

# The Bedford Citizen

THE NEWS YOU NEED TO GUIDE YOUR CITY

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## OPINIONS AND EDITORIALS

### EDITORIAL: THE TAX RATE AND THE VISION

By Stu Updike

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Should we continue trying to squeeze every last cent out of our budget, or spend wisely on developing a new vision for Bedford?

On Sept. 10, we ran a Letter to the Editor from Mary Hartwell in which she lamented that there seems to be no guiding vision for our City. This prompted me to ask our readers for their vision.

On Sept. 17, we ran a Letter to the Editor from John Hogg in which he opined that Bedford's taxes are too high and that, "The City Council should continue to examine every aspect of the City operation in an effort to reduce these high taxes."

It was not until I read Hank Henning's Letter to the Editor while preparing our Sept. 20 issue that I realized that the two previous letters actually identified two facets of the same conundrum: should we continue trying to squeeze every last cent out of our budget, or spend wisely on developing a new vision for Bedford?

As we work to develop a new vision, we must remember that comparing Bedford to Grapevine is as unrealistic as comparing Bedford to Dallas. As Mr. Henning pointed out in his Letter to the Editor, Grapevine has sales tax from all of the terminals and three hotels on DFW, Grapevine Mills Mall, Gaylord Texan and all of the downtown

businesses. Hurst has Northeast Mall, and Euless has revenue from DFW airport and its rental car center. Bedford has no such revenue source to lighten our tax load.

On our 2006 tax statements there is a line which reads, "Additional city sales tax reduced your city ad valorem tax by ... " When I asked the Tarrant County Tax Assessor's Office how that number is derived, I was told that the estimated total 2006 sales tax revenue dedicated to property tax reduction is divided by the total of all the property valuations to arrive at a factor which is then multiplied by each person's property valuation. Mr. Hogg came up with \$0.0790 per \$100 valuation, and the figure I came up with was nearly the same.

What Mr. Hogg's explanation does not take into consideration, though, is that Bedford's shoppers include not only our homeowners but also the people who rent living quarters in town as well as the many people who shop here but live elsewhere. *Each person who shopped in Bedford contributed to the total amount by which our ad valorem taxes were reduced.*

For that reason, I cannot accept Mr. Hogg's assertion that he is paying an additional \$0.0790 in taxes per \$100 of valuation. In fact, if Mr. Hogg had made up his mind not to shop in Bedford at all for the entire year, his tax statement would not have changed because it was not reporting how much *he* paid in sales taxes. It was reporting what portion of the sales taxes that everyone paid was allocated to his property and *that* number would not have changed because he did not shop in Bedford, assuming the estimated sales tax did not change.

Mr. Hogg certainly is correct that we are not enjoying the General Homestead Exemption here in Bedford, but that is understandable in light of the fact that Bedford does not have any big sales tax generators.

Since there is such a huge disparity among the cities in terms of revenue generated, the question we should be asking is not whether our taxes are too high, but rather, how do our per capita expenses compare with the other cities?

Like you, I don't want to pay any more in taxes than I have to, but I am willing to support with my tax dollars a well thought-out vision for revitalizing our city. Until we do so, we continue to lose businesses which results in decreased revenue which, in turn, prompts increased property taxes.

It is important to keep our productivity high and our costs in line, but we cannot generate revenue by cutting taxes.

It's like Desert Pete said, "You've gotta prime the pump ... "

*Editor's note: To read the letters mentioned above, please visit BedfordCitizen.com and click on View Back Issues.*

## CITY OF BEDFORD'S UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS

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### Artoberfest

This two-day festival features art, music and children's activities. King Creole (Pop Top 40), Sidemen (Blues), Stoney Larue and Josh Gracin (Country) will perform Saturday, and Johnny Reno (Swing Dance), Me and my Monkey (Beatles

Cover Band), Everlife (Radio Disney) and Three Dog Night (60's Band) will perform Sunday. Hip Pocket Theater Puppet Shows, InflataFUN and D&D Rockin' Rods add to the fun. General Admission is \$5/person (kids under 5 admitted free). For online ticket purchase, go to: <https://tix.extremetix.com/tix/SilverStream/Pages/pgIndex.html?siteID=1574>. There will be a \$10 charge for on-site parking and a \$15 fee of an InflataFUN wristband. For more information, visit:

[www.bedfordartoberfest.com](http://www.bedfordartoberfest.com).

Saturday-Sunday, OCT. 6-7

### Living with Low Vision Fair

October is Blind Awareness Month. The Bedford Public Library is partnering with various sponsors to provide a special event to increase public awareness of the resources available to persons with low vision, failing vision and no vision. Goals of the Living with Low Vision Fair are to:

- ◆ Demonstrate assistive technologies that can improve quality of life
- ◆ Promote resources and organizations that offer help to individuals with low vision
- ◆ Educate employees and employers about programs designed to help with job training and job technology

The event will take place in the Bonnie Finn Room of the library. Sponsors include Books on Tape – Random House, Easter Seals – Disability Services, National Federation for the Blind, Prevent Blindness Texas, Reading and Radio Resource, and the Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services. The program is

free and open to the public. For more information, contact Cher'e Bradford or Maria Redburn at 817/952-2330 or [mredburn@ci.bedford.tx.us](mailto:mredburn@ci.bedford.tx.us) .  
Saturday OCT. 13, 2-4 p.m.

