

THE LIBERTY GAZETTE

Vol. 66, No. 34

Liberty County's Only Home-Owned Newspaper

Tuesday, August 25, 2026

AGENDA

KENEFICK VFD BLOOD DRIVE

KENEFICK - Kenefick VFD is sponsoring a blood drive Sat., August 29, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. to benefit UT MD Anderson cancer patients. The mobile collection bus will be on-site at the fire station at 3709 FM 1008. An appreciation item and refreshments will be available for all donors. Photo ID is required. Appointments are strongly encouraged to efficiently coordinate your donation. Schedule your appointment at tinyurl.com/kenefick-vfd0826.

HULL-DAISETTA GOLDEN OLDIES

HULL-DAISETTA - The Hull-Daisetta Golden Oldies will once again celebrate Homecoming in Bobcat fashion, Friday, September 4, at the new Hull-Daisetta Community Building. This year, the Class of 1976 will be honored on their fiftieth year of graduation. Brunch will be served at 11 a.m. with a meeting at noon, followed by refreshments at 1 p.m. That evening the Class of 1976 will be introduced at a 6:50 pre-game celebration. The homecoming game, against Arcadiana Christian Louise, will be at 7 p.m.

RURAL RALLY FOR SETX

LIBERTY - Meet the Democratic candidates in the upcoming election at the Rural Rally for Southeast Texas taking place Saturday, Sept. 5, at 1 p.m. at the A.J. "Jack" Hartel Building, 318 San Jacinto Street. Slated to appear are Gina Hinojosa, candidate for Texas Governor; Leticia Gutierrez, candidate for US Congress District 9; Valorie Barton, candidate for Texas House District 18; Bobby Tillman, candidate for Texas Senate District 3; Tiffany Perkinz, candidate for Texas State Board of Education District 7, along with others to be announced. This event is presented by the Liberty County Democratic Party.

ICE CREAM SOCIAL

DAYTON - Come enjoy a sweet treat and meet the local law enforcement officers at the Dayton Police Department Ice Cream Social. Everyone is welcome to come out Wednesday evening, September 9, from 6-8 p.m. at Parker Park, 1207 N. Winfree. It's an opportunity to enjoy some free ice cream, meet and chat with your local police officers and build connections for a stronger community. The event is co-sponsored by Sweet Scoops and Patients ER.



DAYTON ROTARIANS LEARN ABOUT FAITH-BASED SECURITY

Dayton Rotary members pose for a photo with guest law enforcement. Dayton Chief of Police Shane Burleigh is at far left. Next to him is Liberty County Sheriff Bobby Rader. Presenter Sgt. Ted Smith is seated at the front right and retired law enforcement officer and Rotarian Ken DeFoor, who arranged the program, is at far right.

Faith-based security program presented to Dayton Rotary

The Rotary Club of Dayton welcomed area pastors, church leaders, law enforcement representatives and community members Thursday for a timely presentation on faith-based security and church safety.

The program was presented by Sgt. Ted Smith of the Liberty County Sheriff's Office, who shared practical steps churches can take to prepare for emergencies, strengthen safety procedures and better protect their congregations. Rotarian Ken DeFoor, who arranged the program, welcomed the visiting pastors and church representatives and explained why the sub-

ject has become increasingly important.

DeFoor noted that churches are intended to be places of worship, fellowship and peace, but faith-based organizations must also recognize that emergencies and acts of violence can occur anywhere. He encouraged church leaders to evaluate their current procedures rather than assume a serious incident could never happen in their congregation.

Sgt. Smith introduced attendees to the Faith Based Security Network, an organization focused on helping houses of worship establish and improve safety ministries. Smith has

received specialized training through the organization and works with Liberty County churches to identify vulnerabilities and develop practical safety plans. One of the primary messages of the presentation was simple: start with what you have and build from there.

Smith shared that a church doesn't have to have a complicated or costly security system to start enhancing safety. With strong leadership support, thoughtful planning, training, and awareness, you can make a meaningful difference. He suggested that congregations think about forming a Safety Ministry Team in-

stead of just focusing on the word "security."

A well-rounded safety ministry can handle much more than immediate threats. It can include fire safety, severe weather preparedness, medical emergencies, disruptive individuals, child and youth protection, financial security, theft prevention, and emergency evacuation plans.

Churches were encouraged to conduct a baseline assessment of their facilities and procedures. Among the areas Smith recommended evaluating were parking lots and exterior lighting, building entrances and exits, landscaping that could conceal individuals, alarm and camera systems, key control, classrooms, restrooms, financial procedures and emergency access routes. Key control was identified as one area that can easily be overlooked. Smith encouraged churches to know exactly who has keys to their buildings and to establish procedures for issuing, tracking and recovering them.

