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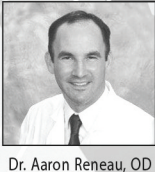
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Dr. Aaron Reneau, OD

OBITUARY

RONALD RIGGS

LIBERTY - Ronald Gene Riggs, 75, of Liberty passed away November 3, 2025. He was born in Wichita Falls, TX, December 8, 1949 to N.J. and Naomi A. Riggs. He graduated from Liberty High School in 1967. Ronnie worked in the oil field industry for over 40 years and loved to travel. He was not a shy person by any means, as he always seemed to be the life of the party. Over the years, Ronnie enjoyed stamp collecting, rock tumbling, cooking,



and had an enduring love for reading. He was preceded in death by his father, N.J. Riggs, and his mother, Naomi A. Riggs. He is survived by his loving wife, Maria Lilia Riggs; sons, Christopher L. Riggs and Dustin S. Riggs; stepdaughter, Blanca Mondragon; stepsons, Tony Vidal and Carlos Vidal, and his cherished granddaughter, Maya A. Riggs. Ronnie will be remembered for his love of all things that brought joy to others. His memory will live on in the hearts of those who knew and loved him. A memorial service was held at Allison Funeral Service, Saturday, December 6, at 10 a.m.

SHC Book Club releases list of books for 2026

LIBERTY - Join the Sam Houston Regional Library and Research Center (SHC) for another year of book club meetings featuring works of fiction related to libraries, archives and museums. The 2026 calendar is filled with engaging titles that should inspire discussion with the group. Led by a member of the SHC staff, the book club meets on the fourth Tuesday of January, April, July and October from 6-7 p.m.

The first selection for the

2026 SHC Book Club is the novel *The Briar Club* by Kate Quinn. Set in Washington, D.C., in the 1950s, the novel presents women who form friendships while living in a boardinghouse during the postwar era. Join the discussion on Tuesday, Jan. 27, at 6 p.m.

The SHC Quarterly Book Club 2026 schedule is as follows: *The Briar Club* by Kate Quinn (January 27), *The Stolen Queen* by Fiona Davis (April 28), *My Dear Hamilton* by

AUSTIN - The Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) has announced new and revised finding aids recently made available online, along with fresh uploads to the Texas Digital Archive, its repository of electronic items.

The Sam Houston Regional

Stephanie Dray and Laura Kamoie (July 28), and *The Midnight Library* by Matt Haig (October 27).

Interested participants may obtain a copy of each novel through their local library or favorite bookstore to prepare for the quarterly conversations. For more information, contact SHC staff at (936) 336-8821 or via email at SamHoustonCenter@tsl.texas.gov. SHC Book Club meetings are free and open to the public with no registration required.



Dennis and Melony Beasley were heading over to the Rays of Light lighted Christmas parade last week in downtown Liberty.



Susan Daniel has her letter for Santa all ready to send to the North Pole. Has she been naughty or has she been nice?



Frankly Speaking –

Teddy Bears

by Frank Jordan



The teddy bear is one of the most popular gifts since its creation and the most popular stuffed toy ever, not only for Christmas, but birthdays, sickness, or as a pick-me-up or comfort gift. No one is real sure when the first stuffed bear was made, but we're really sure about the first teddy bear. First Teddy was made shortly after President Theodore "Teddy" Roosevelt settled a border dispute between Mississippi and Louisiana in November of 1902.

Roosevelt went bear hunting while in the area, but saw no bears, so on the last day of the hunt his aides captured and tied up a bear cub to a tree. Roosevelt was incensed and ordered the cub untied. The president then rode his horse back to the camp to confront awaiting reporters.

Papers nationally carried the story of Roosevelt coming to the rescue of the small bear cub.

Russian immigrant Morris Michtom saw a political cartoon of the president involving the bear cub and asked his wife Rose to make a toy bear to put in his candy store display window in Brooklyn, NY. Rose used brown mohair plush and stuffed it with fine wood shavings called excelsior. People crowded to see the bear with candy heaped all around it in the store's window.

Morris worried that the attention it was drawing might upset the president. He packed the bear in a box and sent it to the president with the note, "Dear Mr. President, I do not wish to seem disrespectful, but I would like to call my toy, 'Teddy Bear.'"

New aids for locating materials at SHC

Library and Research Center is open for research Tuesday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Researchers are invited to visit the State Archives in Austin during public service hours. Appointments to use archival materials are encouraged but not required. For more information, see www.tsl.texas.gov/arc/visit.

Newly added Finding Aids with reference to Liberty County include:

• *Hull-Daisetta Rotary Club Collection (at Sam Houston Center)* - The Hull-Daisetta Rotary Club was chartered on April 1, 1926, in Hull, Liberty County, Texas. In 2006, several local individuals and organizations began working to support renovation of the Hull-Daisetta Rotary Club building and preserve its legacy. It was moved to the grounds of the Sam Houston Regional Library and Research Center in June 2010 and now houses an exhibit on the heritage of Rotary clubs and community service in Southeast Texas. The Hull-Daisetta Rotary Club collection documents some of the activities of the club, with records including attendance and program records, membership rosters, correspondence, financial records, newsletters, photographs, posters, and artifacts. Materials date 1926-1979, 2010, bulk 1949-1979.

