

THE OBSERVER/ENTERPRISE

Published Weekly

The Observer/Enterprise, LLC

(325) 277-9210

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www.ObserverEnterprise.com

Periodical Rate Postage paid at Robert Lee, Texas

POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to
Observer/Enterprise
PO Box 1329, Robert Lee, Texas 76945

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Ashley McCutchen Braswell, Social Media Coordinator

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Per Year in Coke County ... \$35.00

Per Year Elsewhere in Texas ... \$40.00

Per Year Outside of Texas ... \$45.00

Death Notices

Reyes

Daniel Reyes went to be a peace surrounded by his family on July 9, 2024, at the age of sixty-one at Shannon Medical Center in San Angelo, Texas.

Danny is survived by his spouse, Tamalia Grigg Bell; his children, Jon Reyes, Charles Reyes, Kristina Reyes, and Carrie Reyes-Goodwill, as well as nine grandchildren. He is also survived by his siblings, Manuela Eubanks, Antonia Owens, and Manuel Reyes, Jr. Danny was preceded in death by his Mother Noverta Olivas Reyes, Father Manuel Reyes, brother, Joe Reyes, and sister, Olivia Basquez.

Funeral services for close friends and family will be held on July 20 at 10 am at Forgiven Ministries, 117 West Main St., Bronte, Texas, with graveside services to follow. A celebration of his life will take place at 3 pm at Kimbos Saloon, 78 E Avenue K, San Angelo, Texas.

Montgomery

Thomas (Tom) Purnell Montgomery passed away on July 11, 2024, at the age of 80.

He is survived by his wife of 48 years, Betty; son, John (Cindy); and granddaughter, Emily of Allen, Texas; two sisters, Barbara Feil and husband Robert of Bronte, Texas, and Cathy Keady of Granada, Mississippi; and many nieces, nephews, and special friends.

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Wendell Berry at the Matched Horse Races

By James M. Decker

When you reference Wendell Berry every 14.5 seconds in your writing, it's inevitable that others ask you for Berry reading recommendations. I am always honored to field such a request, because it usually means that people are interested enough in my writing to learn more about this Kentucky farmer/writer/poet who influences me so deeply. I recently recorded a Rural Church and State podcast on this very topic. I probably owe it to my West of 98 readers to do a special newsletter with a Wendell Berry reading list.

My reading recommendations may vary depending on who asks me and the particular angle from which they approach Berry's work. However, every time I am asked, I mention the essay "The Work of Local Culture." I do so because it is unquestionably one of Berry's most powerful influences on my

own life and work. I have referenced it several times in this newsletter for a reason.

Nearly a decade ago, I was asked by the leaders of the Texas Cowboy Reunion to chair a new event called the Matched Horse Races. There are a few of these events floating around various rodeos, but it would be something new on the roster of events at the historic TCR. And yet, it wasn't necessarily new at all.

As I wrote last week, the Texas Cowboy Reunion was intended to preserve the heritage of the cowboys who helped tame the West Texas frontier. On that frontier, a man's horse was both a significant financial asset and a significant contributor to his capacity to live or die. Wherever two or more humans are gathered, a competitive spirit is liable to break out, so the importance of the horse lent itself to cowboys, cavalry officers, and others deciding to race their horses against each other. In the nine decades of Texas Cowboy Reunions that preceded the creation of the Matched Horse Races, I feel certain that the frontier's competitive spirit spilled over into plenty of impromptu horse races on and around the TCR grounds. I am confident nobody ever gambled on those horse races, though. The horror!

This year's Matched Horse Races were the 8th annual edition. We've had a few challenges thus far, creating these races from scratch. If a man was to draw up the most ideal time and place for a horse race, in order to draw the best crowd of spectators and racers, he would probably choose something other than the Saturday on July 4th weekend at 3:30 PM when the sun is blazing in an open field with no shade except that which you might bring yourself in the form of automobile, tent, or umbrella. But the TCR is about preserving the heritage of the frontier, not spoiling ourselves with creature comforts. This is not Major

League Baseball, ruining God's sport by playing it indoors in a soulless glorified shopping mall that they call a domed stadium. But I digress.

And the rain. Oh the rain.

