



# Benbrook News

Established 1939 • A Publication of Suburban Newspapers, Inc.

86th Year, No. 6 • 7820 Wyatt Drive, White Settlement, Texas 76108 • suburban-newspapers.com • February 5, 2026

*From the Benbrook Public Library*

## Benbrook Library Offers In-House Laptop Checkout!

The Benbrook Library is offering patrons the opportunity to borrow laptops for use inside the library during regular business hours. Library users may check out a laptop with either a resident or non-resident library card. The devices are available at no cost and may be used for work, study or leisure activities while on-site.

Laptops are available on a first-come, first-served basis and can be checked out at any time the library is open.

*Around the Town with Denise Honeycutt*

## Community Gathers for Farewell Event at Robot Park



*From the Sports Desk with John English*

## Bobcat Wrestlers Advance to Regionals

The Benbrook wrestling team competed in the District 4-5A tournament this past Friday and Saturday with good results.

The boys came in third place out of 20 teams scoring 200 points, and the girls finished fourth overall, just 9.5 points out of third place.

“I could not be more proud of how our kids competed,” coach Wade Cribbs said.

Regional qualifiers on the boy’s side included Christian Cannon, Gavin Henderson, Phillip McFadden, Mac Shafer, Desmond Chambers, Zack Burks, Aiden Carpenter, and Jacob Carpenter.

Standouts for the boy’s team included Desmond Chambers, who became a 2-time district champion at 165, and Gavin Henderson who reached 100 wins.

On the girl’s side, Judith Jimenez, Bailey Lott, Zoe Clark, Mya Fenner, Emily Hassler, and Brileigh Satterwhite all advanced, with Mya Fenner bringing home the district championship at 145 pounds.

“Every team that finished ahead of the boys and the girls teams has at least 1,000 more students than Benbrook,” Cribbs said. “We are hoping to continue a successful season in Lubbock and push some kids out to the state tournament for the fifth year in a row. Region 1 is extremely tough, but I have high confidence in our Bobcat Wrestlers.”

(continued on page 3)

Community members gathered Sunday, Feb. 1, for an informal “last hurrah” at Benbrook’s Robot Park, also known as Castle Park, marking a moment of reflection and nostalgia at the longtime neighborhood landmark.

The impromptu gathering brought together residents who shared memories and photos while spending time around the park’s iconic robot structure, known as “Giganta.” Giganta, a towering robot play structure, was installed at the park in the early 1970s and has served as a familiar backdrop for generations of Benbrook families. The robot has long been considered a unique and beloved feature of the park, often drawing visitors curious about its retro design.

Attendees described the gathering as a chance to celebrate the park’s history and the role it has played in the community, offering one final opportunity to connect at the site in a meaningful way.

For more information on the upcoming park, contact Bennett Howell at [bhowell@benbrook-tx.gov](mailto:bhowell@benbrook-tx.gov).

(photos continued on page 4)

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[suburban-newspapers.com](http://suburban-newspapers.com)

These newspapers are published and delivered digitally every Thursday.

Deadlines are Friday at 4 p.m., prior to the following Thursday's edition.

The publisher/editor reserves the right to reject or edit all copy submitted for publication. Advertising and Letters to the Editor do not necessarily reflect the opinions, editorial policies or beliefs of the Publisher, Managing Editor or staff of Suburban Newspapers, Inc.

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• **Obituaries** are limited to 250 words and cost \$100.

Mistakes in stories or ads must be reported by Friday at 4 p.m. following Thursday's edition for corrections. Payment for advertising is due by 10 a.m. Monday.

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# Sports Desk

(continued from page 1)

On the court, the Benbrook boy's basketball team won a close one over Eastern Hills last week, and coach Blake Mendez said it was another tough contest for his team

"This game is always a battle," Mendez said. "Coach Miller does a great job getting his kids ready to play and they came out and punched us in the mouth early. They did a good job against our defense and we had to adjust after they built an eight-point lead.

