

...West of 98

(continued from previous page)

Yet, because he showed mercy, the Samaritan was the true neighbor to the injured man, not the man's own people. We are called to do the same, no matter the differences with our own neighbor.

In Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians, he discusses spiritual gifts. We all have gifts that we are called to use in our personal witness. Each of those gifts is unique and diverse. Our collective gifts work together like the parts of the body, so that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. But as Paul finishes his discussion of spiritual gifts, he turns to love. He opens Chapter 13 of that letter by admonishing that it is nothing to use your spiritual gifts without love. In fact, he writes that using your gifts without love is like a resounding gong or clanging cymbal. Real appealing imagery, eh? Have you ever considered that you might've used your spiritual gifts like that? I imagine we all have, if we want to be honest.

I'm bothered that too many in

society are willing to pay lip service to their Christian faith without the actions to accompany it. I think it all comes back to this discussion of love. What concerns me is what Paul speaks of - if we act as Christians but do so without love, then it sounds to the non-believer like the resounding gong or clanging cymbal. I know we all have different tastes in music, but I can't see walking up and down the streets of Stamford banging a gong and clanging a cymbal and expecting it to drive people into our churches.

But when we act as Christians without love for our neighbor, that's exactly what we're doing. If we're not living out our Christian faith with love - real, messy, hard, genuine love - for ALL of our neighbors, we're not living our life as we've been commanded.

James Decker is a lawyer, farmer, and mayor 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.



Yard of the Month! RL4Restoration awarded their May 2020 Yard of the Month recently. Receiving this honor was Mrs. Bobbie Allen with her beautiful yard on Chadbourne Street in Robert Lee.

RL Elementary 5th Six Weeks Awards 'A' Honor Roll

1st Grade

Gabriel Eubanks, Grayon Jones, Blakely Raney, Tucker Rose, Ethan Segalla

2nd Grade

Jacquelyn Madrid, Destiny Pittman

3rd Grade

Avery Bosworth, Amanda Burns

4th Grade

Taylor Rose, Major Smith

'A/B' Honor Roll

1st Grade

Jordan Bohannon, Ezra Douglas, Cash Ingram, Bryson Munoz, Lane Oleksiuk, Xander Prieto, Kamryn Stanford, Amree Womack

2nd Grade

Emily Hopson, Kaygen Jost, Emmitt Madron, Milo Rackley, Reed Rangel, JT Sawyer

3rd Grade

Logan Arens, Lucas Escamilla, Bailey Flanagan, Mylee Longoria, Seeley Maddox, Kyle Manis, Jewel Pitcock, Mark Reyes, Bracken Robertson, Kaleb Samaniego, Jaxson South

4th Grade

Jaedyn Ayers, Autumn Camarillo, Lucas Cowart, Jessica Navarro, Fallon Raney

6th Grade

Eli Bradshaw, Carter Fluhmann, Brennen Hood, Maci Lee, Harper Mathis, Brenner Sherwood

Perfect Attendance

Pre-K

Slade McGuire

Kindergarten

TJ Corley, Damian Smith

1st Grade

Bryson Munoz

2nd Grade

Carl Harvey, Thomas Immel, Fernanda Landeros

3rd Grade

Amanda Burns, Kyle Manis, Bentley Pope, Navaya Smith

4th Grade

Justice Immel, Pyrce Munoz, Jessica Navarro, Taylor Rose

5th Grade

Jayla Corley, Alyssa Landeros

6th Grade

Carter Fluhmann, Brennen Hood, Jeremy Morata, Danielle Munoz

Not too late to complete 2020 Census

In the last couple of months, households across the country should have received paper questionnaires for the 2020 Census. However, it seems that many with a post office box did not receive these items. Don't worry though, you can still make your voice heard online and by

phone. To complete the census online, visit 2020census.gov. If you would rather complete the census by phone, call 844-330-2020. One person (at least 15 years of age) should respond for each household and report everyone living and sleeping in the household most of the time as of April 1, 2020. This includes college students, who should still be counted at school, even if they are home early due to the Covid-19 situation. If they live in student housing, the college will count them. If they live off campus, they should compete the census for their off-campus address and include any roommates or other people living there.

It is important that all households complete the 2020 Census, especially those in rural areas. The Census helps determine how billions of dollars of federal funding flow into states and communities. The results also determine how many seats in Congress each state gets.

The deadline to self-respond is October 31, 2020. For more information, please visit 2020census.gov.

State Parks allowing limited overnight camping

As part of a broader effort to reopen Texas, Texas State Parks resumed limited overnight

camping as of May 18. This gradual reopening of overnight reservations will be limited at all Texas State Parks to varying degrees depending on individual park occupancy in order to align with safe business practices currently followed in Texas. Some existing reservations will be honored, but to prevent overcrowding, manage continued social distancing and safeguard public health, no new reservations can be made for now. The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) will notify the public once new reservations can be booked.

"After careful consideration, we are taking this additional step towards returning to normal operations in our parks by resuming some overnight camping at Texas State Parks," said Carter Smith, Executive Director of TPWD. "As overnight campers are welcomed back to their favorite natural spaces, our team will continue maintaining the cleanliness of frequently used facilities such as campsites, cabins and restrooms to ensure that visitors, volunteers and staff can continue to enjoy Texas State Parks safely."

TPWD recommends visitors

continue to adhere to local, state and federal travel restrictions and other guidance for safety and social distancing before traveling. Additionally, all visitors are required to pre-purchase and print day-use and overnight camping permits through the Texas State Parks Reservation System before traveling to a park. All reservations can be made online at www.texasstateparks.org or by calling 512-389-8900.

Existing social distancing standards and public health recommendations remain in effect including the recommendation to wear face coverings and bring one's own supply of hand sanitizer. State parks will also continue the requirement of a six-foot distance from individuals outside of their party, including the prohibition of the gathering of groups larger than five that are not part of the same family or household.

Visitors planning on coming to a state park are encouraged to bring all necessary provisions, such as hand sanitizer and face masks, with them in order to help local businesses have enough goods to properly serve their communities during this time.

(Continued on page 10)

Glenn-Bivins Insurance

325-473-6791 - insurance@glennbivins.com
Locally and Family Owned Since 1922
Home - Auto - Life - Commercial - RV

Congratulations, graduates!



Larry M Gilbert, CFP®, AAMS®
Financial Advisor

122 N 8th St
Ballinger, TX 76821
325-365-2505

Edward Jones®
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING
edwardjones.com

Member SIPC

HIGH FIRE DANGER

BURN BAN IN EFFECT