

# The Burton Bulletin

*"The Best Kept Secret in Texas"*

October 2025

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## Happy Halloween

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### History of Halloween

The tradition of Halloween originated with the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain that was celebrated on the evening of October 31<sup>st</sup> and ended on November 1<sup>st</sup>. It marked the end of the harvest and the onset of winter. It was believed to be a time when the boundary between the living and the spirit world is thinnest and that the spirits of dead would roam the earth. Bonfires were lit to protect people and livestock and to purify the community. People would wear costumes to ward off ghosts. Communities would gather for feasts, sharing food and leaving offerings for spirits. The use nuts and apple were used to predict the future. This practice was believed to ensure a good harvest for the following year. During the 8<sup>th</sup> century, Pope Gregory III designated November 1 as All Saints' Day and October 31 became All Hallows Eve, which later turned into Halloween.

The Burton Bulletin is a monthly publication  
for the Burton Texas area.

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The opinions, statements and advertisements made by others do not necessarily reflect the views of the Burton Bulletin.



**COME JOIN US FOR  
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**October 4, 2025 2pm to 7pm**

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***BRING YOUR LAWN CHAIRS!!!***

**(Rain Date October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025)**

**Proceeds go to the Burton Beautification Association  
For Burton Beautification Projects**

## ECONOMIC STABILITY

Susie's comments in last month's Bulletin prompted me to think, which led to some research, and ultimately to my writing this summary. The first and foremost element of sustaining our beautiful city in these times is, as expected, economic. Attracting the small businesses that support the quality of life for our citizens, and serve us all by providing a stable cash flow to maintain the functions of the community. As Susie pointed out, we are a small local base supporting a handful of "Mom & Pop" stores, which serve as the backbone of our community.

Developing economic stability in a small, rural city like Burton, Texas, involves strategies tailored to local strengths, challenges, and opportunities. We can incorporate adjustments so we can retain the uniquely beautiful nature of our community. Here are some key steps to help foster long-term stability:

### 1. Promote diverse Local Entrepreneurship.

- Support small businesses through low-interest loans, grants, and technical assistance.
- Encourage business incubators or co-working spaces that nurture startups and innovation.

### 2. Diversify the Local Economy

- Attract new sectors (e.g., light manufacturing, renewable energy, local food production, or agritourism) to reduce reliance on a single industry like agriculture or oil. Restaurants and antiques are a start, but the future requires more. We need to address technology, food production, medical care, and craftsmanship.

- Identify and promote unique local assets—such as cultural heritage, natural landscapes, or historic sites—to boost tourism. The Cotton Gin, RR Station, and the great job done by these folks in promoting monthly community activities is excellent, and we need more.

### 3. Invest in Workforce Development

- Partner with local schools, community colleges, and industry to provide relevant training, apprenticeships, and job placement services. AI can be a huge force multiplier for educating and enhancing the lives of our community.

- Promote workmanship skills, digital skills and trade skills that can lead to new businesses, remote work, or higher-paying jobs.

### 4. Improve Infrastructure

- Upgrade broadband internet, roads, and utilities to attract new business and facilitate remote work.
- Seek state and federal grants aimed at rural infrastructure improvements.

### 5. Leverage Public-Private Partnerships (P3)

- Work with local organizations, private investors, and non-profits to develop community projects, such as housing, health clinics, or business parks.

- Develop corporate relationships to partner in infrastructure and economic development.

- Encourage collaboration with regional economic development agencies for large-scale initiatives.

### 6. Enhance Quality of Life

- Invest in parks, recreation, cultural events, and safety to make the city attractive for residents and newcomers.

- Support affordable housing and health care initiatives.

### 7. Market the Community

- Develop a clear brand identity and promote the city as a destination for business, recreation, and living. Use digital marketing and local ambassadors.

- Burton's place in history, and the folks here whose families go back generation ARE the "Brand" for Burton. A rich and solid Brand that needs to be built upon. The Cotton Gin, under Stephanie's leadership, is an excellent model for "building the Brand".

