HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Warmer weather allowed at least a few jet skiers to enjoy Lake LBJ on Christmas weekend (see a surprise guest on page 3) after a real freeze the weekend before. The photo above was taken two days before Christmas, on a warm but cloudy Friday, December 23. Beautiful weather is predicted for New Year’s weekend, when state parks including Inks Lake State Park and Enchanted Rock State Natural Area will hold their traditional First Day Hikes (see “Upcoming Events,” on page 2).
UPCOMING EVENTS

This year’s “First Day Hike” at Inks Lake State Park will leave at 10 a.m. on New Year’s Day from the Pecan Flats trailhead (next to the park headquarters). The hike at Enchanted Rock State Natural Area will begin at 9:30 a.m.

By JOHN HALLOWELL

On New Year’s Eve, kids are invited to the Llano Library for a “Kids Reckin’ ’Round Year’s Eve Blast!” from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. New Year balloons drop at NOON!

There will be numerous New Year’s Eve parties this Saturday night. Some of the venues will be: The Place Downtown (across from the post office) and The Club Car Bar (upstairs above the Grand Central Cafe) in Kingsland, the Globe Theatre in Bertram, Quail Point in Horseshoe Bay, On the Rocks in Cottonwood Shores and at the VFW Hall in Burnet. A not-quite-traditional New Year’s Eve party will be an Open House for all lovers from 5 to 8 p.m. this Saturday at Lou Quennelberg’s studio, just west of Llano at 143 CR 116. Inks Lake State Park will host its annual “First Day Hike” on New Year’s Day. Hikers should gather by 10 a.m. at the trailhead adjacent to the park headquarters. A First Day Hike at Enchanted Rock State Natural Area will be the final weekend of January (Thursday through Saturday, January 25-27) at the fairgrounds behind the Burnet Airport. The Kingsland Garden Club invites the public to a free program called “Living with Purple Martin’s” with Master Gardener Robert York. It’s on Friday, January 6, at the Kingsland Library. The Club meeting begins at 1 p.m., and the program is scheduled for 1:30. Call 325-388-6940 for more info.

A Men’s Breakfast, featuring guest speaker Joe Champion, will be held at 6 a.m. on Thursday, January 12, at Hill Country Fellowship in Burnet. Author Garde Stewart will speak at the Llano Brown Free Library’s January 12 Coffee Talks, about the heroes in her non-fiction book, 100 Heroes in History—True Stories of Heroes Who Shaped Our World. The event starts at 11:30 a.m. with refreshments. Call 210-388-6940 for more information.

The Llano County Livestock Show will be held the second weekend in January, from Thursday to Saturday, January 12-14, at the John L. Kuykendall Event Center on FM 152. The Premium Sale will begin at 6 p.m. on Saturday. Holland Racing and the Driveway Series will be hosting an Oatmeal Road Race for bicycles beginning at 8 a.m. on Saturday, January 21, at 2:45 OR 3:15 from Beers. Bicycle enthusiasts (and spectators) are invited; find them on Facebook or look for more details here next week. Country music stars Ray Benson and Dale Watson will be live on stage with Full Band at Downtown Marble Falls at Brazos Hall on Sunday, January 29. VIP and Table Reservations are available; call 512-388-6300 for tickets or details.

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Thank you for reading the Highland Lakes Weekly!
Scatterthought

What a year it has been! Certainly not ALL the 2016 news has been good, but there have been so many good things happening this past year that I've never had to wonder how to fill the space in my little "good-news-only" paper. Business has been good for me, and I think for the Highland Lakes area in general. There's been plenty of rain, so there is water in the lakes; lots of construction, quite a few new businesses, all kinds of activity. This is a great place to live, and I am very thankful to have a "job" (I use the term loosely!) where I get to drive around and see a lot of what's happening.

If I survive another week, I'll be putting "Year 7" on the front page of my paper. That was the farthest I dared to plan for when I started this paper, but 2016 was my best year yet for readers and advertisers, and it looks (at least right now) like I'll have a job as long as I can keep doing it. Wow!

Unfortunately, the pace has begun to tick some days off, and I think I'm going to try to find ways to scale things back just a little. Starting next year, I'm going to plan for at least one week off (and possibly two) in the middle of the summer for some, but possibly another in the middle of the winter) every year. After all, I'll be turning 60 in less than two months now, there should be SOME reward for lasting this long!