"But once we settled in and saw some shots fall, we gained our confidence. The three-ball was huge for us, especially late and we were able to hit enough and get a few stops to get the win 60-57."

Mendez said a couple of players stood out for the Bobcats.

"Will Cook came off the bench and was huge for us," Mendez said. "He missed all of last season with a shoulder injury and has still been trying to find his rhythm this season and I think he found it in this game.

"He hit four threes for us, two in the fourth quarter that kept Eastern Hills from being able to catch us. It was great to see him find himself again."

Over at Western Hills, the Cougars defeated Carter-Riverside by a score of 56-21 last Friday to improve to 3-5 in district and keep it's playoff hopes alive.

On the girl's side, Benbrook came up just a bit short against Eastern Hills and coach Leta Lofton said it was also a tough game.

"We, the Lady Bobcat basketball team, had a tough game versus Eastern Hills," Lofton said. "Once again having difficulty defending a tough a very experienced Eastern Hills post player in (Kayden) Sherman."

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From Suburban Newspapers Staff Writers

## Tarrant County Residents Invited to Register to Vote

Tarrant County election officials are reminding residents how to register to vote and take part early in shaping the future of local, state and federal government. To be counted for a ballot, voter registration applications must be postmarked by the deadline date if submitted by mail. If the deadline falls on a weekend or holiday, it is extended to the next business day.

Residents may register by completing a voter registration application and delivering it to the Tarrant County Elections Office or mailing it in. Paper applications are available at the Elections Center, post offices, libraries, city halls and public assistance offices. Voters may also register or update their information when renewing or updating a Texas driver's license or state ID. Applicants must be U.S. citizens, Tarrant County residents, at least 17 years and 10 months old at the time of application, and 18 by Election Day.

Early voters may cast ballots in person at any early voting location in the county. Election Day voting will take place from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., with voters able to use any county Vote Center.

Ballot-by-mail applications must be received no later than 11 days before Election Day. Voters are encouraged to verify registration status, polling locations and ID requirements using the [county's online voter tools](#).

**VFW** STEAK NIGHT!  
 VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS. Public Welcome  
 Saturday, Feb. 7 • 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.  
 Steak Dinner or Pork Chop Dinner  
 Meal includes:  
 New York Strip or Pork Chop,  
 Baked Potato, Salad and Dessert  
 Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 10429  
 1000 Stevens Drive • Benbrook, TX  
 US 377 South of I-20, left turn at  
 Dutch Branch Park Lake Access  
 Please join us for  
 Burgers & More  
 Every Friday 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.  
 Thank you for your support!

From the Benbrook Animal Shelter

## Cookie Wants to Be Your Valentine!



Cookie is a loveable, 2-1/2-year-old, 53-pound Staffordshire terrier mix. She loves to give hugs and hang out with people.

Adoptions are available at the Benbrook Shelter, located at 469 Winscott Rd., Tuesday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. or Saturday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Visit [www.4pawsinc.org](http://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 available dogs.

**Benbrook American Legion Post 297**  
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# Around the Town (continued from page 1)



Ronan Wortham, Isak Wortham, Morgan McNair, Levi Brown, Caleb Billman, Torrynn Wortham, Penny Kenough and Brayden Nutt.



Victoria Caldwell and Hailey Cummings came to say good bye to Robot.



Alaina, Garrett, Renley and Miles Gris-som came out to play at the park.



Morgan Winslow-Hinkle (Robot alumni), Beck Hinkle and Thomas Winslow



Oliver Smith enjoys a swing on a pretty, sunny day.



These engraved bricks were sold as fundraisers for Castle Park in the 1990s.

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From the North Central Texas Council of Governments

# NCTCOG Seeks Input on Transportation, Air Quality Improvement Initiatives at Feb. 9 Public Meeting

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) invites the public to provide input on recent transportation initiatives, funding requests and air quality improvement updates during a hybrid public meeting at noon on Monday, Feb. 9.