### 8. Foster a Supportive Regulatory Environment

- Streamline business licensing and reduce ordinances and unnecessary regulations to make it easier for entrepreneurs to set up shop.

### 9. Capitalize on Agriculture and Local Products

- Support farmers markets and cooperatives. Encourage value-added agriculture (like cheese, preserves, or crafts) to keep more money local.

### 10. Plan for the Long Term

- Develop a working "Comprehensive Plan" (the City has a Plan created in 2000 that has significant value). Engage stakeholders in developing a realistic, actionable economic development plan and update it regularly to respond to changing circumstances.

By combining these approaches, a small rural city can build resilience, attract investment, and provide a stable foundation for future generations.

## CITY GOVERNMENT

Burton is small, and should be simple and efficient, but there is always opportunity to reducing the cost of city government requires a multifaceted strategy focused on efficiency, accountability, and prioritizing essential services. Here is a detailed breakdown from a MPA text that I believe is appropriate overall, and could be scaled to help here in Burton:

### 1. Performance Audits and Efficiency Reviews

- Regularly review all departments and programs to eliminate redundancy, streamline workflows, and identify underperforming initiatives.

- Implement best practices from other municipalities with similar challenges.

### 2. Modernize Technology and Infrastructure

- Upgrade to digital records, cloud computing, and automation tools to minimize paperwork and manual processing.

- Use data analytics to optimize municipal services, such as traffic management or waste collection routes.

**Continue on Page 4**



# BANKING THROUGH THE *Decades* -

HERE YESTERDAY.  
HERE TODAY.  
HERE TOMORROW.



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**(Continue from page 3 – Economic Stability)**

**3. Personnel Management**

- Introduce flexible work arrangements and leverage part-time or contract roles for non-essential tasks.
- Cross-train employees to handle multiple responsibilities, reducing the need for surplus staff.

**4. Shared Services and Public-Private Partnerships (PPP or P3)**

- Collaborate with neighboring municipalities to share services like IT, waste management, emergency services, or procurement.
- Explore PPPs for maintenance projects, infrastructure development, or community events.

**5. Energy Efficiency and Green Initiatives**

- Invest in energy-efficient lighting, heating/cooling, and fleet vehicles to ensure long-term savings.
- Encourage remote work and virtual meetings to reduce facility costs.

**6. Procurement and Contract Management**

- Review procurement processes to ensure competitive bidding, thereby reducing costs of goods and services.
- Negotiate long-term contracts for commonly used supplies.

**7. Transparent Budgeting and Citizen Engagement**

- Adopt transparent, participatory budgeting so that resources flow to programs with the most public support.
- Review user fees and charges to ensure they reflect actual costs and are fairly applied.

**8. Outsource Non-Core Services**

- Consider outsourcing functions like facility management, some IT tasks, or fleet maintenance to specialized firms if cost-effective.

**9. Utilize Grants and Alternative Funding**

- Maximize the use of federal, state, and private grants for capital projects and innovation.

**10. Monitor and Eliminate Waste**

- Foster a culture of continuous improvement where suggestions for cutting waste and improving efficiency are welcomed.

We must get stable economically so we can maintain the character and nature of our little city. By combining these tactics, city governments can maintain or even improve service quality while reducing operational expenses.

**Article Submitted by Pete Horn**

### *Burton Bulletin Advertising Rates*

<u>Size</u>	<u>Prices</u>
<b>Business Card</b>	\$ 9 per month or \$ 90 a year
<b>Half Page</b>	\$14 per month or \$140 a year
<b>Full Page</b>	\$22 per month or \$220 a year
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<a href="http://www.burtonbulletin.com">www.burtonbulletin.com</a>	<a href="mailto:editor@burtonbulletin.com">editor@burtonbulletin.com</a>

Listen and Silent have the same letters – Coincidence?

Most computer issues are caused by a faulty connection between the chair and the keyboard.

