

Community Center for a meal and to celebrate the life of Esmie.

Sahr

Leslie Dale Sahr, 53, of Bronte, Texas, passed away on Saturday, September 28, 2024.

He is survived by his wife, Robin Roberts; his mother, Threassa Joy Bowman; his son, Clayton Sahr and wife Dyani, son, Brady Wesson and wife Hannah; and daughter, Jessi McWright and husband Stacy. Leslie will also be greatly missed by his grandchildren, Landyn, Colt, Camden, Wyatt, Baker, Hadlee, and Audie.

A private memorial service will be held for Leslie at a later date.

Friends of the RLCC meeting held

The September meeting of the Friends of the Robert Lee Care Center was held on Monday, September 15, at 10 am with 9 members and 1 guest in attendance.

The meeting was called to order at 10:01 am by President, Della Alexander.

Minutes of the last meeting, May 2024, were read and approved.

The treasurers' report was presented and approved. Della Alexander reported that a debit card has been obtained from Robert Lee State Bank and will be used primarily for online ordering.

Betty Lewis shared with those present the new Fredricksburg Farm items and lip balm/hand cream gift packets that are being used in the employee birthday gift bags.

Members were encouraged to provide items for sale and to come help with the Homecoming Bake Sale to be held on Friday, October 4. Funds from this fundraiser will be used to purchase Christmas gifts for the RLCC residents. Items to be considered for the Christmas gifts were discussed and additional suggestions were encouraged to be shared at the November meeting. Mary Rodriquez, RLCC Activity Director, has requested that the Auxiliary look at an item called Touch to Play as a possible gift idea. Becky Ross will research this item.

Additionally, Mary requested that the Auxiliary furnish again this year items to be used as prizes for the Halloween Festival planned for October 23. After discussion of this request, a motion was made and passed to use Auxiliary funds to purchase needed items instead of having the members bring them individually. Becky Ross volunteered to make the purchases and get them to Mary.

Discussion was held regarding the other annual fundraiser, a Brown Bag Pulled Pork Sandwich meal. Discussion was focused on the amount of activity that takes place in the fall months across the community and that a different time of the year might be better for this event. A motion was made and passed to move the



Stars! Robert Lee Elementary students named as Stomper's Stars for Week Five have recently been announced. They include Pre - K - Maurizio Mendoza, Kindergarten - Casey Eubanks, 1st Grade - Saul Tostado, 2nd Grade - Kallie Stanford, 3rd Grade - Ryder Millican, 4th Grade - Hudson McGuire, and 5th Grade - Camila Mendoza.

Brown Bag Fundraiser from October to January.

The date of Friday, January 24, 2025 was set for the next fundraiser. Members were reminded that the annual dues are now due. There were no items of new business. The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 am.



Leading From the Front

By James M. Decker

This is not the essay I had planned today. That other essay is a good one. I am excited to share it soon but it needs to wait. Today's essay is longer than normal, but it is very important.

I am going to get raw, real, and candid with you about mental health and suicide. This is your warning that if you are not in a good mental place to read about those topics, today's essay may not be for you, at least right now. Two weeks ago, I wrote an essay called "Loved and Needed." That essay ignited a flurry of conversations with others and a whole lot of self-reflection of my own. This essay is the product of all that has transpired since that essay.

I wrote that prior essay on World Suicide Prevention Day. For that same day, a friend of mine used her own Facebook platform to share her story of a foiled suicide attempt that gave her a powerful new lease on life. I have since been made aware of others struggling with suicidal feelings. I had conversations with friends who were dealing with

anxiety and depression. When I write about suicide prevention and then immediately see the realness of the topic in Stamford, it is abundantly clear that I need to put mental health advocacy at the forefront of my life for the foreseeable future. When a topic keeps coming back to me in a very vivid manner, that is no coincidence. It is a sign.

Too many people are struggling in the world and in our own community. I owe it to myself and to each of you to obey this clear calling to speak candidly and encouragingly about mental health. This can become an abstract topic when we discuss mental health generally or in "society." It is better to discuss mental health in the abstract than to not discuss it, but abstract conversations can obscure the very real and very personal things happening with our family, our friends, our neighbors, and ourselves. That is what I want to talk about.

I want to talk about teenagers who are struggling with acceptance or relationships or peer pressure or expectations.

I want to talk about the parent engaged in a constant juggling act of robbing Peter to pay Paul to make sure their kids have what they need and they aren't sure how they'll get it done the next month.

I want to talk about the adult who takes one step forward to get ahead in life and then gets pushed backwards ten steps each time, so they begin to wonder why they keep trying and whether life is worth it.

I want to talk about people who feel like they are under so much pressure, perhaps partially self-created, that it all seems like too much to overcome and they are not sure if they can handle it.

I want to talk about the people

who do not feel understood by the world around them, for whatever reason that might be, and who do not feel at home or at peace in life.

These are not abstract ideas. These are challenges that real people face every day. You know people who are struggling like this. I dare say that many of you have felt one or more of those feelings, on some level, at some point in your life. People who face these challenges must cope somehow. Sometimes they find healthy and calming coping mechanisms. Sometimes they do not. Sometimes they repress, repress,

and repress, until they can repress no more. Sometimes the coping can be destructive, like substance abuse. Sometimes, coping results in suicidal ideation (considering the hypothetical of suicide). Those ideations can turn into real fixations or something worse and more damaging and permanent.

Mental health struggles and suicide are topics that transcend class, race, gender, and every other classification of people. I know people who seemingly "had it all" from outside appearances but faced very deep suicidal ideations or took their own life.

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