The meeting will be held in the Transportation Council Room at the NCTCOG offices, located at 616 Six Flags Drive in Arlington. Those unable to attend in person can view the meeting online at [PublicInput.com/nctcogFeb26](http://PublicInput.com/nctcogFeb26).

Residents can also participate by calling 855-925-2801 and entering code 2831. Public comments will be accepted until March 10.

At the meeting, staff will present the 2027-2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), a federally and state-mandated list of transportation projects with committed federal, state and local funding within a four-year period. The overview will cover the TIP document and development process, which includes a draft list of active regional projects.

Additionally, an overview of a North Tarrant Express funding request will be provided. TxDOT is requesting to use \$145 million for the construction of a northbound frontage road from northbound IH 35W to eastbound SH 121 and reconstruction of the Sylvania Avenue Bridge over SH 121. Approximately \$100 million of TxDOT funds and \$45 million of the North Tarrant Express managed lane revenue are requested for the project.

Finally, staff will present the final draft of the Dallas-Fort Worth Air Quality Improvement Plan - Comprehensive Action Plan. This plan serves as a strategic roadmap for reducing emissions through 2050 across five key sectors. The draft plan is available for comment at [Publicinput.com/dfwAQIP](http://Publicinput.com/dfwAQIP).

Residents planning to use transit to attend the meeting can take advantage of \$6 round-trip rides from the CentrePort/DFW Airport Station to NCTCOG via the Arlington Transportation app. Visit [ArlingtonTX.gov/ondemand](http://ArlingtonTX.gov/ondemand) to download the app.

For special accommodations related to disabilities or language interpretation, call 817-608-2365 or email [cbaylor@nctcog.org](mailto:cbaylor@nctcog.org) at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

### About the Regional Transportation Council:

The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) of the North Central Texas Council of Governments has served as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for regional transportation planning in the Dallas-Fort Worth area since 1974. The MPO works in cooperation with the region's transportation providers to address the complex transportation needs of the rapidly growing metropolitan area. The Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area includes Collin, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Hood, Hunt, Johnson, Kaufman, Parker, Rockwall, Tarrant and Wise counties. The RTC's 44 members include local elected or appointed officials from the metropolitan area and representatives from each of the area's transportation providers. More information can be found at [www.nctcog.org](http://www.nctcog.org).

## FEBRUARY Events

**BENBROOK SENIOR CENTER HOURS**  
**M-W-F 9 AM - 2 PM**  
**TUES & THURS 9 AM - 3:30 PM**

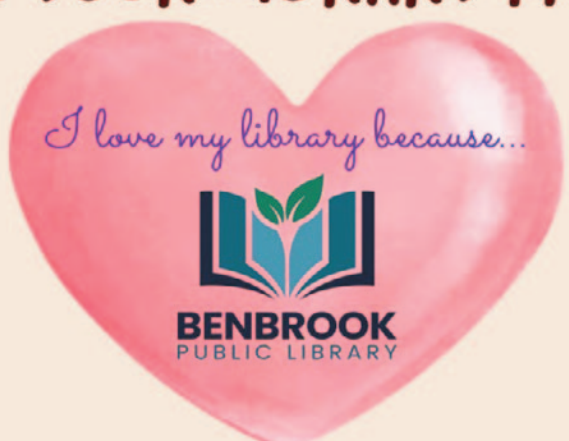
Weekly Activities

**Bridge:** Monday and Thursday, 9 a.m.  
**Canasta:** Thursday, 9 a.m.  
**42 Dominoes:** Tuesday and Friday, 9 a.m.  
**Hand and Foot:** Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, 9 a.m.  
**Mexican Train Dominoes:** Tuesday and Thursday, 12 p.m.  
**Chair Yoga:** Tuesday and Friday 9 a.m.  
**Pegs and Jokers:** Monday and Friday, 12 p.m.

What's Happening This Month?

