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Benbrook News

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Benbrook Council Action

Community Development Block Grant Project Public Hearing Held

by John English

The Benbrook city council meeting on Jan. 19 was conducted as scheduled. Mayor Jason Ward called the meeting to order. An invocation was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

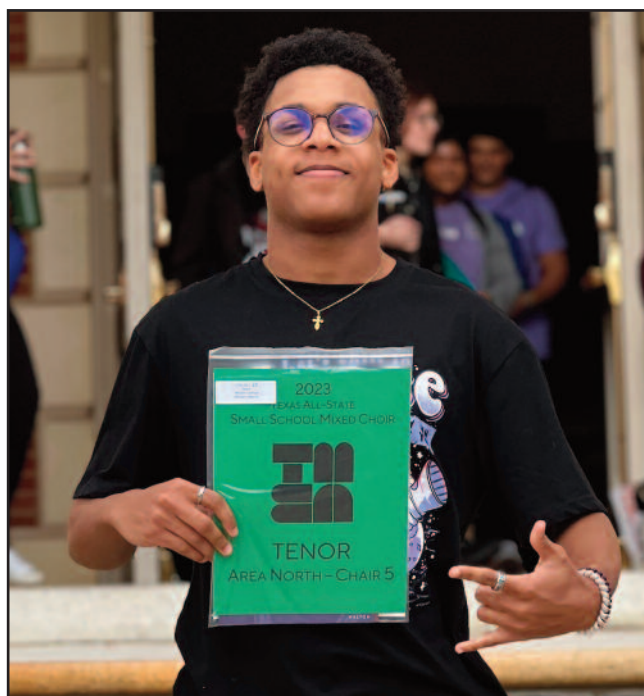
Time was then allowed for citizen comments on any agenda item, but there were none.

The minutes from the meeting held on Jan. 5 were then approved.

The first item of the evening was a public hearing to consider the 49th Year Community Development Block Grant Project. The application for the grant is due by Jan. 31 and projects must benefit low or moderate-income residents. Eligible projects may include public facilities and improvements, removal of architectural barriers and rehabilitation and preservation activities. Benbrook has only one project that meets the eligibility requirements, which staff recommended to be the installation of approximately 300 feet of sidewalk along the South (continued on page 5)

From Western Hills High School

WHHS Student Selected as Texas All-State Musician



Weldon Louis Cannon II, a member of the Western Hills High School Varsity Men's Choir will perform with the Texas All-State Small-School Mixed Choir in San Antonio on Saturday, Feb. 11 at the Henry B. González Convention Center as part of the 2023 Texas Music Educators Association Clinic/Convention.

Weldon was chosen for this prestigious honor through a competitive process held this year across the state at District, Region, and (continued on page 5)

From the Sports Desk with John English

Cougar Boys Defeat YMLA; Bobcat Girls and Boys Fall to Dunbar

The Western Hills boys' basketball team picked up a big win on Friday, defeating the Young Men's Leadership Academy by a score of 39-31.

Coach Blake Dunson said he was pleased with the way his team executed what they have worked on in practice.

"I was very pleased with our effort last night versus a good YMLA team," Dunson said on Saturday. "Our kids played with incredible toughness throughout the game to secure the road win. We had a great week of practice and it translated to the game last night."

Dunson said the victory was a "total team effort" and that the Cougars' "defensive effort was great and players one through eight came up big when their number was called."

Western Hills is in the thick of the playoff race at the midway point of district competition, but Dunson said his team needs to finish out strong.

"We are in a good place being in the playoff hunt at (continued on page 3)

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Sports Desk (continued from page 1)

3-3, but we are not satisfied,” Dunson said. “There is still work to do, and we have to finish the job. We are focused on winning the next play and we are going to take it one possession at a time.”

Smith said that AnJell Smith carried Western Hills offensively down to the final few minutes,” Smith said. “I’m very proud of our girl’s effort and the way they battled all night.”

The Cougars will play Benbrook on Saturday afternoon, and Dunson said he expects a tough contest.