### **Economic Stability with Minimum Start-Up Risk**

With all the discussion of creating a stable economy in rural Texas I started researching the small-scale ventures that require minimal start-up costs, use local resources, have a low environmental impact, and create steady income streams. They often support local communities by providing employment opportunities, preserving cultural traditions, and promoting economic stability. These businesses are usually easy to start with limited funds, and they thrive by being resourceful, adaptable, and community-focused. What struck me immediately was how many of these enterprises are already in operation here in Burton. The need is to scale it to a sustainable size and structure so that it not only survives, but thrives. We have a nice Farmer's Market here once a month, several beekeepers, folks with chickens, and talented artisans. We also have meat processing and cattle (which have too high an entry point and risk to be listed). There is no end to the options, but in the Southern USA, the following were deemed best Return on Investment, designed to require minimal investment, often less than \$2,000 to start, and use local resources. Many are easily scalable and can help diversify and strengthen rural economies while remaining environmentally benign:

1. **Farmers' Market Stall** – Sell your own or neighbors' surplus produce, baked goods, or preserves at local markets. Start-up is as simple as a tent, table, and signage.
2. **Beekeeping (Honey Production)** – A few beehives in your backyard can yield honey and beeswax for local sale. Training and starter kits are affordable.
3. **Handmade Soaps & Skincare** – Use natural, local ingredients to make soaps, lotions, or lip balms. Sell at markets or online; equipment and supplies are inexpensive.
4. **Egg or Small-Scale Poultry Farming** – Begin with backyard chickens for eggs and meat, catering to local consumers interested in organic options.
5. **Crafts and Artisanal Goods** – Make pottery, woodwork, jewelry, or knitted goods with resources you can gather or recycle locally.
6. **Herb or Medicinal Plant Sales** – Grow basil, lavender, mint, or traditional medicinal plants and sell them fresh, dried, or as seedlings.
7. **Mushroom Farming** – Use a shaded shed or basement to grow gourmet mushrooms like oyster or shiitake, which require little equipment and fetch high prices.
8. **Composting & Fertilizer Sales** – Create and sell compost or vermicompost (worm castings) from food and yard waste to gardeners.
9. **Small-Scale Dairy** – With one or two goats or cows, sell fresh milk, cheese, or yogurt to local families, B&Bs, or markets.
10. **Agri-Tourism Experiences** – Offer u-pick berries, orchard visits, or farm-based workshops for families, schools, or tourists.
11. **Flower Farming / Bouquets** – Cultivate cut flowers in a small plot for bouquets, weddings, and markets; seeds and tools are low-cost.
12. **Mobile Food Cart or Coffee Stand** – Using a small trailer or cart, serve local snacks or drinks at events, markets, or roadside spots.

13. **Rural Bed & Breakfast** – Convert spare rooms or empty land to host visitors seeking a rural getaway, using booking platforms for easy start-up.

14. **Online Tutoring or Digital Services** – Use your skills from home to find paying clients online. Utilize your knowledge to support homeschooling and supplementary education through the internet or in personal sessions.

15. **Freshwater Fish Farming (Aquaponics or Ponds)** – Raise tilapia or catfish on a small plot; sells to local restaurants or markets; low-tech starter systems are available.

16. **Seed or Seedling Sales** – Start seeds in trays and sell young plants to gardeners, especially heirloom or organic varieties.

17. **Microgreens** – Many ways to set this up to produce a high-nutrition, flavorful, and high-demand product in very little space, converting Organic Seed into a finished product in 8-10 days of planting, with one ounce of seed yielding 30-40 ounces of finished greens.

18. **Upcycled Furniture or Crafts** – Use reclaimed or discarded materials to build or refurbish furniture for eco-conscious consumers.

19. **Freelance Agriculture Writing/Content Creation** – Use your knowledge to write blogs, guides, or social media content for agricultural businesses.

20. **Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Boxes** – Assemble subscription-based produce boxes from your own and neighboring farms for weekly deliveries.

Article Submitted by Pete Horn

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## Quality Glass

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You're never too old to throw random stuff into other people's shopping carts when they are not looking.

