



District Golf! The Coke County high school girls golf teams both did very well at the 2018 District 14 Golf Tournament. The Bronte High School girls team was named District Champions (right photo), with the Robert Lee High School girls being named District Runner-Up. Congratulations ladies!

...Commissioners Court meeting minutes

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Commissioner Williams moved to approve the bond for Deputy Clerk Martha Ratliff. The motion, seconded by Commissioner Sefcik, carried.

County/District Clerk Mary Grim requested that the monies deposited to the County from the Secretary of State for the Primary Election be transferred to her to be deposited into the Registry Account in order to take care of bills for the election and to pay the election workers. Commissioner Williams moved that this money be transferred to the County Clerk to take care of election expenses. The motion, seconded by Commissioner Millican, carried.

A request from the Robert Lee Street Affair to be placed on the No Charge List for the rec hall died for lack of motion.

The Robert Lee Street Affair requested to use the show barn and pavilion for the annual Street Affair. The request died for lack of motion.

Commissioner Williams reported on the stock pile of caliche.

Extension Agent Morgan Runyon reported that she has been traveling a lot of miles.

There being no private road work requests, no action was taken.

Commissioner Sefcik moved to pay the bills. The motion, seconded by Commissioner Millican, carried.

Judge Blair adjourned the meeting at 10:05 am.

Finding Unity in the Big Picture

by James M. Decker
[Editor's Note: The article referenced below was printed in the March 16, 2018, issue of The Observer/Enterprise.]

A few weeks ago I wrote about nostalgia for the "good old days" in our community. If you've not read that essay ("Nostalgia...With a Purpose"), I would encourage you to do so. The crux of that essay was to focus on the "why" of nostalgia rather than the "what." The "why" is the community purpose and identity underlying the

nostalgia. That purpose and identity is what made the community special and is the key to build on. The "what" is the tangible expression of that purpose and identity. We may long for the "what," a certain restaurant, place of entertainment, or an era of our community's primary industry, but that time may be past. Our goal should be to build around the "why," to recapture our innate purpose and identity, and in doing so, create new tangible expressions of that identity, a "what" for a new era, if you will.

But something that I want to address moving forward is "how": how do we go about planning to build around our "why"? How do we determine what that "why" is? How do we actually formulate a plan? We cannot simply snap our fingers and restore our community greatness.

Over the years, I've participated in several community meetings with outside facilitators and consultants. The big idea of each meeting was largely the same: the outside person would help community leaders identify community goals and vision. Some of those conversations were productive, some not so much. Looking back, they've all had the same net result: everyone had the meeting and thought of ideas, then the meeting was promptly forgotten.

That's not to say facilitators and consultants are a poor investment. They can be helpful. But a common thread in many meetings is a fanciful hope that a third party will help inspire a group of local leaders into a unifying purpose. Having a community vision meeting AFTER you're unified might be quite successful. Expecting a

group of disjointed leaders to work together by expressing their own visions, which might be at odds with one another? That's tougher.

Unity has to come from within. You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink. You can't make local leaders work together just because you had a meeting about it. Unity is about the big picture, not specific details. We may have different ideas for new restaurants, expanded parks, or locations for new housing, but those specifics are all the "what," the tangible expressions. They all underlie the big picture "why," the dream of a better, more prosperous community.

When you attempt to unite people around the specifics, you end up with everyone proposing their own ideas they believe are best and little being accomplished. When you start with the big picture first, it's easier to see that the leaders all want the same big picture. We begin to realize the little details are less important - your idea may be better here, my idea may be better there - but in the end we're working towards the same destination.

I've got more to say in the future about putting pen to paper and actually identifying a community's "why", but for now, think about the big picture. This applies to national political discourse as much as it does local communities, but don't let disagreement on the specifics destroy the big picture goal. All of us mostly want the same big things, even if we disagree on how to get there. When we start the conversation with the disagreeable specifics, we're destined to fail and probably get mad at each other in the process. Instead, let's realize that we all

see the same big picture and don't lose sight of that.

James Decker is a lawyer, farmer, and city councilman in Stamford, and the creator of the forthcoming "West of 98" podcast and website. He may be contacted through Facebook at facebook.com/james.decker.

Psalm 23

[Editor's Note: The following is the fourteenth in a series of articles submitted by Brandon Broadbent.]

People often wonder why one Christian may receiving many blessings while another very few. All good and perfect gifts come from the Father. Our walk with the Father and our faith in the promises lead to a more abundant life.

Psalms 23:1-5

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

If we look at the scripture above it gives us insight to being blessed.

1. He is lord and shepherd, you must let Him watch over and protect you. If a wolf

comes, you need to let the Shepherd protect you. You don't need to run to the wolf and just plan to come back to the flock tomorrow or when you get beat up enough.

2. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures. Jesus will lead you to the best places. We cannot follow our own instincts because we follow after what we think looks good to us and maybe not what is good for us. He leads we must follow.

4. He restores us. It is not something we can do. He has restored us. We don't fear because we know without a doubt that He already has this worked out for our good.

5. You have enemies, but He raises you up while they are looking on. The last sentence sums it up, my cup runs over. You see, if you are Christian, you have a cup. It is up to us if we want to turn it upwards to catch what is flowing down from above or if we just lay there on our side. Not following the will of the Father, you may not receive the full blessing that is available

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

Work zone fatalities on the rise

In recognition of National Work Zone Awareness Week, April 9 - 13, the Texas Department of Transportation reminds drivers that every day requires caution when driving through work zones. In 2017, work zone fatalities in Texas increased 9 percent over the previous year, resulting in 199 deaths and 813 serious injuries statewide.

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