Smith said that AnJell Smith carried Western Hills offensively in the game.

“Benbrook will be another good test for us,” Dunson said. “They have a strong team and we will have to be ready to compete.”

“She’s a competitor who never wants to come off the floor and did everything she could to keep us in the game,” Smith said.

Benbrook coach Blake Mendez agrees that game with Western Hills should live up to billing in what will ultimately be a rubber match.

“It’s always a dog fight with Hills,” Mendez said. “We’ve played twice this year. They’ve gotten one and we’ve gotten one. We were not at full strength when they beat us last month so we feel like we’ve got some making up to do.”

Benbrook came up a little short against Dunbar on Friday night and sat at 2-4 at the halfway point of district competition following the game.

“Our district is tough and it seems just when you think you’ve got it figured out, a team upsets someone they weren’t necessarily supposed to beat,” Mendez said. “With that said, we know we still have a chance. We played Dunbar, YMLA, and Western Hills close and lost, but we feel like we are playing our best basketball over the last few games, and we know we have a chance to make up for those losses.”

Against Dunbar, Mendez said “Anthony Landrum and freshmen point guard Jayden Hall continue to come up big for us game after game.”

Landrum hit a 3-point shot in the fourth to send the game to overtime.

“He’s a big time player,” Mendez said. “And Jayden is going to be a huge part of our program over the next three years.”

On the girls side, Benbrook lost to Dunbar on Friday, but coach Leta Lofton said she was pleased with her team's effort.

“Dunbar is a well-seasoned team that will be very tough for any team in our district to defeat,” Lofton said. “I am proud of our athletes for putting their best foot forward in attempting to be successful. Even though we did not win, it did prepare us further for the remaining games ahead.”

Zoey Smothermon led the team in scoring 23 points against Dunbar.

Over at Western Hills, the girls lost to the Young Women's Leadership Academy by a score of 38-30.

Coach Avante Smith said it was another close game for the Lady Cougars.

“We’ve played them three times now and all three have gone



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Obituary



Bessie Christine Kuhn Harding

Bessie Christine Kuhn Harding, 99, departed this life Sunday, Jan. 15, 2023. Funeral services will be held cryptside on Saturday, Jan. 28, 2023, in Greenwood Mausoleum.

Bessie was born Dec. 25, 1923, to James and Ella Kuhn in Three Sands, Okla. She graduated from Rodessa High School in Rodessa, La., in 1940. Her family moved to Bossier City, La., in 1941. She met her future husband, S/Sgt. Carrel L. Harding, while he was stationed at Barksdale AFB, La., before deployment to the EJO during WWII. When he returned from a three year tour, they were married Oct. 13, 1945. Their union was blessed with two loving daughters, Patty Jane and Linda Kay.

Her husband, retired from the Air Force in September 1962 and they decided to make their home in the Fort Worth Area. Mrs. Harding never worked outside the home after marriage, except for volunteer work. She liked to refer to herself as a self-employed home economist. She found being a full-time wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and great-great-grandmother to be life's greatest reward. Her hobby was sewing and spoiling her five grandchildren, and 14 great-grandchildren and four great-great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her loving husband of 63 years; her father; mother; step-father, Alvis Cook; brother, Hugh, Jr., and wife, Mary Kuhn; her beloved Aunt Bessie Raynes; son-in-law, John LeJeune; and granddaughter, Dawne Pettigrew.

Survivors include her daughters, Patty LeJeune and Kay Benton and husband, Larry; grandchildren, Lisa Collett (David), Robert Benton (Kristi), Patty Ann McGinnis (Justin), John LeJeune III (Katina) and Dawne Pettigrew (David), Rachel, Ashley, Elizabeth Collett, Madison, Macy and Matthew McGinnis, Brandon Benton, Paige and Julie Schwartz, Johnathan and Joshua LeJeune.

Benbrook Council Action

(continued from page 1)

side of Bellaire Drive at an estimated cost of \$30,000.

A public hearing followed, but there were no citizen or council member comments. The block grant project was approved unanimously.

