

I would go but never listened. If God began to get through I would just run. A little further away, a little more intensive position, to block out what I know now was God beginning to make an appearance in my life.

Things swirled out of my control. The jobs dried up. Friends faded away. The money was gone. My toys were sold to continue feeding my habits. Until the last of the well went dry. There I was without anything to hide behind. I was done. A full and total surrender to my Father. Jesus and I met, and my life has never been the same. Thank you, Jesus!

**2 Timothy 1:9** "9 who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began, 10 but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."

**Romans 10:9-10** "9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

**Romans 1:16** "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek"

There are many lost in the world today. If you are lost there is hope. Jesus is waiting on you to come. If you know someone that is lost always remember to love, and never stop praying!

Love y'all. Tell someone what Jesus has done in your life.

**Letter to the Editor**

First a little History. The East Coke County Hospital District (ECCHD) doing business as the Bronte Health and Rehab Center and the West Coke County Hospital District (WCCHD) were originally established as hospitals. Why one on the west side of the county and one on the east side of the county speaks of the historical division of Coke County. The hospitals were funded by taxes levied on Coke county taxpayers (residents and businesses) within their borders. When it became apparent the hospitals could not stay open due to lack of patients and medical professionals, the ECCHD and the WCCHD in 2006 asked the State of Texas if they could instead operate as nursing homes. The State said yes.

Now a little current information. Funding for ECCHD and WCCHD has not changed from their inception. They get a lot of their money from Coke County taxpayers. For 2017: ECCHD billed \$515,000 (a tax rate of 46 cents per \$100 valuation); WCCHD \$596,000 (a tax rate of 25 cents

per \$100 property valuation). The net average taxable value of a home is \$47,600 in Coke County; in ECCHD the taxes for 2017 for such a home were \$219 and in WCCHD they were \$119.

These nursing home "tax incomes" are in addition to the monies they get from Medicare and Medicaid programs for services rendered to the residents. How many nursing home residents are being serviced monthly in Coke County Texas on the average? 65 per month. For One Million One Hundred Thousand Dollars. Annually. Oil and gas production can easily cause WCCHD total figures (not residential) to double in a single year.

New solutions to old issues and future problems. The very Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 286 (Hospital Districts Created by Voter Approval) under which ECCHD and WCCHD were created allows for the district to operate or contract for the operation of a mobile emergency medical service.

Now is the time to consolidate the two nursing homes into one. Eliminate the inefficiencies of operating two facilities only 12 miles apart with redundant facilities, services and staffing. Get the benefit of reducing management overhead. Get the synergy of utilizing a facility built originally for more than 60 persons (as both hospitals were). Be it located in either Robert Lee or Bronte should not be the major consideration. The resultant savings could then fully fund ambulance service in Coke County.

Obviously, analysis of what it will cost to create (equipment, equipment housing, where in

county will equipment be held, staffing levels and salaries, liability insurance etc, etc, etc) must be known BEFORE any ambulance service creation...gotta know how much you're gonna have to spend to properly provide the county wide service...because it's going to be several hundred t h o u s a n d dollars...annually...and it'll stay around!!

Or a modification of the existent volunteer ambulance services in some way to continue forward may also provide options for their continuance. What needs to be done for example to attract more (than the current 4) "west siders" to approach closer to the 15 volunteers on the "east siders"? Or does this just perpetuate the East vs West of Coke County? What resources do the volunteer groups need to continue forward?

And under any scenario, emergency medical services (read ambulance services) are and would be a great benefit to any and all Coke County residents. Having an ambulance service in Coke County to justify the continued existence and operation of the tax supported nursing homes in Coke County is not. The 3,300 plus taxpayers in Coke County prefer to pay taxes benefiting all county residents, not just 65 residents and those making a living serving them. Adding another tax and taxing entity via an Emergency Servicing District (ESD) in Coke County is not a reasonable solution to the problem.

Last and not least, where do our County leaders stand on this issue? We know that the county budget is tight and dollars are not laying around.

But since this is a county wide issue, shouldn't the county take the lead in addressing the problem and solving same? Are State of Texas grant monies available to the County for creation and or maintenance of a county wide ambulance service?

East versus West is just plain nonproductive. Come to solutions for the betterment of all citizens of Coke County Texas.

Tommy Parker

**Wildfire season stresses need for preparation**

Wildfire season hit Texas early this year, emphasizing the need for farmers, ranchers and homeowners to be prepared, Coke County Farm Bureau President John Ross Copeland said. "It's extremely important for everyone to take precautions and prepare their homes, barns and any other buildings," John Ross said. "Fires can start suddenly and overwhelm even the best of us." One match, welding equipment, a careless fire or a cigarette can spark a wildfire, so stresses the importance of being prepared.

"There are fairly simple steps we can take to help protect ourselves and our homes, buildings and equipment from devastating destruction," said.

These steps include cleaning gutters and connecting garden hoses long enough to reach every inch of the house.

Other management practices include trimming trees up to six to nine feet above ground, keeping grass mowed short and maintaining a safe zone at least 30 feet away from the home. This zone should be free of flammable material, such as wood piles, dried leaves, brush

and other landscaping.

"Texas is like a tinderbox right now, and fire risks will remain constant throughout the winter and early spring," said John Ross Copeland.

John Ross noted there are several websites to visit while preparing for wildfire season, including the Texas A&M Forest Service and Texas Ready for Wildfire.

"Whatever you do, have a plan in place to protect your home and family," John Ross Copeland said.

**Coke County featured in Texas Midwest Guide**

Bronte and Robert Lee are two of 42 communities featured in the 2018 Texas Midwest Guide. The 23rd Edition of the annual publication is now in circulation in print as well as online digitally at [texasmidwestguide.org](http://texasmidwestguide.org). Printed copies are available at the Bronte City Hall, Wool N' Cotton Shop, Rusty Bell, Shear Heaven Salon & Boutique, Pena's Red Barn, Larry Dyess Auto, Glenn-Bevins Insurance, Bronte Body Shop and Robert Lee City Hall.

The Texas Midwest Guide includes community information, attractions, recreation, lodging, regional calendar of events, unique shopping and dining opportunities and much, much more about the 30-county Texas Midwest region. Distribution of 45K copies goes to the Texas Travel Information Centers along the State's borders, chamber of commerce, CVBs, hotels & motels, hospital, colleges and universities and advertisers throughout the region. If your business or local venue would like a supply of Guides, please contact the TMCN Office at 325-795-8626 or [tmcn@tmcn.org](mailto:tmcn@tmcn.org).

For more information about the Texas Midwest Community Network, visit our website at [www.tmcn.org](http://www.tmcn.org).

**If yew like a good ol' bowl o' steamin' hot chili, partner, yew just mite be a Texan!!!**

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 contact Nancy at 432-413-4216  
 or email [vprobortlee@gmail.com](mailto:vprobortlee@gmail.com)

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