### **Mammogram Screenings at the Library**

The Bedford Public Library and the UT Southwestern Center for Breast Care Mobile Mammography Program have joined efforts so that women may have their annual mammogram in a mobile unit at the library. Insurance information and the name of the woman's primary care physician must be provided during the required pre-registration by phone. Some grants are available. For more information, visit:  
<http://www.eventkeeper.com/code/events.cfm?curOrg=BEDFORD> or contact Jeanne Green at 817/952-2370  
or [jgreen@ci.bedford.tx.us](mailto:jgreen@ci.bedford.tx.us).  
Friday OCT. 19, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

### **Bedford Fire Prevention Month Open House**

In recognition of National Fire Prevention Week and Bedford Fire Prevention Month, the public's invited to an Open House at the Central Fire Station on Bedford Road. Bedford firefighters will provide tours of the newly remodeled fire station and show off the fire engines and ambulances. Visitors can get a glimpse of what it's like to be a firefighter, by wearing actual firefighter gear and spraying a genuine fire hose. In the Fire Safety House they'll learn how to escape danger. The Bedford F.A.L.S.E. Alarm (Fire and Life Safety Education) Clown Troupe will provide fire safety and prevention tips for children. For more

information call the Fire Department at 817-952-2500, visit [www.bedfordfire.net](http://www.bedfordfire.net) or send an email to:  
[sphillips@ci.bedford.tx.us](mailto:sphillips@ci.bedford.tx.us).  
Saturday OCT. 20, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

### **First-Ever Paper Shredding Event In Bedford**

The Bedford Beautification Commission will sponsor a Paper Shredding event, conducted by Brink's Document Destruction, for private residences only. Proof of residence required. Residents may bring up to three boxes (any size) of paper documents to be shredded. Paperclipped and stapled documents will be accepted. The free event is scheduled for Meadow Park Athletic Complex.  
Saturday OCT. 27, 8 a.m.-noon

### **Halloween Fest 2007**

One canned good per person or a donation to the Tarrant County Food Bank will get you into this year's Halloween Fest at the Boys Ranch Activity Center. The event, especially planned for children 12 and under, will include face-painting, bounce houses, carnival games, slime-making, arts and crafts and trick-or-treat candy stations. Concessions will be available, also. For more information call 817/952-2323.  
Saturday OCT. 27, 6-9 p.m.

### **Halloween Blood Drive at the Library**

Call 817/852-2342 to schedule an appointment, or stop by the library's parking lot while the Carter BloodCare Mobile Unit is parked there.  
Wednesday, OCT. 31, 8 a.m.-3 p.m.

## UPCOMING BEDFORD ACTIVITIES

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### Basic Computer Class

Library, FREE, 817/952-2373  
Monday Oct. 1, 8:30-9:30 a.m.

### Internet Searching Class

Library, FREE, 817/952-2373  
Tuesday Oct. 2, 8:30-9:30 a.m.

### Sprouts Story Time for the active child

Library, FREE, 817/952-2370  
Tuesday Oct. 2, 10-10:20 a.m.

### Story Book Club Story Time for the child who's ready to sit and listen

Library, FREE, 817/952-2370  
Tuesday Oct. 2, 11-11:20 a.m.

### Deadline to Sign Up to Speak at the Oct.

9 City Council Meeting  
Wednesday Oct. 3, noon

### Teen Court Advisory Board Meeting

Library, Open to Public, 817/952-2300  
Thursday Oct. 4, 5:30 p.m.

### Parks & Recreation Board Meeting

City Hall, Open to public, 817/952-2300  
Thursday Oct. 4, 7 p.m.

### Basic Computer Class

Library, FREE, 817/952-2373  
Monday, Oct. 8, 8:30-9:30 a.m.

### Internet Searching Class

Library, FREE, 817/952-2373  
Tuesday, Oct. 9, 8:30-9:30 a.m.

### Sprouts Story Time for the active child

Library, FREE, 817/952-2370  
Tuesday Oct. 9, 10-10:20 a.m.

### Story Book Club Story Time for the child who's ready to sit and listen

Library, FREE, 817/952-2370  
Tuesday Oct. 9, 11-11:20 a.m.

### City Council Meeting

City Hall, Open to Public, 817/952-2101  
Tuesday Oct. 9, 7 p.m.

### Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting

City Hall, Open to public, 817/952-2125  
Thursday Oct. 11, 7 p.m. Regular Session,  
work session precedes

Unless otherwise noted, find more  
information at these sites:

Bedford Public Library activities  
<http://www.eventkeeper.com/code/events.cfm?curOrg=BEDFORD>

Boys Ranch Activities Center activities  
[http://www.ci.bedford.tx.us/Departments/parks\\_recreation/recreation.htm](http://www.ci.bedford.tx.us/Departments/parks_recreation/recreation.htm)

Old Bedford School activities  
<http://www.oldbedfordschool.com/index.htm>

Senior Center activities  
[http://www.ci.bedford.tx.us/Departments/general\\_government/sc\\_calendar.htm](http://www.ci.bedford.tx.us/Departments/general_government/sc_calendar.htm)