

THE OBSERVER/ENTERPRISE

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UPCOMINGS!

Donations requested for benefit fundraiser

On Saturday, July 31, a benefit/silent auction will be held for Ross Torres, a Robert Lee citizen. In 2019, Ross became ill and was in severe kidney failure. This led to having daily dialysis treatments and hospitalizations.

If you would like to donate to the silent auction or Ross's medical costs, please call Julia Madrid at (325) 473-1146 or send an email to julia.madrid@live.com.

Summer Reading Program being held

The Coke County Library Children's Summer Reading

Program began Tuesday, June 1. Reading logs may be picked up during business hours at the library. Once completed, participants will receive a free one time use pool pass for either the Bronte or Robert Lee pool.

For more information, contact the library at (325) 453-2495.

Walk Workout & Chair Yoga held each week

A 1 mile walking workout will be held each Tuesday and Thursday beginning at 9:45 am at Bronte First United Methodist Church. Chair Yoga will then follow from 10:30 am until 11:30 am. Both activities will be held inside and any fitness levels are welcome.

For more information, contact Pastor Stacy Sprinkle at pastorstacy.bumc@gmail.com or (325) 473-3281.

that? And how do we get them back?

Before I get there, let's talk about the jobs that we *do* have. Years ago, I needed a single hour of course credit to fill out a semester at Texas A&M. I chose an independent study project with a longtime professor of community economics, Dr. Dennis Fisher. He taught me several tools of community economic analysis, but he also encouraged me to study a lot of varied economic research on rural communities. He said something has stuck with me ever since. Observing that rural communities spend far too much time and energy trying to lure new companies from other places, he asked: if you make a sweetheart deal to lure a company away from some other town, why wouldn't they drop you like a hot potato when the next, better deal comes along? Dr. Fisher reiterated to me the importance of strengthening existing businesses before worrying too much about incentives to lure other businesses. This is something that should resonate with every community leader in every town.

What I am about to say is not a "Stamford problem" as much as a "rural America" problem. A few weeks ago, I discussed one inspiration for this series - conversations arising out of a tweet about a community's high school graduates leaving town. Those conversations included a friend in Nebraska, Casey Schumacher (@cowbroker on Twitter) who has some strikingly similar thoughts.

If a large company (say Google or General Motors) announced tomorrow that they would build a massive campus in Stamford, how excited would we be? Would we celebrate those jobs and what they mean for our local community? Would we encourage our Stamford natives to pursue those jobs? Now I ask a hard question - do we treat our existing jobs the same way? When a local employer is hiring,

do we celebrate the job opening like we would a Google job? Do we encourage young people to pursue those local jobs like a job from the "outside"? What if the local employer pays the same as that "outside" job? What makes a similar-paying job at Google's Stamford campus more attractive than a job from an employer who has lived and worked here for decades?

As far as I know, Google and GM are not coming to Stamford (yet), but we have several existing businesses who are hiring. It is human nature to treat "different" as "better." The grass is always greener, they say. I'm more interested in a movie that I haven't seen in a year than one that I watched recently (unless the movie is "Road House," I'm always interested in

that). New and different is not always better. We know that, but we don't always process it.

I have a lot more to say in the weeks to come. I might ask some hard questions of community leaders and employers. I leave you with this question: do you look at your community's current jobs with the same favor that you look upon hypothetical future jobs? Why? Is there a legitimate difference between the current jobs and the hypothetical ones? If there is, how can we make those current jobs just as attractive?

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.

Drawn hunt permit applications being accepted

Hunters looking for a new opportunity or a change of scenery this fall are encouraged to check out the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's (TPWD) drawn hunt permits program. Applications are being accepted now for a shot at almost 10,000 permits in 61 hunt categories.

The permits are for drawn hunts on both public and private lands throughout Texas. Among the offerings available through the online system are hunts for white-tailed and mule deer,

pronghorn, turkey, alligator, dove and guided packages for exotic species and bighorn sheep.

"This season, we will conduct drawings in 61 hunt categories," said Kelly Edmiston, TPWD Public Hunting Program Coordinator. "These drawings include selections for U.S. Forest Service Antlerless Deer Permits, both adult and youth hunts, 18 e-Postcard Selections for hunters using the \$48 Annual Public Hunting Permit (APH), and hunts conducted on 9 National

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
 Pastor George Cooper
 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. Stacy Sprinkle, Pastor
 Sun. 10:00 am Sunday School
 11:00 am Worship

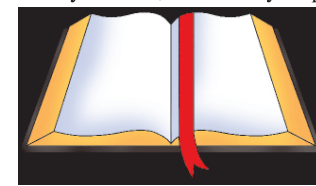
St. James Catholic Church
 215 N. Washington, Bronte
 (325) 365-2687

Rev. Yesu Mulakaleti, Jr., 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

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

Robert Lee Cowboy Church
 James Brunson, Pastor
 (469) 834-3932

10:30 am Sunday • Robert Lee Rec Hall
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. Yesu Mulakaleti, Pastor

Saturday Vigil Mass 5 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

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

home (albeit without his wife) but most did not. They found a city job, put down roots, and stayed there.

As this shift occurred, rural Texas communities would also pursue manufacturing opportunities to employ locals (including here in Stamford for many years). As we know, manufacturing has changed. Fewer goods are built in America. Factories require fewer people. Manufacturing is not the draw it once was, but people are still leaving rural communities anyway. Why is



What Is A Good Job? Part II

By James M. Decker

After the guns of World War II fell silent, America embarked on a major economic shift. American industrial strength had helped win the war. Now, it would transform America's population. Rural people left in droves for the cities to find new jobs that were viewed more favorably than the rural opportunities left behind. These were often manufacturing jobs - "good jobs" that provided a strong foundation for prosperous communities of every size.

This phenomenon was so powerful that it produced some of the greatest country music ever written. Songs like "City Lights," "Detroit City," and "Streets of Baltimore" would tell of country boys leaving for economic opportunity in the city. The narrator of "Streets of Baltimore" made his way back

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