

THE OBSERVER/ENTERPRISE

Published Weekly
 707 Austin (325) 453-2433 (325) 473-8863 Cell
 observerenterprise@gmail.com
 www.ObserverEnterprise.com
 Periodical Rate Postage paid at Robert Lee, Texas
 POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to
 Observer/Enterprise
 PO Box 1329, Robert Lee, Texas 76945

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Per Year in Coke County ... \$30.00
 Per Year Elsewhere in Texas ... \$35.00
 Per Year Outside of Texas ... \$37.00



Traditions and Habits

by James M. Decker

I had a conversation late in the Texas Cowboy Reunion week that's been on my mind ever since. The TCR's announcer, West Huggins, has a great mind for presentation of a rodeo in a way that appeals to modern audiences but stays true to its roots. As I wrote in my last essay, the world is different in 2018 than in 1930, so a rodeo has to recognize that it competes for entertainment dollars in a different way in a modern era. A rodeo has to recognize its roots and build around those roots, so that the event remains true to itself, but it has to be presented in such a way that captures the attention of modern society and appeals to its target audience.

West and I were discussing how many rodeos struggle to adapt, or don't even try. He said that a rodeo has to build around its traditions, but then he dropped this line on me: it's important to tell the difference between "traditions" and "bad habits."

How often do our communities tell the difference between our traditions and our bad habits? Have we ever actually thought about the difference? A typical definition of "tradition" includes passing on a set of customs and/or beliefs. In our minds, we tend to view "tradition" as passing on of something good and positive to a future group of people. But are we actually doing that? Or

have we entrenched certain "traditions" into our communities without seriously examining those so-called traditions to determine whether they are actually a good thing?

The most fitting phrase for this topic is something we've all heard before: "that's the way we've always done it." It's a common objection to new, different, or unfamiliar ideas in our communities. As I've written before, "that's the way we've always done it" is only a good thing if "the way we've always done it" is successful and continues to be successful.

Sometimes, an idea is successful for a while, but after changes in populations, economies, or the world around us, that idea stops being successful. We can do one of two things: we can recognize that circumstances have changed and recalibrate our tradition to fit the new circumstances, or we can ignore the new circumstances and let our once-successful tradition slide into a

bad habit.

We in Stamford have learned in the last few years with the blossoming of the Texas Cowboy Reunion that the distinction between a tradition and a bad habit is critical. If you have positive traditions in your event or in your community, identify them. Figure out how to build on these traditions and build around them for the modern world, for the audience that you need to capture. But be objective and analyze your "traditions." Some traditions are outdated and have turned to bad habits. Others might never have been good traditions and have been bad habits for a long time.

Look critically, think boldly. You might be surprised just what opportunities exist in your community.

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.

VP meeting set for August 2

Vision with a Purpose will hold their next monthly meeting on Thursday, August 2, at 6 pm. The meeting will be held at their headquarters at the corner of Austin and West 7th streets in Robert Lee. All are invited to come and see what this community-minded organization is all about!

Ladies Retreat slated for August 4

Robert Lee Baptist Church will host a Ladies Retreat on Saturday, August 4, from 10 am until 2:15 pm. Tammy Whitehurst will be the speaker, with Tammy Aten as the worship leader.

Bronte Elementary School Supply Distribution set for August 4

Bronte Elementary School supplies will be distributed Sunday, August 4, from 2 pm until 4 pm at the Bronte Church of Christ.

If anyone would like to make a donation to this cause, you may do so at any of the Bronte churches.

RLBC summer lunch delivery available

Robert Lee Baptist Church will be delivering lunches to children ages 4 - 18 at home within the city limits of Robert Lee. The lunches are delivered every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday through August 10. There are no qualifications to be included, just forms for delivery. The forms may be picked up at the church, Monday through Friday, 8 am - 5 pm.

For more information, contact the church at (325) 453-2724 or Erin Oleksiuk at (325) 656-9884.