• *R.D. (Bob) Evans Rice Production Slides (Sam Houston Center)* - Robert Dawson (Bob) Evans was a prominent rice farmer in Devers, Liberty County, Texas. This collection consists of 275 color slides of photographs, maps, and statistical information pertaining to rice production in Southeast Texas, primarily Devers in Liberty County. Materials date 1961-1965.

TSLAC provides access to Finding Aids online at www.tsl.texas.gov/arc. A comprehensive list of all recently added and updated finding aids can be found in TSLAC's online catalog at <https://bit.ly/TSLAC-newcollections>. Contact archives reference staff at 512-463-5455 or archinfo@tsl.texas.gov to learn more about finding aids.

Christmas Jamboree at River Ranch set for Saturday

DAYTON - River Ranch will embrace the holiday spirit with a holly jolly Christmas Jamboree featuring a full day of festive fun for the entire family, noon to 9 p.m. Sat., Dec. 13, at 15 River Ranch Boulevard in Dayton. The public is invited to attend this free holiday celebration.

During the day, guests will be treated to holiday-themed bounce houses, craft stations, face painters, balloon artists, reindeer food-making, letters to Santa, cookie decorating and more. Santa, his elves, and Frosty the Snowman will be available for selfies. Once the sun sets, there will be Christmas light displays and movies to enjoy.

Roosevelt replied to Morris that he could use the name "Teddy" bear, but couldn't imagine what good his name would do for him. Morris set up making Teddy Bears to sell in 1904, with Steiff from England also successfully presenting a teddy bear on the market.

The most commonly sold brands recently include Gund and Ty, Inc. Brands associated with teddy bears that enjoyed strong popularity in the 1980s and 1990s were Teddy Ruxpin and Care Bears, almost impossible to find at Christmas. Various TV shows and movies have featured a star teddy bear, including Super Ted and Mr. Bean.

Build-a-Bear stores have brought resurgence in popularity for the bears with a "constructed" bear of different materials and attire, even lights and voices. Of course, now, also fairly expensive! If you have children, grandchildren or like gifting children you are probably familiar with famous teddy bears in the national media market including Paddington, Rupert, and Sooty.

The most famous teddy

bear in the world is Winnie the Pooh, the honey-loving bear that appeared in 1926 and continues in popularity in books, movies and TV productions. My favorite Winnie the Pooh quote is, "If you live to be 100, I want to live to be 100 minus one day so I never have to live without you." Of course, you know, Pooh was speaking to his best friend, Piglet.

Two more personal favorites are, "You're braver than you believe and stronger and smarter than you think." And wisdom of a bear, "People say nothing is impossible, but I do nothing all day!"

Teddy quickly became one of the most requested gifts of all time, with millions sold to date and about \$2 billion in sales. Morris Michtom who made that first teddy bear went on to form Ideal Toys, a huge financial success.

The most expensive? A Steiff 17-inch Louie Vuitton teddy bear made in 2000 that sold at Christie's in Monaco for \$182,550.

Frankly speaking, sorry there was just one available. Now grin and bear it, while having a grrr-reat day!

Taylor vying for Republican Party Chair

Just ahead of the deadline for candidates to file paperwork for offices across the state, Daisetta City Councilman Ryan Taylor is tossing his name in the hat as a candidate for Liberty County Republican Party Chair.

Taylor is an advocate of strong public service, and he hopes to bring that to the forefront of the local Republican Party to get more citizens into the fold, especially those who believe in American First conservative principles.

"Public service to me is about supporting the community and all of the people in it. What can we do for our fellow citizens," Taylor said.

Now more than ever, growth in the Republican party, especially locally, is paramount, and Taylor hopes to foster growth in the party and its activities.

"This is a big moment for Republicans to continue to establish conservative values across the country, and we need to have leadership that will bring local people to the table at a grassroots level," Taylor said.

As party chair, Taylor hopes to increase the number of precinct chairs and create a network for conservative voices across the county.

"I want to stress that we need growth in our party. Yes,

we are a Republican county, but we have lower voter turnouts, and we have low participation in the party," Taylor said.

Taylor is in his second term as a Daisetta City Councilman, represents a broader section of the community in the Texas Municipal League, serves on the board of directors of the Brazos Transit Authority, and is a trailblazer in the organization RunGenZ.

Professionally, he works as a firefighter and EMT in Lumberton.

Taylor is looking forward to getting out and asking the community for their votes, and hopes to hear from conservatives across the county.

"I would truly appreciate your vote this March, as we work to make great things happen for the Liberty County Republican Party," Taylor said.



RYAN TAYLOR

Liberty Church of Christ

Bryant Perkins, Minister

Join us this Sunday for Bible Classes for all ages at 9 a.m. and stay for Worship at 10 a.m.

We meet Sunday night at 5 p.m. and Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.

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We'd love to see you soon. We've saved you a seat!

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