

THE OBSERVER/ENTERPRISE

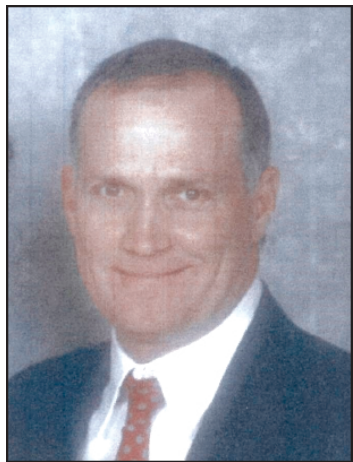
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Obituaries



Devoll

We are sad to announce that on October 15, 2022, at the age of 73, Ronald Len Devoll in Arlington, Texas, born in San Angelo, Texas passed away.

He was predeceased by his father, Lendy Devoll.

He is survived by his mother, Yvonne Devoll; his wife, Marcia Elna Duncan; his sons, Shane Devoll (Kassie), Hayden, Brandon, Chase, Casey Devoll (Virginia), Ethan and Joshua; and his siblings, Donnie Devoll (Audrey) and Lisa Pearson (Greg).

Visitation was held on Thursday, October 20, 2022, from 6 pm to 8 pm at the Wade Funeral Home and Crematory (4140 W. Pioneer Pkwy, Arlington, Texas 76013). A graveside service was held on Friday, October 21, 2022, at 2 pm at the McKenzieville Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Lewy Body Dementia Association, www.lbda.org, or your favorite charity.

When I Must Leave You

When I must leave you for a little while,

Please do not grieve and shed wild tears,

And hug your sorrow to you through the years.

But start out bravely with a gallant smile;

And for my sake and in my name, Live on and do all things the same,

Feed not your loneliness on empty days,

But fill each waking hours in useful ways,

Reach out your hand and in comfort and and in cheer,

And I in turn will comfort you, And hold you near;

And never, never be afraid to die, For I am waiting for you in the sky!



The Power of Roots

By James M. Decker
“The provincial who cultivates only his roots is in peril, potato-like, of becoming more root than plant. The man who cuts his roots away and denies they were ever connected with him withers into half a man.”

--John Graves, Goodbye to a River

I have been re-reading “Goodbye to a River” recently. I need to do a full essay on it, but I have been thinking about this line since I read it on Friday night. Sometimes when I think, I tweet. The results can vary.

My friend Seth Wieck from Amarillo is a much more talented and prolific wordsmith than I am (check him out at sethwieck.com). When I tweeted this line from Graves, Seth sent me a good read. It is a Front Porch Republic conversation from early 2021 between authors Matt Stewart and Grace Olmstead. It was released shortly after publication

of Olmstead’s book “Uprooted: Recovering the Legacy of the Places We’ve Left Behind.” In that book, Olmstead examines her family’s multigenerational home of Emmett, Idaho; the factors that drew her family and others like them to Idaho’s Treasure Valley; and the economic and societal forces that are slowly driving away younger generations and agricultural producers, to see them replaced by retirees and suburban sprawl. Emmett’s story is all-too familiar. Olmstead’s examination is important for the whole of rural America, not just Emmett, and I highly recommend her book.

In this conversation (linked on my West of 98 website), Olmstead and Stewart dive deeply into the topic of roots. It’s a thoughtful conversation. Roots are a complex topic. As Graves vividly illustrates in the line that opens this essay, obsession with one’s roots is just as harmful as a lack of roots. I strive neither to wither rootlessly nor to become potato-like, more root than plant. Healthy humans and healthy communities are like healthy plants. Their roots sustain them so long as they flower and blossom into something healthier with each successive year and generation.

In that conversation, Olmstead shares the story of an amazing scientific finding. The 1980 eruption of Mount St. Helens caused enormous devastation. For miles around, a wide plain was rendered practically a moonscape, devoid of life. In 1982, federal scientists spotted a lone flowering lupine on the wide plain (for reference, our own Texas bluebonnet is a member of the lupine genus). The scientists marked off a 200 square-yard plot around the lupine. Within four years, they identified 16,000 lupines in that plot; three years later, there were 35,000 plants! A 2005

Smithsonian Magazine interview with the scientists revealed that in 25 years since the eruption, 27 different plant species and 11 small mammal species had been identified in that single plot alone. It likely all stemmed from the lone lupine in 1982. That plant established roots, enriched the soil, propagated itself, and deposited organic matter. Life flourished from there.

It’s a powerful example of the resilience of nature. Olmstead raised an equally powerful idea: what about the human equivalent of the prairie lupine? What about the people who root themselves in communities that are broken and scarred from the devastating effects of economic consolidation and rural decline? What about these people who enrich the soil of local culture and community with their talent, zeal, and energy? They invest themselves, but they also propagate others to do the same.

