

# Perk Williams to be remembered at festival

## Fiddler-singer Paul Schlesinger to perform

This Saturday, Oct. 25, the Chriesman community will come together to remember its best known musician -- "Perk" Williams.

Beginning at 3 p.m., the community will host the annual "Perk" Williams Music Festival, featuring Paul Schlesinger and his Perk Williams Tribute Band performing many of Williams' songs, including his biggest hit, "Release Me," a top five record in 1953.

Schlesinger is a fiddle player and vocalist from Taylor. He describes his style of music as "a blending of Texas swing and honky tonk, molded by the unique playing styles of the professional post-war musicians who grew out of Central Texas."

Williams was the fiddler and vocalist for Jimmy Heap and the Melody Masters from 1949-57, a band from Schlesinger's hometown of Taylor.

Schlesinger befriended Williams in 1992, and

in 1993, Williams gave Schlesinger his first fiddle lesson, teaching him "Faded Love" and a few other songs.

Schlesinger recalled first meeting Williams: "I met Perk in the summer of 1992. A German record company named Bear Family Records had just released a CD compiling over 30 songs Jimmy Heap and the Melody Masters had recorded between 1951 and 1955."

"I was fascinated by the music and the history of the Melody Masters, primarily because they were from my hometown of Taylor and had such a significant impact and influence on country music."

"I had obtained a copy of the CD and set out to collect autographs on the accompanying CD booklet of all the living band members who had made those recordings."

"I found out where he (Williams) lived and drove up to his tiny house in Chriesman."

"Not really knowing



**DON COOK AND Bessie Sefcik display this Perk Williams memorabilia at the Chriesman Citizens Center. The Perk Williams Festival will be held this Saturday, Oct. 25. -- Tribune photo by Roy Sanders**

what to expect, I knocked on the front door, and a voice on the other side hollered, 'Come in!' I walked into to the darkened living room, and Perk, complete with a straw cowboy hat and western style clothing, was sitting in a chair next to a wood burning stove. He had a pair of scissors in his hand, and he was busily clipping the filters off of a bunch of cigarettes before stuffing them back into the pack. An Igloo ice chest was on the floor next to him, filled with opened packs of de-filtered cigarettes."

"I told Perk my name and why I had come, holding up a copy of the CD. Speaking in a very raspy-graveled voice, he quickly confirmed that he was the one who made the song 'Release Me' into the hit it had become."

"I showed him the CD and read him all the song titles. He responded to each with either a 'yeah' or 'nuh-uh' -- depending on if he remembered the song."

"He then said, 'Sit down and tell me about yourself!' He had a small cot in the middle of the room. It was very evident that he lived and slept in the front room of his house. Since the cot was the only place that allowed me to sit and face him, I planted myself down on it."

"During our conversation, I glanced around the room. Pictures of all phases of Perk's life were tacked onto each and every wall. Some, like his official portrait from the recording days were framed, most were not."

"He pointed out the most significant pictures, which included his kids, a photo of a Houston Fat Stock Show fiddle contest and his recent cancer radiation treatments."

"Perk was suffering from mouth cancer. Though he had an operation to remove the tumor a year or two before, the cancer had spread and it was terminal."

"I learned that Perk didn't have any of his records. He had given them away a long time ago to anyone who wanted them. He definitely wanted a copy of the CD. I made a promise to get one and bring it to him."

"Perk's house was right across the road from the railroad track, and about every 20 minutes or so the BNSF would come blasting by interrupting the conversation."

"We became friends, and that episode became the first of many visits until he passed away in early 1994."

"Subsequent visits led to fishing trips, backyard barbecues, trips to visit old friends and bars, like Nat's Place in Milano, where the proprietors quickly found a copy of the Jimmy Heap



**PAUL SCHLESINGER, will be featured at the Perk Williams Music Festival on Saturday. -- Photo courtesy of the Austin Music Journal.**

CD and put it on their jukebox."

"For Christmas of 1992, my mother gave me a fiddle that she bought from some friends because she knew how fascinated I was about the legendary musician."