In the prior seven years, we've had rain six times. We once had a giant thunderstorm the night before the race, partially wrecking our track fence, getting numerous vehicles stuck in the mud, and leaving me slogging around all day in rubber boots. On several occasions, a poorly-timed rain shower in the hours before the race deterred many would-be competitors. Last year, a four-inch rain on the morning of the race wiped out the race entirely. It is tradition in Stamford that it almost always rains during the TCR, but the Matched Horse Races seem to have created a particular magnetism. I advised some of the local farmers this year that we may start another horse race in August just to draw in a timely rain for the cotton crop. They think I am joking, but I am dedicated to improving the local economy.

This year, it rained again because of course it did, but the rain was fortuitously timed. A nice half inch dropped on midday Friday. It left the race track in outstanding condition for a final plowing. As I made the final preparations on Saturday morning, I couldn't help but ponder "The Work of Local Culture." In this essay,

Wendell compares local culture to soil. A place that cares about its stories, history, memories, and people is a place in which the local community is nourished like the plants growing in a field of healthy and fertile soil. That soil welcomes the establishment of deep roots, which strengthen the community, hold the people there, and ensure that that the entire place is built to last. A community that lacks a local culture, or that which wholesale replaces its local culture with the same homogenous "culture" found on other televisions and computer screens across America, is a community whose soil is malnourished. Any farmer or rancher knows that unhealthy soil is more prone to erosion and in that same way, Berry observes that such a place is open to decay, exploitation and destruction.

But back to the horse race.

It was hot, but not unbearably so. Okay, it was very hot, but "unbearable" is a sliding scale at the Texas Cowboy Reunion. A record twenty-three horses duked it out in front of the largest crowd to date. These races are just what you think they are. We have a 500 foot straightaway track. The competitors ride their horses down to the starting line, with their backs facing the finish line. The starter drops his flag. The competitors wheel around their horses and sprint for glory. 12 to 15 seconds later, they cross the finish line at a dead run. As

Area Churches

Invite You to Worship

Bronte

Bronte Church of Christ

PO Box 346

118 S. Jefferson • Bronte

Sun. 10 am & 6 pm, Wed. 7 pm

Central Baptist Church

324 S. Franklin • Bronte

(325) 473-4811

Dale Patterson, Pastor

Sun. 10 am Sunday School

11 am & 5 pm Worship

First Baptist Church

424 S. Washington • Bronte

(325) 473-2331

firstbronte@gmail.com

Pastor George Cooper

Sunday 9:45 am Sunday School,

10:30 am Worship

Wednesday 6 pm - 8 pm

Children and Youth

Bronte Methodist Church

Corner of Washington & Holmes

Bronte • (325) 650-4836

Pastor Keith Fletcher

Sun. 10:00 am Sunday School

11:00 am Worship

St. James Catholic Church

215 N. Washington, Bronte

(325) 365-2687

Rev. Timothy Hayter, Pastor

Sunday Bilingual Mass 8 am

Robert Lee

Emmanuel Pentecostal

PO Box 794 • 1004 Hillcrest

Pastor Brantly Robertson

(972) 841-2009

Sundays 10 am, Wednesdays 7 pm

First Methodist Church

PO Box 144 • 9th & Chadbourne

Pastor Gary Karschner

Robert Lee • (325) 453-2417

Sun. 11 am Worship, Southside Church of Christ

PO Box 698 • 8th & Houston

Robert Lee (325) 453-2176

Sun. 10 am, Sunday School

11 am Worship

Wed. 6 pm, Worship

Northside Church of Christ

PO Box 508

9th & Chadbourne • Robert Lee

(325) 453-2685, (325) 763-2118

or (325) 473-1053

Services: Sun. 10 am

Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church

601 W. 10th, Robert Lee

(325) 365-2687

Rev. Timothy Hayter, Pastor

Saturday Vigil Mass 6 pm

Robert Lee Baptist Church

PO Box 493 • 22 W. 11th

(325) 453-2724

Chris Walls, Pastor

Sun. 9:45 am, Sunday School

11 am Worship

Wed. 6:30 pm, Prayer Meeting

Victory Assembly of God

(325) 453-2208, PO Box 638

202 E. 6th Street, Robert Lee

Rev. Rocky Youngblood, Pastor

Sun. 9:45 am, Sunday School

10:45 am & 6 pm, Worship

Wed. 6 pm, Bible Study

Coke County

Pecan Baptist

PO Box 542 • 12 miles West of

Robert Lee on Sterling City Hwy

(325) 453-2065, Bill Hood, Pastor

www.pecanbaptistchurchrl.com

Sun. 10 am, Sunday School

11 am & 7 pm, Worship

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