Protecting children and youth was another important part of the discussion.

Churches should evaluate whether classrooms have appropriate exits, determine how children would be evacuated during an emergency and establish procedures to control access to areas where children are present.

Smith also stressed the importance of relationships with local first responders. Church leaders should know which law enforcement, fire and emergency medical agencies serve their facilities, understand approximate response times and communicate with those agencies before an emergency occurs.

Training is equally important. Church safety teams should regularly review their responsibilities and practice how they would respond to different situations. For congregations that are hesitant to conduct a full emergency drill, Smith suggested beginning with a tabletop exercise in which church leaders and safety team members discuss a hypothetical emergency and determine who would

See SECURITY, Page A-2

'Spies in Saigon' subject of next History & Then Some

WALLISVILLE - The History & Then Some Lecture Series at the Chambers County Museum at Wallisville continues Thursday, September 17, at 6 p.m.

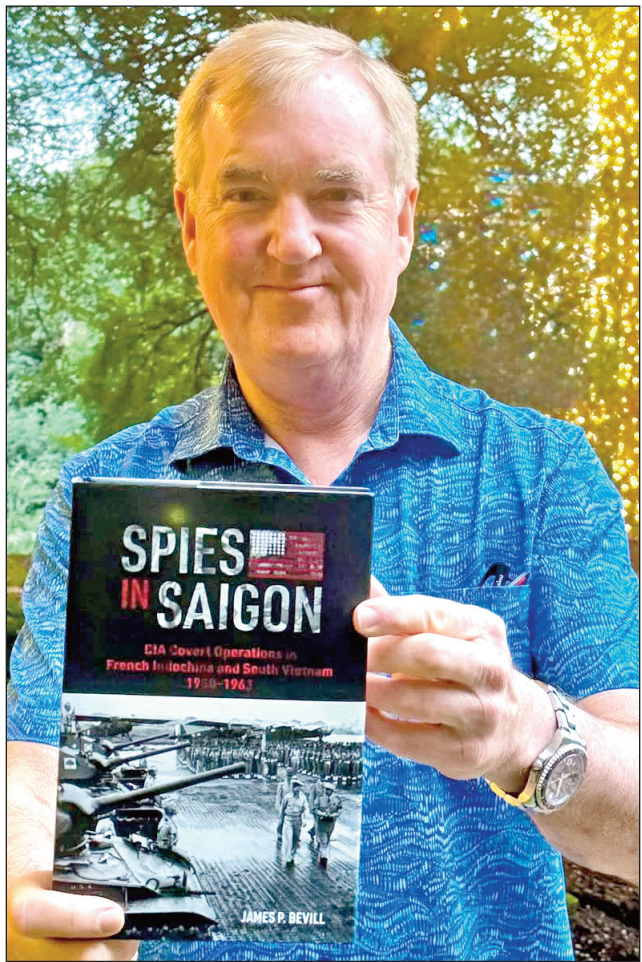
Guest speaker James Bevill will present his book *Spies in Saigon*, a fascinating insight that brings to life gripping stories of the dangerous world of undercover spies, double agents, and covert CIA operations in Saigon, Vietnam, during the French-Indochina War. This untold prequel to the American war reveals the surprising depth of American and CIA involvement during the French War and the creation of the first Republic of Vietnam, which followed.

Bevill lives in Houston with his wife, Jodie Springer Bevill. He is senior vice president at UBS Financial Services in River Oaks.

Seating is limited, so make your reservation

today. Presentations of the History & Then Some series are held the third Thursday of each month. For more information,

call 409-389-2252. The Chambers County Museum at Wallisville is located at 20136 IH-10 East.



JAMES BEVILL

Master Naturalist training class Sept. 2

If you enjoy the outdoors, want to learn more about Texas' incredible ecosystems, and are looking for a meaningful way to give back to the community, why not explore the Texas Master Naturalist Program?

The Lower Trinity Basin Chapter is currently accepting applications for its next training class, which starts September 2.

The Texas Master Naturalist Program is sponsored by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

and the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. Its mission is to train volunteers who are passionate about conserving Texas' natural resources through education, outreach, and community service. Participants complete classroom and field training, volunteer service, and advanced education while learning from engaging experts.

If you are interested in learning more, visit the website txmn.org/lower-trinitybasin or email lowertrinitybasin@gmail.com.



LET'S TURN THAT SPARE CHANGE INTO SOMETHING MORE.

FLB.BANK



936.336.6471