"Perk showed me how to tighten the bow hair and hold the fiddle under my chin. He began my first lesson with Bob Wills' 'Faded Love,' teaching it to me one note at a time. He explained that 'Release Me' would come later, but, unfortunately, he got to a point where he was too weak to have any interest in playing the fiddle."

"I became a rabid fiddle fan and made it a point to sit down every night at home with Perk's old records, trying to duplicate the sounds he made and the songs he played."

In 2002, Schlesinger showed off his duplication of the sounds by performing at the Perk Williams Music Festival, where he and his "Perk Williams tribute band" have been performing the last Saturday in October every year since.

Schlesinger recorded a CD with Bill Dowdy in 2005 called "Our Way," featuring fiddle and guitar instrumentals. He has also appeared on Joe Boyd Reynolds' CD, *O! Cowboy* and on *More Very Eclectic Country Folk* by Caldwell's own Gable Mateck.

Schlesinger and his band will take the stage at 6:30 p.m.

RIMSHOT will also perform at the festival from 3-5 p.m.

The festival will also include a barbecue meal and a cake auction and raffle.

The annual cake auction will begin at 5:30 p.m., and the raffle will begin around 9:30 p.m. Raffle entrants do not have to be present to win.

This year's prizes include \$500 cash, a 92 inch handmade quilt, a handmade afghan, a 100 quart ice chest and a \$100 Walmart shopping card.

Tickets are available at the door.

Doors will open at 2 p.m. with the music starting at 3 p.m.

Thank you to  
**Citizens State Bank**  
for buying my  
pen of rabbits at the  
Burleson County Fair.



*Harlee Taylor*

Thank you  
**Zodiac Enterprises**  
and **Jon Larch**  
for buying my rabbits at the  
2014 Burleson County Fair.



*~ Victoria Huskey ~*

Thank you  
**Mrs. Carol Whitten**  
for buying my goat.  
That made me real happy.  
Thank you for  
helping me.



*~ Luke Jakubik ~*

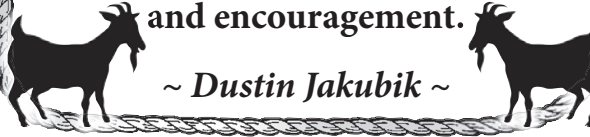
Thank you to  
**Don and Jeri Haisler**  
for buying my  
pen of rabbits at the  
Burleson County Fair.



*Alaric Taylor*

Thank you  
**D.L. Groce**  
for purchasing my goat at the fair.

I appreciate your support  
and encouragement.




*~ Dustin Jakubik ~*

THANK YOU  
**JASON WENDLER**  
for purchasing my Grand Champion  
pen of Commercial Heifers.

Thank you to:

- John and Donna Malazzo Grand Champion Buckle
- Capital Farm Credit Grand Champion Premium Money
- Caldwell Livestock Commission Braford Division Champion Premium Money
- Burleson County Fair Association 1st place Braford Premium Money



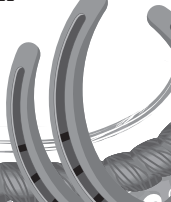
THANK YOU  
**Citizens State Bank**  
for purchasing my 6th place Market Goat.

Thank you to:

- Anadarko Petroleum Co. 6th Place Market Goat Premium Money
- CDI Energy 7th Place Market Goat Premium Money

I would also like to thank all the volunteers and supporters of the Burleson County Fair Association.


**-Cade Scarmardo-**



A Special Thank you to  
**Ray Wolf of John Crane**  
for your support and  
purchasing my pig at the  
2014 Burleson County fair.

Also, thank you to  
**Uncle John Muzny, C&H Welding,  
and Small Farm Innovations**  
for being great supporters and  
bidding on my pig.

*~ Emily Jennings ~*



A Special  
Thank you to  
**Popsie (Jim Muzny)**  
for your support and purchasing  
my commercial heifers at the  
2014 Burleson County fair.

Also, thank you to  
**DWZ Welding,**  
for being great supporters and  
bidding on my commercial heifers.