The other concession to old age is that sometimes I'm going to get a little more selective about the events I try to cover; maybe even set a limit on hours or events that I work (but don't worry! I'll have plenty of pictures to fill up the paper; I might even have time to do a little more writing.)

I have a few news items that I want to mention this week, and the first is the HFLA Responder Appreciation Luncheon from 11 to 3 this Sunday (New Year's Day) at Genesis Lutheran Church in Beechwell Dam. All area First Responders are invited.

The second thing is a reminder that Lake LBJ will be lowered for six weeks, starting next Monday (January 2). Details can be found at lama.org/lakelevels.

Barry Seibert, of Cranbury, will give a hard-core watercolor demo at 10 a.m. on Monday, January 9, at the Llano Fine Art Guild.

The Christian Homeschool Athletic Association of Texas has begun a new Physical Education program, called "S.A.I.N.T.S.P.E." The program meets on Fridays from 9:12 to 11:42 at Westside Park in Marble Falls (or, in bad weather, in the gym at the OLL located of First Baptist Church). You can learn more at www.chasainsists.com.

I usually restrict myself to events inBurnet or Llano County, but there are two special events I'd like to mention, even though they are a little farther afield. The first is the big New Year's Eve party with Tracy Ashley and the Heart of Texas Country Music Association in Brady (see ad on page 9). The other is the Snowman Day, from 11 to 2 on Saturday, January 14, at Johnson City's amazing Science Mill. For some of us, that's closer than parts of my two counties, and it really is a great place to visit. That would be a good time, too.

That's probably enough to fill my space, so I'll stop and wish you all a very Happy New Year! Have a great week, and I'll see you in 2017.

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King's Fellowship

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December 30, 2016
Highland Lakes Weekly
Several construction projects are underway in Kingsland as 2016 draws to a close. This expansion of the Grand Central Cafe will provide an extra dining room and a new home for the Club Car Bar.

This dramatic expansion of the Splash Rentals building will provide a showroom for boat sales and more office space.

In addition to the many upscale lake homes built in Kingsland this year, there are at least seven modest (and modestly-priced) homes under construction at year's end in the Nob Hill section of Kingsland.

Reach more customers for less. Advertise in the Highland Lakes Weekly! email for a rate sheet at editor77@live.com
Kingsland Grows in 2016

Among the many improvements in Kingsland in 2016 was this new building on Hw 1431. It houses Elegant Nails & Spa and the “Saigon South” Vietnamese Restaurant, a welcome addition to Kingsland’s dining options.

Kingsland got its new charter school in 2019. Located in the former Calvary Hill Church buildings on Real Street (behind Kingsland Health & Fitness Center), the school has about 100 students in its first year.

The former “Kingsland Medical Plaza” has been transformed by new owners Lawrence and Janice Nebgen, and is now open for business as “Kingsland Plaza.”

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December 4th – Holy Communion – 10:45 a.m.
December 6th – Community Coffee – 9:30 a.m.
December 11th – Choir Cantata – 10:45 a.m.
December 13th – Men’s Breakfast – 8:00 a.m.
December 14th – Women’s Christian Organization – 9:30 a.m.
December 25th – Lessons & Carols – 10:30 a.m.

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Llano in May, 1935

BY JOHN HALLOWELL

May of 1935 got off to a very interesting start, and the front page of The Llano News on May 13, 1935, carried the usual story of the first flood of the year. A heavy rain that began the previous day continued all night, and by the morning the streets were gushing with water. The city was badly flooded, and many homes were threatened with damage. The news was doubly bad because of the recent drought, which had already caused serious water shortages. The rain was welcome, however, and it brought relief to the parched land. The news was covered in detail on page 2 of the newspaper, and it included interviews with local residents and officials. The news was widely reported in other newspapers, and it was the subject of much discussion in the town. The flood was a reminder of the power of nature and the need for preparedness in times of crisis. The story was told in detail, and it was widely reported in other newspapers, and it was the subject of much discussion in the town.
2016 Highlights

The lakes filled up! Lake Buchanan was 81 percent full on January 1, 89 percent full by March 25, and full enough to open the floodgates by the end of April. This photo of Wirtz Dam was taken June 7, after more rain overflowed the lakes again on Memorial Day weekend.

The City of Granite Shoals celebrated its 50th “birthday” with a huge party on the weekend of April 23 and 24.

After years of renovations, the historic Globe Theatre in Bertram held a Grand Re-Opening on February 27.

