staggered three-year terms. All three positions have previously expired without appointment. The City Manager has offered appointments to the following Benbrook residents:

Gary Ritchie in Place 1, with a term beginning on Feb. 6, 2025 and ending on Feb. 5, 2028, Crystal Ramsey in Place 2 with a term beginning Feb. 6, 2025 and ending on Feb. 5, 2027 and Jeremy Kirwan in Place 3 for a term beginning Feb. 6, 2025 and ending on Feb. 5, 2026.

These residents have agreed to serve pending City Council confirmation.

The members were confirmed unanimously.

Time was then allowed for informal citizen comments, and a boy scout who was present introduced himself.

Time was then allowed for council member and staff comments, but there were none.

The meeting was then adjourned.

Texas History Minute by Dr. Ken Bridges

Red River Expedition of 1806: Betrayal, Tension, and Near-War Between the U.S. and Spain

The Louisiana Purchase of 1803 sparked a new wave of exploration in the United States as a number of expeditions were commissioned at the direction of President Thomas Jefferson to explore the new American frontier. The most famous of these adventures was the Lewis and Clark Expedition of 1804 - 1806, which explored the Upper Missouri River Valley. Of the four major expeditions, one looked to explore the Red River Valley to the frontiers of Texas but became the most disastrous of all.

The idea of a trek along the Red River to find out more about the reach of the river, its wildlife, and the Native American tribes that lived along it had been conceived not long after Louisiana had been purchased from France.



William Dunbar, the Scottish scientist and Mississippi planter who had immigrated to the United States before the American Revolution, was chosen by Jefferson to plan this venture. In 1805, Dunbar, fresh from his successful expedition along the Ouachita River, accepted, and began sketching out plans for the voyage and the needs for the explorers.

The Ouachita River runs to the North and to the East of the Red River, snaking its way from western Arkansas into eastern Louisiana. An expedition along the Red

River was not expected to be dissimilar to the Hunter-Dunbar Expedition as most of it would be in a climate similar to those in the Ouachita River Valley.

Though the French claimed the entire Red River Valley, the Spanish continued to claim the area for themselves. An expedition along the Red River would take American explorers closer to Spanish territory than any other expedition to this time. However, the Spanish had a difficult time maintaining control over the area of the upper Red River, and a number of Spanish expeditions were defeated by local Native American tribes. Rarely did the Spanish army even attempt to journey into the area.

By late 1805, the expedition leadership consisted of Captain Richard Sparks, Thomas Freeman, a surveyor who had helped survey the southern border for the United States following the 1795 border treaty with Spain, and botanist and medical student Peter Custis of Virginia. As a result, the Red River Expedition was also called the Freeman-Custis Expedition. The explorers, numbering 24 at this point, left from the Mississippi River port at Natchez, Mississippi Territory, in April 1806 and pushed to the Red River.

The group stopped briefly at Natchitoches in what is now western Louisiana. Here, they picked up about 20 more troops as rumors spread that the Spanish had been tipped off about the expedition and intended to confront it. Though under strict orders not to engage in any military action, they were willing to defend themselves. Three Caddo guides were also included as the expedition was about to move into the area of what is now Northeast Texas, Northwest Louisiana, and Southwest Arkansas, the heart of Caddo tribal territory at the time.

The expedition moved northward through what is now the Shreveport area and entered what is now Arkansas by June. The trip had been hampered by the relatively shallow waters of the river at the time but were pleased with their efforts.

They soon began moving westward as the Red River takes a sharp turn in Arkansas. The journey had been without incident up to this point. Their encounters with the Caddos had been welcoming. However, the Caddos warned that they had learned that Spanish troops were on their way to capture the expedition. The explorers realized the entire journey was now in danger but decided to press forward regardless.

Their actions over the next few days would determine the fate of the expedition and perhaps even the fate of relations between the United States and Spain. However, as they moved westward into Texas, they never imagined what had led to the expedition's doom.

Part II

The Red River Expedition of 1806 was supposed to be another in a string of scientific triumphs for the United States as it explored the new territories of the Louisiana Purchase. Captain Richard Sparks, Thomas Freeman, and Peter Custis led a team along the Red River into Southwest Arkansas and into North Texas to the sourcewaters of the Red River in what is now the Texas Panhandle to learn about the local Native American tribes as well as the geography, plant life, and animal life. However, it would end in failure after a stunning betrayal.