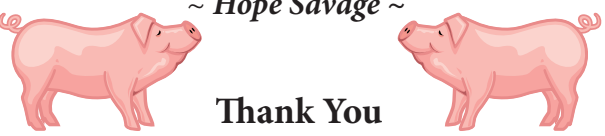
*~ LeAnn Jennings ~*

Thank You  
**VICTOR MENDEZ**  
for purchasing my swine project at  
the 2014 Burleson County Fair.

Thank You  
**SPJST DISTRICT 1**  
for sponsoring the  
4th place premium money  
for my 4th place market swine.

Also, Thank you to  
**NEI, Inc.  
Donald Haisler (Poppy)  
C & J Welding**  
for bidding on my project.

*~ Hope Savage ~*



Thank You  
**JACK & SANDRA MCKEMIE  
&  
DON HAISLER (POPPY)**  
for purchasing my 2014 swine project.

*~ Grace Savage ~*

We would also like to thank all the volunteers who work at the fair. These volunteers spend all year preparing for the fair so that the youth of Burleson County can have a successful show.



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## Election day approaches

### Voters to cast ballots in two contested local races

Burleson County's voters will go to the polls on Tuesday, Nov. 4, to help elect a new governor, decide the fate of state Proposition 1 and a Somerville ISD bond issue, elect a county treasurer and a new Caldwell school board member.

Polls open at 7 a.m. and close at 7 p.m.

This will be the first open election for governor since 1990. Incumbent Republican Governor Rick Perry, who has served in the office since Dec. 21, 2000, is not running for a fourth full term

as governor.

The election will take place between nominees who were selected in the March primaries: State Attorney General Greg Abbott (R) and State Senator Wendy Davis (D). The ballot will also feature Libertarian Party candidate Kathie Glass and Green Party candidate Brandon Parmer.

Also on the state's ballot is an amendment related to transportation and appears as Proposition 1.

Proposition 1 provides for the use and dedication of certain money

transferred to the state highway fund to assist in the completion of transportation construction, maintenance and rehabilitation projects, not to include toll roads.

In Burleson County, county treasurer Beth Andrews Bills (D), incumbent, is running against Ken Prestenbach (R). This is the only contested race in the county.

The Somerville School Board has asked Somerville residents to vote on a \$12.5 million bond issue.

The proposition is to

fund a new elementary school, renovations to the high school, a new cafeteria and a new parking area for the high school and elementary school staff.

Caldwell ISD will also elect a new school board member during the election. The race will include candidates Chris Luttrell and Chester Canady.

Paula Bartnesky, Burleson County elections administrator, said a photo ID is required to vote.

See ELECTION, page 2A



PAULA BARTNESKY, Burleson County elections administrator, prepares for the Nov. 4 elections. -- Tribune photo by Roy Sanders

## Fire scorches 15 acres of land

Cooks Point and Caldwell firefighters on Monday, Oct. 27, put out a 15-17 acre grass fire on F.M. 1362 North that destroyed a large amount of just cut hay.

Larry Odstrcil from the Cooks Point Volunteer Fire Department said the landowner was baling hay and a hot bearing from his round baler caught his hay and baler on fire.

Odstrcil said the owner was able to unhook his tractor from the baler before his tractor caught fire.

The wind was gusting up to 20 mph to quickly move the fire, and the area contained a lot of dead trees, Odstrcil said.

Odstrcil said the fire spread through the woods and into a neighbor's pasture.

Cooks Point and

Caldwell were dispatched to the scene at about 3 p.m. and remained there until around 10 p.m., Odstrcil said.

The fire was under control about 6 p.m., but the firefighters had to pull hay bales apart and fully extinguish the embers, which is a lot of hand work, Odstrcil said.

Odstrcil said the baler was a total loss, and the owner lost the mostly un-baled hay in his pasture, about 6-7 acres. Also, the neighbor lost four to five bales of hay.

Cooks Point brought a tanker, three brush trucks, and seven fire fighters, and Caldwell brought two brush trucks and five fire fighters, Odstrcil said.