Next up was a motion to approve the finance report ending Dec. 31. For the General Fund, revenues for the month of December were \$7,154,796, while expenditures totaled \$1,254,508. Year-to-date, revenues were \$9,573,177 and expenditures were \$4,021,902.

For the Economic Development Corporation, revenues for the month of December were \$197,417, while expenditures totaled \$49,715. Year-to-date, revenues totaled \$580,621, while expenditures were \$392,511. The finance report was accepted unanimously.

Next up was a motion to accept the investment report for the period ending on Dec. 31. Investments for the City of Benbrook were \$49,813,970, while investments for the EDC were \$6,518,208.

The investment report was accepted unanimously.

Next up was a motion to Approve Amendment #2 with the Tarrant County Emergency Services District #1 for Phases 4 and 5 of the American Rescue Plan Act toward ambulance replacement, associated equipment and Firefighting PPE and SBCA.

According to the agenda, the amendment allows for the purchase of one new ambulance (replacing the City's 2020 model year ambulance). It also includes the purchase of a cardiac monitor, Lucas compression device, patient stretcher and all necessary supplies and equipment fitted in every ambulance. This amendment also includes the purchase of firefighting Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) bottles.

The motion carried unanimously.

Next was a proposal to award a contract for the Dawn Drive and Westerly Ditch Drainage Projects. This project would modify the downstream channel to improve the water flow through the bridge and reduce sedimentation and flooding. The lowest qualified bid came from Humphrey & Morton in the amount of \$567,585.00. Humphrey & Morton was awarded the contract unanimously by city council.

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

The meeting was then adjourned.

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Texas All-State Musician

(continued from page 1)

Area levels. Weldon is a student of Elizabeth Kulbeth, and sings at school under the direction of Blake Glass, who is a member of the Texas Music Educators Association, a 14,000+ member organization headquartered in Austin. This is Weldon's first time to perform as a member of a TMEA All-State organization. Weldon is the child of Sheretha Craig and Weldon Cannon, Sr.

High school students selected to perform in the All-State concerts have competed through auditions to qualify at the state level. All-State is the highest honor a Texas music student can receive. 1,875 students are selected through a process that began with over 70,000 students from around the state vying for this honor to perform in one of 18 ensembles.

Texas Music Educators Association sponsors the Texas All-State competition. This competitive process begins throughout the state in auditions hosted by 33 TMEA Regions. Individual musicians perform selected music for a panel of judges who rank each instrument or voice part. From this ranking, a select group of musicians advances from their Region to compete against musicians from other areas in eight TMEA Area competitions. The highest-ranking musicians judged at the TMEA Area competitions qualify to perform in a TMEA All-State music group. Only the top 2.6 percent of musicians who initially audition become All-State musicians.

These All-State students participate in four days of rehearsals directed by nationally recognized conductors during the TMEA Clinic/Convention. Their performances for thousands of attendees bring this extraordinary event to a close. For the All-State concert and conductor information, go to the Performances section of www.tmea.org/convention.

Founded in 1921, Texas Music Educators Association is an association of over 14,000 members dedicated to promoting excellence in music education. Go to www.tmea.org/convention for more information.

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Five Financial Tips for Newlyweds



February is the month of love and one of the most popular times of year for couples to get engaged. According to a recent study, 36 percent of respondents said Valentine’s Day is the most romantic day to propose. If you’re about to get married or just walked down the aisle, here are five things to do to ensure your financial health.

1. Determine how you will handle finances. They say money can’t buy love and happiness, but talking about it in a marriage, or even beforehand, goes a long way. You’ll want to discuss whether you’ll have a joint bank account and credit cards, separate accounts or a combination of the two. It’s a personal decision,

so consider the pros and cons. It’s also a good idea to know the roles you will play. For example, will you or your partner pay the day-to-day bills? The other person may want to manage the monthly mortgage and auto expenses, or even the long-term investments and retirement funds. If you need help coming up with a plan, you may want to seek the advice of a financial counselor.