I won't be impressed with technology until I can download a pot of coffee.

My mind is like my internet browser/ At least 19 open tabs, 3 of them are frozen and I have no idea where the music is coming from.

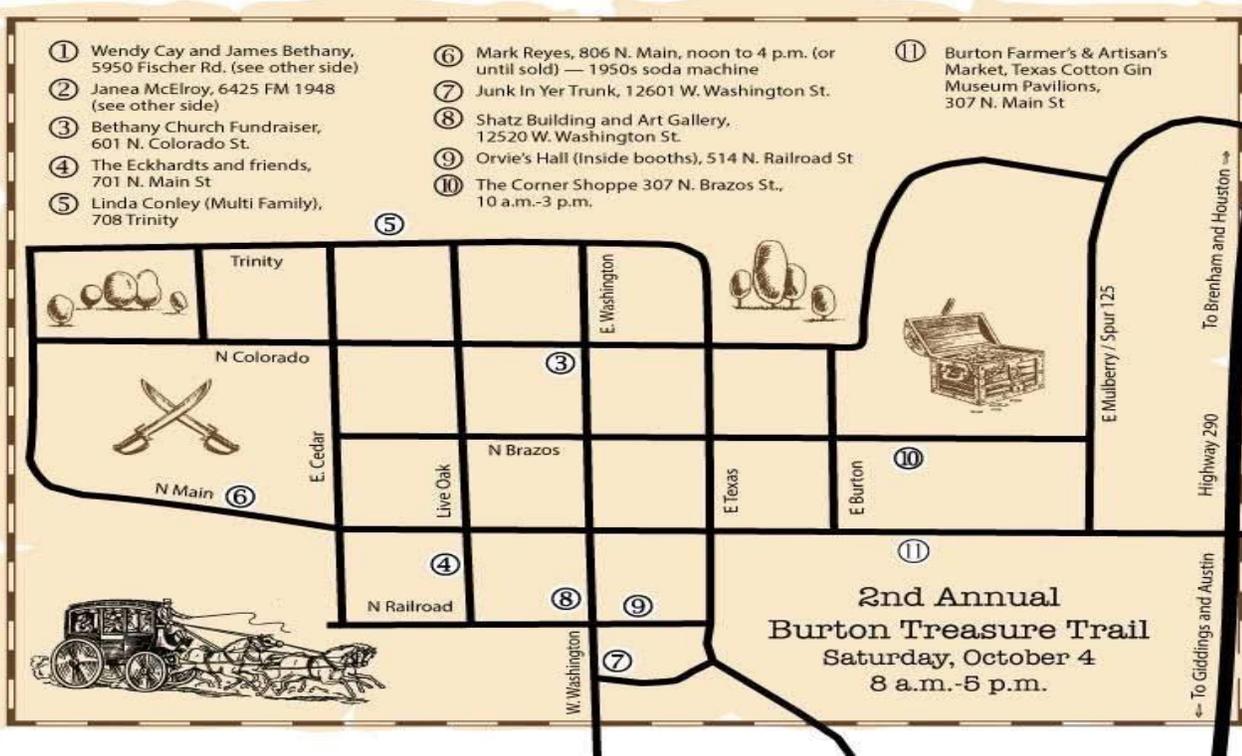
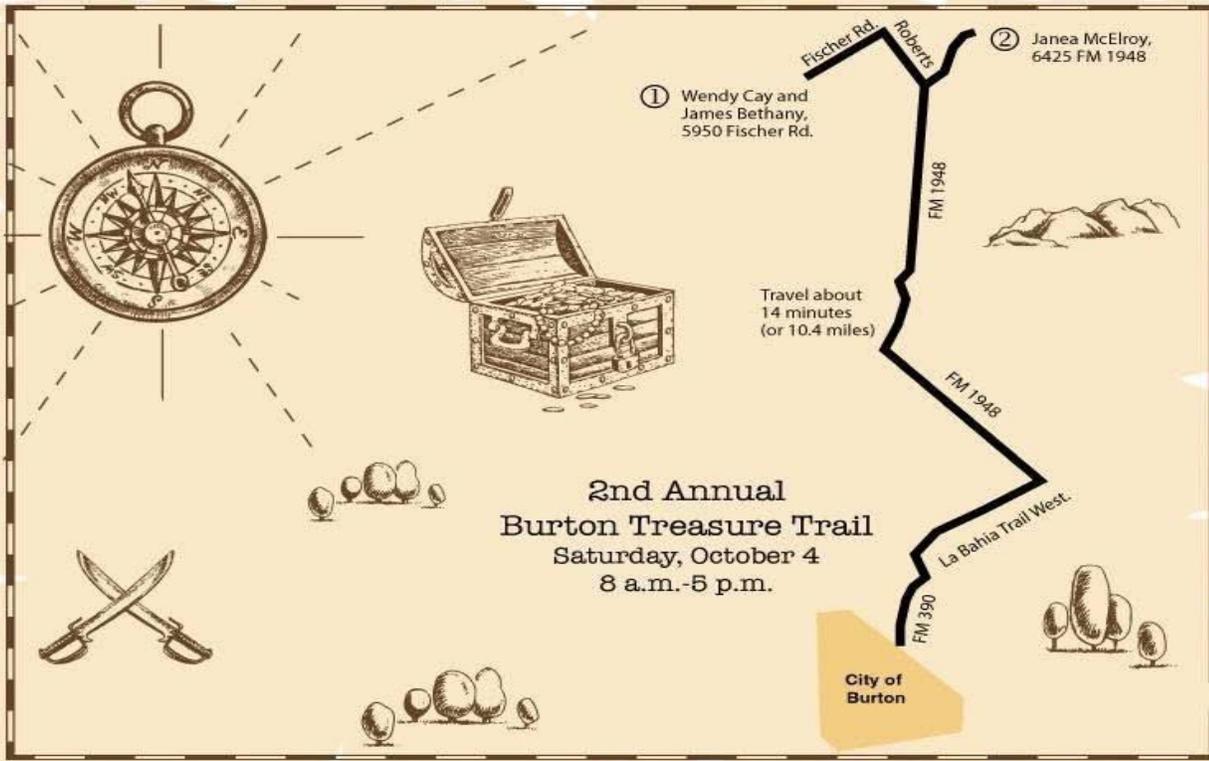
I came home and my dog peed a little because he was happy to see me. Not any of my friends pee when they see me. I'm surrounded by Fakes!!!