Golf tournament slated for August 12

The Bronte Longhorn Golf Club will host a golf tournament on Sunday, August 12, beginning at 9 am. The 18 hole tournament will be 3 person, best drive, everyone plays their own ball.

For more information, call (325) 473-2156 or (325) 262-6617.

Color Run/Fun Walk set for August 25

The Robert Lee Junior High Cheerleaders will be hosting a 5K Color Run/1K Fun Walk on Saturday, August 25, 2018,

at the Mountain Creek Golf Course in Robert Lee. The first heat will start from the Club House at 8 am, with the second heat immediately following. Color will be provided and registration includes a Dogie Color Run t-shirt if registered by August 15. Extra color will be available for purchase, as well as any extra Color Run t-shirts.

Entry forms may be picked up from and returned to the Robert Lee High School office beginning July 30 from 9 am until 3 pm or may be printed from the "Robert Lee Athletics" Facebook page.

All proceeds benefit the 2018-2019 Robert Lee Junior High Dogie Cheerleaders. Donations and volunteers are greatly appreciated! For more information, contact Shanna Freeman at (325) 453-4555 or shanna.freeman@rlisd.net.

Please come out and make this a fun family event for the whole community!

Water Aerobics to be held

Ladies water aerobics will be held each Monday and Thursday at the Bronte Pool, beginning at 6:15 pm.

Russell Davis
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 611 Austin Street
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 (325) 453-4505 office
 (325) 453-4524 fax
 (325) 650-1904 mobile
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Area Churches

Invite You to Worship

Bronte

Bronte Church of Christ

PO Box 346
 118 S. Jefferson • Bronte
 Preacher David Lewis
 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 • Pastor Lee Bevly
 Sunday 9:45 am Sunday School,
 10:55 am Worship, 6 pm Bible
 Study & Worship
 Wednesday 6 pm RA's & GA's,
 6:30 pm Youth & Adults

First United Methodist Church

Corner of Washington & Holmes
 Bronte
 (325) 473-3281
 Rev. Everette Boyce, Pastor
 Sun. 10:00 am Sunday School
 11:00 am Worship

Forgiven Ministries

117 W. Main, Bronte
 Russ Frasier, Pastor
 Sun. 10 am
 Tuesday 6 pm Table Time

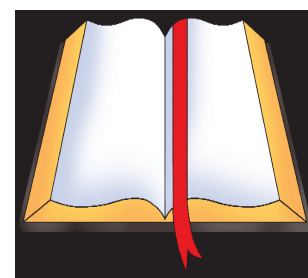
St. James Catholic Church

215 N. Washington, Bronte
 (325) 365-2687
 Rev. Yesu Mulakaleti, Jr., Pastor
 Sunday Bilingual Mass 8 am
4C Cowboy Church
 Texas Theater, Downtown Bronte
 Pastor James Brunson
 Sunday, 10:30 am

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
 Robert Lee, John Fiore, Pastor
 Sun. 10 am Sunday School, 11 am
 Worship, Wed 5:30 pm Bible Study

Emmanuel Pentecostal

PO Box 683 • 1019 Colorado City Hwy
 Pastor Kevin Millstid 453-2360
 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, (806) 543-2118 or
 (325) 473-1053

Services: Sun. 10 am

Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church

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

Rev. Yesu Mulakaleti, Pastor
 Saturday Vigil Mass 5 pm

Robert Lee Baptist Church

PO Box 493 • 22 W. 11th
 (325) 453-2724

Danny White, 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
 6th & Houston, Robert Lee

Rev. Irving Smith, Pastor
 Sun. 9:45 am, Sunday School
 10:45 am & 6 pm, Worship

Wed. 6 pm, Bible Study

Tennyson

Tennyson Baptist Church

Hwy 277 • Tennyson
 (325) 473-2040

Sun. 9:45 am, Sunday School
 11:00 am & 6 pm, Worship

Wed. 6:00 pm Prayer Meeting