2. Get life insurance. You may not realize that February is also Insure Your Love Month, a time to think about protecting your loved ones if something unfortunate should happen. “If you have people who depend on you – including your new spouse – chances are you need life insurance,” said Lou Colaizzo, senior vice president, Erie Family Life. “While it’s hard to think about the possibility of not being there for a loved one, it’s so important to plan for.” Colaizzo added that some people may hesitate to seek out life insurance because they don’t want to go through the trouble of getting a medical exam, but that’s not always necessary. Colaizzo recommends people consult with their insurance agent to find the right life insurance policy and coverage amount that’s best for them.

3. Protect your bling. Chances are you spent a lot of time and money picking out rings you’ll love and wear every day. Unfortunately, burglaries are more common than you may think. According to the FBI, there were more than 1.1 million burglaries in 2019. Protect your wedding jewelry, and any other expensive jewelry, by adding these items to your homeowners or renters policy. It is advisable to have photos and documentation of the value of the ring and other valuable jewelry in the event of a theft or a loss.

4. Update your car insurance. Notify your agent to make sure you’re both covered to drive each other’s cars. You may also be eligible for savings, such as a multi-car discount or bundling your car insurance with homeowners and/or life insurance. Additionally, some insurance companies offer a lower rate for married couples.

5. Make updates to your records if you change your last name. It’s a big decision and takes a lot of work if one of you decides to change your name after marriage. It’s important to be patient and diligent as the entire process may take several months. Remember to update all the appropriate forms, including a new Social Security card, driver’s license, passport, bank accounts and credit cards, among other considerations. Additionally, notify your employer for payroll and health insurance coverage updates.

Getting married is an exciting, big life event. While you and your partner start your new life together, have an open conversation about financial considerations and double check to make sure you’re covered to protect the life you’re building.



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American Singer and Songwriter, Huddie “Leadbelly” Ledbetter

by Dr. Ken Bridges

Many Texas musicians have become legendary figures for not only their great talents as musicians but also for their colorful lives.

Huddie Ledbetter, known to his fans as “Leadbelly,” was a pioneer blues musician starting in East Texas in the early 1900s, just as rhythm and blues was starting to develop its own musical identity. His own life was one of many tragedies, which he incorporated into his music. Ledbetter’s music would far outlast his 1949 death, influencing performers from country to rock for decades afterward.

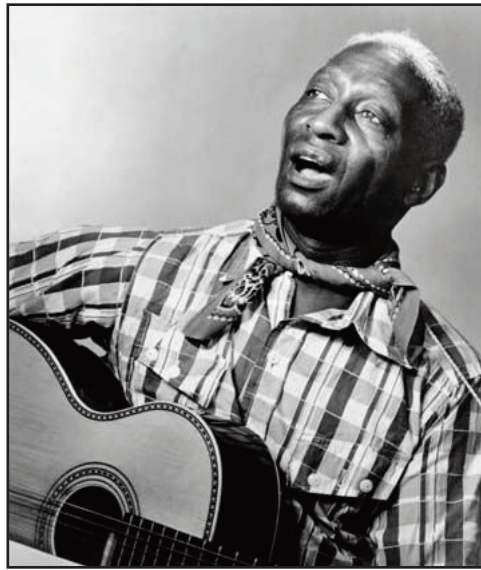
Huddie William Ledbetter was born in a tiny Louisiana community just northwest of Shreveport. The family moved often, and within a couple of years moved across the state line into Bowie County. He showed a great love of music from an early age, but his music training was sporadic. His first musical gift was an accordion given to him by an uncle. He soon mastered it and picked up other instruments, such as the harmonica, fiddle, and what became his favorite, the 12-string guitar. By the time he was 15, Ledbetter was performing at clubs and parties across the area.

Around 1910, Ledbetter was living in Harrison County when he took to the road to pursue a music career, leaving behind his wife and two children. Though he became increasingly popular with his early blues sound, he often found himself in trouble with the law. Increasing issues with alcohol only compounded his problems. Some time in the late 1910s, he picked up the nickname “Leadbelly,” but its origins are uncertain.

