



# International Left-Handers Day

# FRIDAY AUGUST 13

**INSIDE: |Lady Elks, Lady Spartans to open volleyball season this week | Page 1-2B**

In honor of International Left-Handers Day, this is a special edition of the Burleson Star saluting all those who are in their right mind, and use their left hand. Extra copies of this special issue can be found at the Burleson Star office.

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# Burleson Star



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## The right left way to do business

CANDISE MONTEMAYOR/BURLESON STAR

Teresa Nelson points with her left hand to photos on the wall of her business in Everman, Teresa's Treasures Gourmet Baskets and Gifts. The company serves clients in 35 states and seven countries, winning numerous awards locally and national for both business and design.

### Businesswoman turns tragedy into inspiration for others

By CANDISE MONTEMAYOR reporter@thestargroup.com

Teresa Nelson is a master of adversity.

She has shared the gift and challenge of being left-handed with her mother and grandmother all her life. But being left-handed is the least of the obstacles Teresa has conquered to become the successful businesswoman in Tarrant County and Burleson that she is today.

Early on in life, Nelson was headed for success. A straight 'A' student with a photographic memory, she graduated high school at 16, as valedictorian. She attended Texas Wesleyan University, studying for a degree in economics and fiancé, and

worked her first job at the Burleson Walmart pharmacy. This bright-eyed go-getter decided she wanted to meet the famous Sam Walton, founder of Walmart. She made a call to the headquarters.

"I told the secretary I'd like a meeting with Mr. Walton," Nelson said. "The secretary was nice but laughed, as did my friends and family."

She asked the secretary to please try and schedule her a five-minute appointment and gave a date for her arrival.

Nelson went to the headquarters with her mother, and told the secretary, "Here I am, and I will be here until 5 p.m. if you can get me in." They sat for two hours and then, remarkably, were called to walk

down the executive row. Sitting in chairs outside of Walton's office, Nelson's mother asked her, "So what do you want to talk to him about?"

"I told her I don't know, and she bust out laughing," Nelson recalls.

The five-minute conversation with Walton turned into 45 minutes, as he canceled appointments, took her to meet other executives and created her a position in the company's treasury on the spot, that would wait for her until she finished school.

Nelson was indeed on her way in life — until a semi-boobal truck ran a stop sign in a gruesome collision that nearly took her life.

"They told my parents had I gone two inches to the right I would have been decapitated," Nelson said.

Arriving at Harris Methodist Hospital with severe injuries of every description, it took 14 people working frantically to save her.

"I lost nearly all of my memory, including my college education," Nelson said. "At 21 years old, I had to start all over. I had to color in coloring books to learn coordination."

Shaken like an Etch-a-Sketch, Nelson had become a blank slate and had to learn to speak, eat, and walk all over again.

She returned to her parent's home in Everman, where she spent months in a hospital bed when not enduring physical therapy.

The therapy was paying off and Nelson was gaining function. At her six-month follow up, the doctor did an

MRI.

"The MRI found an unrelated brain tumor," Nelson recalls.

The brain tumor they found in Nelson's skull was the size of a softball and attached to the brain stem.

"It was very dangerous and one of the largest they had ever seen," Nelson said. "I had never had any symptom and they said it had probably been growing there for 15 years."

Nelson wasn't strong enough to endure the needed surgery — she was still recovering from the auto accident — so they could only watch the progress and wait.

"The doctor said a line that became an epiphany for me," Nelson said. "The doctor said, 'Teresa, the accident that almost took your life actually saved it, because if you hadn't had the wreck we wouldn't have found the brain tumor.'"

One morning, Nelson woke up and was deaf in her left ear. They scheduled the surgery. The tumor had become aggressive and doubled in size. Nelson's 14-hour brain surgery included cutting the balance nerve, required many post-op surgeries and left Nelson with severe facial palsy.

Nelson, for the second time in her adult life, was learning how to speak, eat and talk — again.

"I couldn't close my right eye for more than two years and all we did was medical. That was my life," Nelson said.

Bettie Bailey, a family

## Man found dead in car at local park

By LUKE HARRIS burlesonstar@thestargroup.com

A Burleson resident was found dead in his car at Oak Valley Park Monday afternoon, according to a report from the Tarrant County Medical Examiner's office.

"Police and fire responded to Oak Valley North park, which is located in the 800 block of Parkridge, shortly after 1 p.m. on Monday, Aug. 9, to a report of a gunshot victim," according to city spokesperson Sally Ellertson. "The victim was found inside a vehicle."

Garry Prater, 55, was found dead of a gunshot wound. It appears to be a suicide, although the Tarrant County ME has not posted the manner or cause of death yet on its website.

## Tax Ratification Election approved

By CANDISE MONTEMAYOR reporter@thestargroup.com

It's official, a Tax Ratification Election will be held in Burleson.

When the recommendation was called for Monday night on whether the Burleson ISD School board should call a TRE, complete silence followed for several minutes.

BISD interim superintendent Richard Crummel spoke on previous discussions the board has had on what is legal and respon-

sible to do in the calling of a TRE.

Crummel listed items that would need to be considered in budget cuts to keep the district operating if a TRE does not pass.

Those include but are not limited to, athletics in seventh through 12th grade, all sports, programs being reduced or limited in some capacity, removal of fine arts in elementary, reductions in GT program, eliminating instruction coordinators, reduction of assistant principals, reductions in administration, possibility of eliminating summer school, possible half-day kindergarten, reductions in travel, utilities and transportation cost, cuts in nursing and library

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Crummel

## HEB, Chesapeake support local charity

By LUKE HARRIS burlesonstar@thestargroup.com

Harvest House is feeling the love from various organizations.