Watch Grandma Cook

By Mark Wangrin

The most unlikely TikTok influencer in Texas lives in an old country house behind a scattering of oak and hickory off Highway 36 about 5 miles north of Bellville, which is about the time it takes to drink a beer, judging by the number of empties Dawn Hodges usually finds beside the roadway in front

They create an environment where new energy and new life can flourish.

Rural communities will not again flourish without strong local roots. Many of our communities have a healthy rootstock - memories, history, and culture, and the generations of people who hold them dear - but roots alone are insufficient. Those roots should be the basis for something that blossoms and grows healthier over the generation.

That requires a lot of work, time, and energy. But maybe it just requires the human equivalent of that lone prairie lupine. When we root ourselves and invest, new life flourishes.

James Decker is the Mayor of Stamford, Texas and the creator of the West of 98 website and podcast. Contact James and subscribe to these essays at westof98.substack.com and subscribe to West of 98 wherever podcasts are found.

Area Churches

Invite You to Worship

Bronte

Bronte Church of Christ

PO Box 346
118 S. Jefferson • Bronte
Sun. 10 am & 6 pm, Wed. 7 pm

Central Baptist Church

324 S. Franklin • Bronte
(325) 473-4811
Dale Patterson, Pastor
Sun. 10 am Sunday School
11 am & 5 pm Worship

First Baptist Church

424 S. Washington • Bronte
(325) 473-2331
firstbronte@gmail.com
Pastor George Cooper
Sunday 9:45 am Sunday School,
10:30 am Worship
Wednesday 6 pm - 8 pm
Children and Youth

First United Methodist Church

Corner of Washington & Holmes
Bronte • (325) 650-4836
Sun. 11:00 am Worship
St. James Catholic Church
215 N. Washington, Bronte
(325) 365-2687

Rev. Timothy Hayter, Pastor

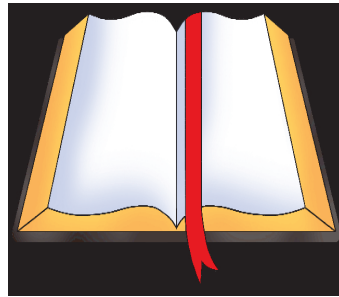
Sunday Bilingual Mass 8 am

4C Cowboy Church

Drawer R • Bronte • (325) 895-4080
Robert Lemmond, Pastor
Sunday, 10:30 am - Texas Theater
Wednesday Bible Study 6 pm -
4C Feedlot Youth Building
Coke County

Pecan Baptist

PO Box 542 • 12 miles West of
Robert Lee on Sterling City Hwy
(325) 453-2065, Bill Hood, Pastor
www.pecanbaptistchurchrl.com
Sun. 10 am, Sunday School
11 am & 7 pm, Worship



Robert Lee

Bible Baptist Church

PO Box 938 • 9th & Austin
Sunday 10 am Sunday School,
11 am and 5 pm Worship,
Wed 5 pm Bible Study
Emmanuel Pentecostal
PO Box 794 • 1004 Hillcrest
Pastor Brantly Robertson
(972) 841-2009
Sundays 10 am, Wednesdays 7 pm

First United Methodist Church

PO Box 144 • 9th & Chadbourne
Robert Lee • (325) 453-2417
Cyndi Weidner, Pastor
Sun. 10 am Sunday School
11 am Worship,
5 pm Choir Practice

Iglesia Bautista Betel

101 Houston • Robert Lee
Sun. 9:45 am • Sunday School
11 am Service • Bible Study Wed. 6 pm

Southside Church of Christ

PO Box 698 • 8th & Houston
Robert Lee (325) 453-2176
Recardo Reyes, Preacher
Sun. 10 am, Sunday School
11 am & 6 pm, Worship

Wed. 6 pm, Worship

Northside Church of Christ

PO Box 508
9th & Chadbourne • Robert Lee
(325) 453-2685, (325) 763-2118
or (325) 473-1053
Services: Sun. 10 am

Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church

601 W. 10th, Robert Lee
(325) 365-2687

Rev. Timothy Hayter, Pastor

Saturday Vigil Mass 6 pm

Robert Lee Baptist Church

PO Box 493 • 22 W. 11th
(325) 453-2724
Chris Walls, Pastor

Sun. 9:45 am, Sunday School

11 am & 7 pm, Worship

Wed. 7 pm, Prayer Meeting


Victory Assembly of God

(325) 453-2208, PO Box 638
202 E. 6th Street, Robert Lee
Rev. Rocky Youngblood, Pastor

Sun. 9:45 am, Sunday School

10:45 am & 6 pm, Worship

Wed. 6 pm, Bible Study



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