

BELTON ISD BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Bond issue decision today

BY MARIEL WILLIAMS
TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

BELTON — The Belton Independent School District board will decide tonight in a special session whether to call a bond election for new school construction and improvements.

The board of trustees have mostly agreed they would prefer to hold the bond election this May.

The board's most recent decision leading up to the bond vote was to build a new elementary school on Poison Oak Road in West Temple.

The Poison Oak elementary site is next to the new development Carriage House Trails. Because of his financial interest in the development, trustee Jason Carothers abstained from the debate and vote on choosing a new school site.

Carothers said in an email he has owned the property since 2013. BISD purchased the Poison Oak site in 2012, and Carothers was elected to the board in 2011.

Carothers further said he did not know if the new school would benefit him financially.

"The question of financial gain is unknown since I only own 50 percent of three lots directly adjacent to the school property," he said. "That is the reason I abstained from the vote and did not participate in any discussion pertaining to the location of Belton ISD elementary No. 11."

Please see BISD, 2A

Interstate 35 closures in Troy scheduled to start tonight

STAFF REPORT

TROY — The Texas Department of Transportation will close northbound Interstate 35 lanes at 7 tonight.

The closures planned today through Thursday will allow the contractor to set beams on the new South Troy Bridge, said Jodi Wheatley, TxDOT spokeswoman.

Daily closures will be from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. through Thursday.

Traffic will detour onto one lane of the frontage road at exit 306, FM 1237/Pendleton Road. Officers at FM 935/Main Street in Troy will re-direct traffic onto I-35.

Delays are expected, and travelers should seek alternate routes, she said. On any given night, if work is completed early, the closure will be ended.

BACK ROADS

French said 'Merci' with boxcars of gifts

Central Texas groups to attend Austin event

BY PATRICIA BENOIT
TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

Above: The Texas "40/8" boxcar will be on public display 11 a.m. Feb. 18 at the State Capitol grounds. Customarily, it is on view at the Texas Military Forces Museum on the grounds of Camp Mabry, 2200 W. 35th St., Austin. The event is a preamble to the kickoff of the Texas World War I Centennial Observance in April.

Right: In 1949, the "Merci" Train, one of 49 French railroad boxcars, arrived in the U.S. in a large tanker. Each boxcar held thousands of gifts of gratitude from thousands of French citizens. These were small tokens to the United States for the more than 700 American boxcars of relief goods sent to them by Americans in 1948. The Texas car arrived in mid-February.

Courtesy photo David Knutson, La Société des Quarante Hommes et Huit Chevaux

Library of Congress

Below: Temple Fire & Rescue personnel inspect fire-damaged playground equipment June 29, 2016, in Temple's Wilson Park.

Below: Emerson school building at 1400 E. Ave. B. It was later determined it would cost \$1 million to repair it or \$450,000 to raze it.

Below: A total of six boys between the ages of 9 and 14 were re-

"I became involved because they were doing more than any other organization I belonged to. ... There's no drama; everybody helps."

Donald Taylor, member of La Société des Quarante Hommes et Huit Chevaux "Voiture" 266 of Copperas Cove

et Huit Chevaux (The Society of 40 Men and Eight Horses)": "Voiture" 1031 of Killeen/Harker Heights and "Voiture" 266 of Copperas Cove.

In keeping with the French tradition, the 40/8 chapters are called "voitures." The weekend will be filled with speeches, touring, banquets, renewing friendships and a Sunday morning memorial service for deceased comrades.

Both "voitures" have members who have held statewide offices. The "40&8" members refer to each other as "voyageurs" (voyagers) because they share experiences of military service. Although World War I veterans began the national organization as an honor group of the American Legion in 1920, 40/8 is now an independent fraternal organization of active-duty, retired and honorably discharged veterans. Membership is by invitation.

Please see BOXCAR, 2A

TEXAS TEACHER IMPROPER CONDUCT

Public information scarce about possible misconduct

AUSTIN (AP) — A newspaper's review of records shows information about hundreds of teachers who have voluntarily surrendered their licenses after possible improper conduct with students but never were charged isn't readily made available to the public by the Texas Education Agency.

An analysis by the Austin American-Statesman also has found the state agency doesn't track if a teacher has been charged or convicted of a crime. The newspaper reported Sunday that in many cases, school districts keep the information secret and teachers are allowed to take other teaching jobs or positions where they are in contact with children.

Please see TEACHERS, 2A

TEMPLE ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL

School scores with Super Bowl Sunday Open House

BY LARRY CAUSEY
TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

St. Mary's Catholic School had a good turnout for Super Bowl Sunday Open House from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., said Theresa Wyles, school principal.

Cheerleaders and basketball players gave classroom tours to more than 25 new families, she said. Parents of St. Mary's students also made the tour. Each classroom had a trivia question or a game, and everyone got their autograph book stamped or signed to qualify them for a prize.

"Each year during Catholic Schools Week, we have an open house," she said.

Since it fell on Super Bowl Sunday this year, she said, the theme seemed appropriate.

"We can cheer for the Falcons, because we're Falcons."

Please see SCHOOL, 2A

TEMPLE JUVENILE CRIME

Sentences revealed for Wilson Park fire, Emerson vandalism

BY DEBORAH McKEON
TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

The sentences of six juveniles who were involved in the Wilson Park playground fire and/or Emerson school vandalism have been revealed.

For some of the boys held responsible for the fire and/or vandalism, it wasn't their first time to break the law, John Gauntt Jr. with the Bell County Attorney's Office said. They were sentenced at the same time for those offenses.

Playground equipment, only a year old, at a Wilson Park children's playground was melted by a fiery blaze that was intentionally set on June 29, destroying the \$250,000 equipment that will finally be replaced in March.

About \$1 million worth of damage happened during multiple incidents of vandalism at the old Emerson school building at 1400 E. Ave. B. It was later determined it would cost \$1 million to repair it or \$450,000 to raze it.

A total of six boys between the ages of 9 and 14 were re-

ferred in July to juvenile authorities to start the process to determine their fates after admitting their guilt.

Please see JUVENILES, 2A