HEB may have not opened its doors in Burleson yet, but the company has already begun rooting itself into the community with an act of giving to Harvest House in Burleson.

The company held two job fairs during the last week in July and the second week in August at the

Burleson Recreation Center (BRiCK) for potential employees at the new store. At the job fair, the company showed off some of the products it is known for and are sold only in HEB stores.

"We wanted to introduce people to our products who may not be familiar with them," HEB community coordinator Kathryn Bosco said.

Two rooms were transformed at the BRiCK to look

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The biggest event in Johnson County is finally here. Find out more.

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### Local Weather

Wed 8/11	102/78	
Mainly sunny. Hot. Heat index near 110F. High 102F. Winds S at 5 to 10 mph.		
Thu 8/12	101/78	
Mostly sunny. Highs 99 to 103F and lows in the upper 70s.		
Fri 8/13	100/77	
Mostly sunny. Highs 98 to 102F and lows in the upper 70s.		
Sat 8/14	100/76	
Plenty of sun. Highs 98 to 102F and lows in the mid 70s.		
Sun 8/15	97/75	
Times of sun and clouds. Highs in the upper 90s and lows in the mid 70s.		

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# Around Burleson



CANDISE MONTEMAYOR/BURLESON STAR

Teresa Nelson is the CEO of Teresa's Treasures Gourmet Baskets and Gifts in Everman, and travels as an inspirational speaker sharing her unique life story.

## Gift

from PAGE 1A

friend, was visiting one day and asked Nelson if she could make some gifts for ladies to go in her retail shop in Burleson.

"I said do you know me? I've never done anything creative in my life," Nelson said laughing.

But she gave it a shot, and by Christmas, Nelson had 1,800 gift basket orders from shops around the Metroplex.

"I had a card table and a folding chair and that was it," Nelson said. "My husband and mother helped, and we had ribbon and gifts

all through the house, garage and even in the bathtub. They said to me, 'I think you have fallen into something here.'"

Fast forward 10 years, and Nelson is the CEO of Teresa's Treasures Gourmet Baskets and Gifts in Everman. Her business serves clients in 35 states and seven countries, and has filled orders for the White House and the governor's office.

"Walton had taught me the golden rule of business," Nelson says of her mentor. "Treat others the way you want to be treated, and nobody ever believes it, but it really is that simple."

Nelson's road of success, setbacks and success yet again

is seen by many as a story of strength, perseverance, and of fate.

"God changed my path, and that's OK," she said. It's all become—well it ain't brain surgery. If you can take that for the good, it's how you can push yourself forward and inspire others.

Giving hope to others is the reason Nelson believes she's made it through so many obstacles.

"If I can just help one

person make it through a bad day, help them hold on one more day, then I believe that is the reason for having gone through it all," she said.

When not running her business, or serving as chamber diplomat, Nelson is an inspirational speaker sharing her journey and message of perseverance with others. Watch the Burleson Star for listings of Nelson's local speaking engagements.

## Harvest

from PAGE 1A

like aisles in the grocery store. The aisles were filled with the company's products for the job fair, but they didn't return to an HEB store after the job fair.

Bosco, along with HEB grocery manager Bobby Olson and center store leader Brian Gardner, took the boxes of food, laundry detergent and baby products to Harvest House in Burleson Monday afternoon.

"We wanted to give back some of our products to [the Harvest House]," Bosco said before explaining how else the company plans to get involved with Harvest House after it opens its doors. "We are going to be volunteering and we have a team from public affairs that will come out and inspect the property and find out if [Harvest House] has the capacity to hold our products."

Harvest House executive director Alice Bleeker was thrilled with the donation.

"We are working on mov-

ing how we do food around to pre-packaged orders," she said. "We were looking on getting started with that and one thing we were out of was cereal. The food bank doesn't have any cereal now, so I was looking at having to buy a bunch of cereal and that is one of the things they donated. We were very excited about that."

Another need that was filled by the organization was the large amount of laundry detergent for the clients, Bleeker said.

"Our clients can really use that — it is a real blessing," she said.

Bleeker has her hands full with the organization's back-to-school event from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday at Kerr Middle School. While the organization was looking at having to do away with gift cards for clients to purchase new school uniforms this year because of the economy, Bleeker said.

That is when Chesapeake Energy stepped in and offered up a helping hand. If Harvest House could raise \$5,000, Chesapeake offered to match

the amount.

"We are not taking money just to be able to provide uniforms," Bleeker said. "We are also looking at school supplies."

The deadline for donations to be matched by Chesapeake is Friday. For more information, call 817-295-6252.



LUKE HARRIS/BURLESON STAR

HEB center store manager Brian Gardner, left, and grocery manager Bobby Olson unload a truck filled with products at Harvest House Monday afternoon. After it held a job fair at the Burleson Recreation Center, HEB donated some of its unique products to Harvest House in Burleson.



COURTESY PHOTO

## Pet of the week

Vincent is a 3-month-old red and white domestic short haired cat. He is very affectionate and would love to curl up in your arms and take a cat nap while you rub his chin. Vincent would do well with children or adults, and is waiting on you to come take him home. Contact the city of Burleson Animal Services, 1695 John Jones Drive in Burleson, or call 817-426-9280.

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