It was also in the 1910s that he began singing one of his most popular songs, “*Good Night, Irene*.” He went on to write hundreds of songs, some gospel but mostly blues. “*Black Snake Moan*,” and “*Cotton Fields*” were among many songs he wrote and performed by the 1920s. Many of his songs were never recorded or were lost over time.

In 1915, he was jailed in Harrison County on an illegal gun charge but soon escaped. Three years later, he was imprisoned after another fight turned deadly. He was sentenced to 35 years. However, Gov. Pat Neff, who once promised not to pardon any prisoners, pardoned Ledbetter in 1925 after hearing him sing for his release. Ledbetter resumed his performances, but he still had legal problems. He was convicted in 1930 in Louisiana following a knife fight and another conviction in New York in 1939. His time in prison became an inspiration for many of his songs.

He promoted himself as the “King of the 12-String Guitar,” but he was only able to begin recording his songs in the 1930s.



John Lomax, co-founder of the Texas Folklore Society and a former administrator at the University of Texas, recorded dozens of Ledbetter’s songs through a Works Progress Administration program to record oral histories and folk music across the nation.

On a tour of the Northeast, Ledbetter found an appreciative circle of musicians in the growing folk music community. He would record several songs with Woody Guthrie.

In the early 1940s, he was a regular radio performer on a nationwide folk music program, hosted by John Lomax’s son, Alan. By 1949, Ledbetter had his own radio show in New York, Folk Songs of America. That year, just as his career and life were back on track, he was diagnosed with Lou Gehrig’s Disease, a degenerative neuromuscular disorder. The condition progressed rapidly, but he was able to perform one last concert, a memorial concert for John Lomax at the University of Texas that summer.

He died quietly in New York City in December 1949 at the age of 61. His life was one of hard luck and little respect save for fellow musicians and a handful of blues fans who saw brilliance in his performances.

As the years passed, fellow musicians kept his memory alive through his music. Within a few years, his influences became much more pronounced as rock and roll saw its introduction by the mid-1950s and blues reached a new level of artistry. In the 1950s, folk musician Pete Seeger wrote a book on playing guitar that praised Ledbetter’s technique. By the 1960s, a flood of popular musicians began recording Ledbetter’s songs. “*Good Night, Irene*” was a favorite of country stars such as Ernest Tubb and Willie Nelson. Tubb’s version topped the charts in 1950. Creedence Clearwater Revival made Ledbetter’s “*Midnight Special*” one of their most famous songs when they recorded it in 1969. It was also covered by Gene Autry, Johnny Cash, Nat King Cole, and the Grateful Dead. Ledbetter was inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame in 1970.

In 1976, a movie was made about his life called simply, *Leadbelly*. In 1988, in the centennial year of his birth, he was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, honored as one of the early major influences.

The popular grunge-rock band Nirvana introduced Ledbetter to a new generation with Kurt Cobain’s rendition of “*Where Did You Sleep Last Night*” in a televised performance in 1994. Many of his surviving recordings from the 1940s from the Library of Congress and the Smithsonian Institution were released as albums in the 1990s.

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TREE SERVICE CHAD GREEN Tree Service 817-246-5943 or 817-800-6059 (cell) C THREE Lawn & Tree Service 817-249-YARD (9273) WWW.C3LAWNANDTREE.COM	PAINTING HAYWOOD Painting 817-371-8597		

Three Day Weekend Forecast



Friday, Jan. 27:

AM - Sunny; high near 59. Southwest wind 10-15mph, with gusts as high as 25mph.
PM - Partly cloudy; ow around 44. South wind around 15mph, with gusts as high as 25mph.



Saturday, Jan. 28:

AM - A 20% chance of showers after 1 p.m. Mostly cloudy; high near 62. S wind 15-20mph, gusts as high as 30mph.
PM - A 20% chance of showers before 1 a.m. Mostly cloudy; low around 40.



Sunday, Jan. 29:

AM - Mostly sunny; high near 56.
PM - Mostly clear; low around 31.

[Extended Forecast Click Here](#)