Three months into the expedition, the voyage had been slow but successful as it entered Arkansas. It soon turned along the river and headed toward Texas. By July 28, the team was about halfway along the length of the river, roughly northwest of New Boston. At a bend in the river, an area now called Spanish Bluff, the team suddenly noticed a large force of Spanish troops, heavily armed.

Sparks, the commander of the nearly four dozen army troops on the Red River Expedition, estimated that perhaps a thousand Spanish soldiers had assembled against them, an incredibly large force for the area at the time.

Regardless of (continued on page 7)

Texas History Minute (continued from page 6)

what legal claims the United States or Spain had on the Red River as a boundary in what is now Bowie County, Texas; all the Americans realized that their lives were at risk. They were entirely at the mercy of the Spanish army. The Spaniards had orders to defend what they considered Spanish territory with deadly force if necessary.

Somehow, the Spanish had located the party. Francisco Viana, commander of Spanish forces in East Texas, had received information in Nacogdoches that the Red River Expedition was moving up the river by April and sent a letter of protest to American officials. His forces raced to the Red River to intercept the group.

The Americans were stopped and held. With tension surrounding each hour and the negotiations of Sparks, Viana ordered them down the river back into the United States.

Badly outnumbered, the expedition agreed, barely escaping with their lives. The encounter had lasted a full day, and it could easily have ignited a war between the two countries. Not long afterward, the Red River Expedition crossed back from Texas into what is now Arkansas and continued back down the river without incident.



The source of the betrayal was from within the highest levels of American government. The source, U.S. Army Gen. **James Wilkinson**, had long worked as a spy for Spain, supplying information on

American activities for a price. Personal profit was his only loyalty.

Wilkinson's treachery was widely suspected at the time. Fellow officers, and even friends and aides never entirely trusted him, but they were never able to collect enough evidence. Their patriotism meant staying faithful to the law though Wilkinson would not.

In 1805, Wilkinson had been named territorial governor for the Louisiana Territory, which through a somewhat confusing naming scheme meant the territory north of what is now Louisiana, including Missouri, Arkansas, and Oklahoma. What is now Louisiana was the District of Orleans.

Wilkinson, at one point the most senior member of the army, continued his betrayals in his new post. As soon as he learned of President Thomas Jefferson's plans for exploring the Louisiana Purchase, he secretly told Spain of these plans, for a price. Spain, fearful of Americans pushing into their territory, was determined to see the voyages fail. In the end, the Red River Expedition was sabotaged. The lives of American citizens and American troops under Wilkinson's command were put in mortal danger by his actions.



By 1807, Jefferson replaced Wilkinson with his personal secretary, **Meriwether Lewis**, now a great hero to Americans after the successful Lewis and Clark Expedition.

Wilkinson was later forced out of the army after his disastrous performance in the War of 1812. However, he would somehow manage to find his way back into political good graces and named ambassador to Mexico in 1816.

Wilkinson died in 1825 as he attempted to cash in on his position as ambassador with a large land grant for himself in Texas. He was buried in Mexico City. Several decades after his death, around the 1850s, a large cache of correspondence was found within Spanish colonial records in Louisiana, showing without a doubt that Wilkinson was actively working as a spy for Spain and had betrayed the United States on numerous occasions, including his information on the scientific expeditions into the West.

None of the leaders of the Red River Expedition ever saw the direct evidence that the voyage had been compromised. In spite of the disastrous effort, they went on to lead respectable lives.

Custis became a respected doctor and planter in North Carolina until his death in 1842.

Freeman served as surveyor general of the United States until his death in 1821.

Though the expedition had cataloged hundreds of species of animals and plants and established a cordial relationship with the Caddo tribe that dominated Northeast Texas, the abrupt halt of the expedition left the data in a haphazard and disorganized state.

In later years, the Red River Expedition was largely forgotten over the diplomatic disaster that resulted.

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Weekend Forecast



Friday, Feb. 7:

AM - Mostly cloudy, with a high near 53. South southeast wind 5 to 10 mph.
PM - Cloudy, with a low around 48. South wind around 10 mph.



Saturday, Feb. 8:

AM - A 20% chance of showers before noon. Partly sunny, with a high near 70. S/SE wind 10 to 20 mph becoming NW in the afternoon. Winds could gust as high as 30 mph.
PM - Mostly clear, with a low around 26. N/NW wind 15 to 20 mph, with gusts as high as 30 mph.



Sunday, Feb. 9:

AM - Sunny, with a high near 43. North wind 10 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 25 mph.
PM - Mostly clear, with a low around 27.

Extended Forecast [Click Here](#)