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Christmas Eve Celebrations

Acting out the Christmas story at Grace United Methodist Church in Granite Shoals.

Beautiful music at Burnet’s First Baptist Church, a celebration which included a candlelight walk to the live Nativity scene in Main Street Bethlehem.

An inspiring candlelight service sponsored by One Desire Church at the Bertram Library.

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Happy New Year
A crowd of volunteers from the Burnet County Hunger Alliance cooked and served a meal at the Boys and Girls Club in Marble Falls on Tuesday evening, while others served a similar meal at First Baptist Church in Burnet at the same time. This was the first major project of the new group, inspired by the Texas Hunger Initiative at Baylor University. Its goal is to “end hunger in Burnet County” by complementing the ongoing services of local churches, food banks and schools, especially during the holiday season.

Organizers Henry and Bessie Jackson and Reverend George Perry of St. Frederick Baptist Church in Marble Falls, sit with friends at the Mission Marble Falls Community Christmas Lunch, served at the church on Friday, December 23.

A good crowd attended the annual Christmas Dinner at Buchanan Dam’s Red Barn community center, next to the fire hall. Originally the project of a local church, the free community meal has been orchestrated (with help from dozens of other volunteers) for the past fourteen years by Joel and Rose Deupree. They are “retiring” this year, and are looking for someone to replace them. If you can help, please call 512-755-5091.
Above: The Lake Buchanen/Wakama Lake Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon-cutting at the Dam Grill (on highway 29) to welcome new owners Steve and Neena Williams as Chamber members.

Right: Local golfing enthusiasts Michael Stoddard won golfing with seven friends in 44-degree weather on December 15 at the Llano River Golf Course. His dedication paid off, as he got his first-ever Hole-In-One on the second hole. Congratulations, Mikel!
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Four of the major construction projects currently underway in Burnet County are (clockwise from above): a new shopping center and new location for Julie's Cocina, next to Dollar General in Cottonwood Shores; the new PEC building, on Hwy 291 just north of Marble Falls; the new McDonald's restaurant on Hwy 291 in Burnet; and the new Boall's store (with two additional retail spaces) on Hwy 1431 in Marble Falls.

The Kingsland House of Arts & Crafts installed new officers for 2017 at their Christmas luncheon on December 14. Pictured (L-R) are: Santa, President Nina Price; Santa's elf, 1st Vice President Joanne Hamilton; Christmas Tree, 2nd Vice President Linda Bryant; Reindeer, Secretary Cindy Keebler (Linda Smith standing in for her); and finally, Scrooge, Treasurer Pat O'Donnell.

Five members of the Hill Country Blazers entertained the Woman's Culture Club of Llano this month with their beautiful harmonies of Barber Shop Style music. Pictured above: Jim McCutchen, tenor, from Sunrise Beach; Steve Stevens, lead, from South Burnet County; Clauk Meyers, bass, from Granite Shoals; Steve Taylor, baritone from Johnson City; and Norman Hamborg, lead, from Horseshoe Bay.
Happy New Year

As the calendar turns the page, we wish you the very best in the year ahead.

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Country music stars Johnny Bush (above) and Darrell McCall (right) will be on stage with Justin Trevino for the “New Year’s Weekend” this Friday and Saturday night in Brady (see ad on p. 9). The next Llano Country Opry will feature T.G. Sheppard on Saturday, January 14.

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Elevate Church stretched the Christmas celebration at both ends, holding a Christmas Eve Eve Celebration at the Lakeside Pavilion (where their regular services are held) on Friday, December 22; then taking thousands of dollars worth of toys around Granite Shoals on Sunday afternoon (Christmas Day) to give to anyone and everyone they could find. Volunteers met at the home of pastors Shane and Sandy Wenger, loaded the toys into trailers which were pulled around pre-selected neighborhoods in Granite Shoals with Christmas music playing to attract the attention of neighborhood children (who were then invited to choose gifts from the trailers). The imaginative "Spread the Love" program made Christmas "extra" special for many local children.

The Place Downtown presents

Kingsland New Years Eve Bash

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Pet of the Week

This is Holly; she is a Lab mix, an older gal who loves everyone. Holly is ready for adoption at the Hill Country Humane Society. It would be only $62.50 to adopt her. If you would like more information on Holly or any of our other wonderful pets, please call the shelter at 512-793-5463 or visit www.hillcountryhumanesociety.org.

The shelter is open Thursday through Monday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Don't forget our Holiday Special. All adoptions are Half Off!

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