- **February 4 :** Birthday Bingo with Maleah Ensey, Senior Healthcare Advisor. **Prior Registration Required**
- **February 6 :** Senior Center closes at **11:30 a.m.**
- **February 6, 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. :** Friday Night Bingo
- **February 11, 8:00 a.m. :** Breakfast with Cathy & Kathy at Cracker Barrel. **Prior Registration Required**
- **February 11, 11:00 a.m. :** Valentines Rock Painting. **Prior Registration Required**
- **February 12 :** Meet at Lions Club
- **February 13 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. :** Valentine's Day Dance
- **February 16:** Closed for President's Day
- **February 18, 11:30 a.m. :** Heart Health Presentation and Snacks with Alex Helms of Overture Home Care. **Prior Registration Required**
- **February 25, 11:30 a.m. :** Field Trip Luncheon to Hoffbrau Steak & Grill House. **Prior Registration Required**

## FEBRUARY IS NATIONAL LOVE YOUR LIBRARY MONTH



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From Statepoint Media

# American Bison: The Heartbeat of the Prairie



The plains bison (or buffalo) is America's National Mammal. When you think of this majestic species, several associations may come to mind: their long history with Native people and the animal's near extinction, their impressive size, and their place within our national parks.

"Bison are the great shapers of the North American grasslands," says Dennis Jorgensen, bison program manager at World Wildlife Fund. "As both an ecological and cultural keystone, bison are the living heartbeat of the prairie."

## Ground Breakers and Home Makers

Grasslands are often subjected to frigid winters, wet springs and hot, dry summers. When precipitation arrives, bison help prairies absorb water through "hoof action." Adult males can weigh more than a ton. As they walk across dry prairies, their hooves punch holes in the soil, allowing water to seep into the earth, rather than washing away.

If you've ever visited Yellowstone National Park, you might have seen bison demonstrating another interesting behavior called wallowing. Bison wallow (roll around) to remove parasites or scratch an itch. Many reuse the same wallowing spots, creating crater-like impressions across the landscape. When it rains, wallows fill with water, which slowly seeps into the soil. In

areas where hundreds of bison roam, this network of basins creates a mineral-rich wetland habitat where amphibians, like tiger salamanders, lay eggs and unique plant communities thrive.

All this rolling around and scratching also help bison shed their warm, insulative fur, which many species of bird, from red-winged black birds to eastern kingbirds, line their nests with to keep their young warm.

"Bison epitomize the interconnectedness that can exist between a landscape and species. These large grazers are intertwined with so many grassland plants, animals and people," says Noelle Guernsey, senior specialist, Bison Restoration, World Wildlife Fund.

## Road Crew

As bison graze, they turn grass into manure. This nutrient recycling process is critical for producing soil, fertilizing plants, and providing food, shelter and protection for other species. Dung beetles roll, tunnel and bury their way through it. Predatory beetles and garter snakes take shelter

beneath droppings, awaiting flies and other prey. And even one species of mason bee is thought to nest in bison dung. Burrowing owls have also learned that lining their nest tunnels with bison dung is a great way to attract dung-beetles: one of their favorite snacks.

During winter, bison play another vital role. Using their massive heads, horns and shoulder muscles, they clear away snow to reach tender plants hidden beneath. Smaller plant eaters, like pronghorn and deer, use these bison-cleared trails like highways to pass through deep snow that would otherwise be unpassable. These paths can be critical to their survival, since without access to new pastures and forage they might otherwise starve.

"In many ways, the plains bison is symbolic of the values the United States was founded upon. These animals are resilient, community-minded, determined, and tied to the fate of grasslands, which have provided for humans for millennia," says Clay Bolt, Great Plains communications, World Wildlife Fund.

World Wildlife Fund's "Stories of Hope and Wonder" is an ongoing series that connects people to the wonder of nature and offers hope for a future benefiting both people and wildlife.

Each month, Stories of Hope and Wonder will feature a different species overcoming some of nature's toughest obstacles to ensure their survival.

To read past editions, visit [www.world-wildlife.org/hopeandwonder](http://www.world-wildlife.org/hopeandwonder).