Odstrcil said they used about 4,500 gallons of water before the fire was extinguished.

## Artists to display work at Art Trail

### Seven stops from Chriesman to Bellville

Arts at The Lake will hold the Highway 36 Grand Art Trail this weekend in multiple locations along State Highway 36, showcasing a variety of unique, local artists.

The art trail will be from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 1, through Sunday, Nov. 2, in locations from Chriesman to Bellville.

The seven stops on the trail include the Bottle House in Chriesman, the Caldwell Civic Center, the Yegua Center in Somerville, the Tin Star Studio in Somerville, Bluebonnet Pottery south of Somerville, the Downtown Art Gallery in Brenham and the Holland Street Gallery in



STEVE TODDEE WORKS this pottery with his wife Bonnie last week at their pottery shop near Lake Somerville. Their work will be featured at the Art Trail. -- Tribune photo by Roy Sanders

Bellville.

The Bottle House in Chriesman is a unique display, using empty wine bottles as the main medium for a

house.

The Caldwell Civic Center will display jewelry by Joan Baker, bronze sculpture by Clover Cochran,

photography by Peggy Gaskamp, pastel paintings by Cynthia Hanks, mixed media art by Marilyn Lowry  
See ART, page 4A

## Scare on the Square planned

The Burleson County Chamber of Commerce is gearing up for its annual "Scare on the Square" on Friday, Oct. 31, in downtown Caldwell.

Already lining the courthouse square are scarecrow displays created by various businesses, civic groups, churches and schools -- all competing for prizes. The winners will be announced at Friday's event.

The scarecrows will remain on display until Nov. 9.

See SCARE, page 2A



THIS SCARECROW DISPLAY is part of the Burleson County Chamber of Commerce's "Scare on the Square." Scarecrows from various groups will remain on display until Nov. 9. -- Tribune photo by Roy Sanders

## Some residents oppose water deal

The San Antonio City Council will consider final approval on Thursday, Oct. 30, of an agreement that would ship 50,000 acre feet of groundwater annually from Burleson County to San Antonio by 2020.

While some have touted the benefits for San Antonio residents and some Burleson County landowners who have leased their land for the project, some area residents remained concerned about whether

the export will overpump the area's groundwater supply.

And they doubt the  
See WATER, page 9A

## City OKs funds for airport

The Caldwell City Council on Oct. 21, approved amendments to the 2014-15 budget to allow TxDOT required, upfront payments for design and construction for upcoming airport improvements.

See COUNCIL, page 11B



PAUL SCHLESINGER fiddles behind his back on Saturday, Oct. 25, at the annual Perk Williams Festival in Chriesman.

## Dr. Smith honored with clinic plaque

Dr. Joe Smith has seen plenty of changes in health care in Burleson County.

There are certainly more options and services provided now.

And Smith was clearly one of the trailblazers who made it all happen. So the Burleson County Hospital District's board of directors wanted to do something special to recognize him.

Last Tuesday, Oct. 21, they formally dedicated a plaque in his honor at the Health Point Clinic next to Burleson St. Joseph Health Center in Caldwell. The plaque refers to the clinic as



DR. JOE SMITH

the Joe C. Smith Building.

The plaque states that Smith practiced in Caldwell from 1953 to  
See SMITH, page 3A

## Caldwell trustees OK safety measure

The Caldwell School Board on Monday, Oct. 27, approved using a flip chart for staff members in various emergency situations, with the assurance that comprehensive staff training will be provided.

The flip chart was part of \$6,393 in budget amendments for a classroom safety feature, as explained by Dr. Tim Cuff, Caldwell superintendent.

The flip chart that listed criteria for staff members on various emergencies drew criticism from board member Janet Carrigan, who said it would be

useless in a live shooting situation when quick reaction is everything.

See CISD, page 7B

## Snook eyes rate increases

The Snook City Council, on Monday, Oct. 27, proposed increasing the water and sewer rates for the City of Snook in 2015.

Tammi Bryan, Snook city secretary, said the proposed water rate is \$25 for the first 4,000  
See SNOOK, page 12A