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*From the American Red Cross*

## *Susie King Taylor: From Enslavement to Civil War Nurse, Educator and Memoirist*



gic positions along the Georgia coast, Taylor and her family seized the opportunity to seek their freedom. They made a perilous journey to St. Simon's Island, where Union troops had established control. It was at about 14 years old that Taylor began her formal work with the Union Army, not only as a nurse but also as an educator and support worker.

Assigned to the 33rd United States Colored Troops, originally the 1st South Carolina Volunteers, Taylor worked without pay for more than four years, tending to the needs of Black soldiers. Her responsibilities extended beyond nursing the wounded; she served as a laundress, camp nurse and teacher, using her literacy skills to instruct soldiers in reading and writing during their off hours. In some cases, she also worked in field duties and spoke of learning to handle a musket while accompanying troops.

Taylor married Sgt. Edward King, a non-commissioned officer in the regiment, in 1863. The couple remained with the unit until it was mustered out in 1866. During the war, she also worked in hospitals for African American soldiers, where she crossed paths with Clara Barton, the famed Civil War nurse and future founder of the American Red Cross.

After the war ended, Taylor and her husband returned to Savannah. There, she opened schools for formerly enslaved children and adults, becoming one of the first African American educators to teach openly in the Reconstruction-era South. She ran multiple schools in and around the city, helping newly freed families develop reading and writing skills essential for civic participation in postwar America.

Edward King died in 1866, shortly before the birth of their child. Taylor, left to provide for her family, continued her work in education but faced economic hardship as public schools for African Americans began to open and drew away her students. Eventually, she took a position as a domestic worker for a wealthy Savannah family,

later moving with them to Boston. There she remarried in 1879 to Russell L. Taylor and became active in veterans' and civic organizations, including organizing and leading Corps 67 of the Women's Relief Corps.

In 1902, Taylor published *Reminiscences of My Life in Camp with the 33rd United States Colored Troops, Late 1st S.C. Volunteers*, the first memoir by an African American woman recounting her Civil War experiences. The book chronicled her work with the regiment, the challenges Black soldiers faced, and her belief in the struggle for justice and citizenship for African Americans.

Taylor's legacy continued long after her death on Oct. 6, 1912. She was buried in Mount Hope Cemetery in Roslindale, Massachusetts, and her contributions to education, medicine and civil rights have been recognized in numerous ways.

In Savannah, a public square was renamed Taylor Square in her honor in 2023, replacing the name of a pro-slavery figure. A charter school in Savannah also bears her name, ensuring new generations learn of her achievements.

Susie King Taylor's life reflects a remarkable journey from bondage to national recognition as a nurse, educator and author, a pioneering figure whose work helped shape post-Civil War America.

Susie King Taylor's life story stands as a testament to courage, resilience and commitment to education in the face of entrenched racial barriers. Born into slavery in Liberty County, Georgia, on Aug. 6, 1848, Taylor would become the first African American woman to serve openly as a nurse during the American Civil War and the first to publish her own memoir of wartime experiences.

Taylor was born Susan Ann Baker on a plantation along Georgia's coast, where she was the eldest of nine children. As a child, she was sent to live in Savannah with her grandmother, Dolly Reed, who ensured that Taylor received an education despite state laws prohibiting formal schooling for enslaved people. There, she attended secret schools run by Black women and received additional instruction from white youths who defied local custom to teach her to read and write.

In 1862, amid the upheaval of the Civil War and after Union forces captured strate-

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## Weekend Forecast



### Friday, Feb. 6:

**AM - Sunny, with a high near 77. West northwest wind around 5 mph.**

**PM - Mostly clear, with a low around 46. Calm wind.**



### Saturday, Feb. 7:

**AM - Sunny, with a high near 75. Calm wind becoming south southeast around 5 mph in the morning.**

**PM - Partly cloudy, with a low around 52. South wind 5 to 10 mph.**



### Sunday, Feb. 8:

**AM - Partly sunny, with a high near 77. South southwest wind 5 to 10 mph.**

**PM - Mostly cloudy, with a low around 53. South southwest wind around 5 mph.**

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