The Five Signs of Laziness:

1.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Burton Treasure Trail

Saturday October 4 8am to 5pm



**TRY THAT IN A SMALL TOWN – A Series  
Highlighting Burton Blessings  
What’s Great About Our Town: “Laudible Children”  
By Ned Ross, contributing writer**

About two years ago, I was sipping a cup of coffee in Neon Moon when an entire classroom of students entered the tiny shop. There must have been 20 teens in the room. They entered quietly and waited for the teacher to make introductions to Carl, the owner. I was glad to witness this moment.

What a contrast to headlines and TV news stories we see daily featuring student violence and misconduct. These kids were so well-behaved that I commented to Carl afterward about it. He agreed and had invited them to the store to learn a bit about small business. I learned a lot about the benefits of a small country school.

Lauren and I lived in Houston and Austin for most of our lives. Our public schools were large – Westlake HS had over 3000 students when we left Austin. Although Westlake is considered one of the best high schools in the state, the size and social dynamics are quite different. Many children walk the halls daily unrecognized by teachers and other students. There are simply too many to know them all. That impersonal environment leads to disenfranchisement of kids from social, academic and sports activities.

Not so in Burton. With a graduating class numbering in the high 20s to 40 or so, every student recognizes and gets to know every other student. Families know families. Hardships and victories are known at a personal level.

Disenfranchisement is more obvious and curable at an individual level. Teachers take a personal interest in students. Our students also benefit from participating in the ag program where they raise animals and learn a strong work ethic, endure unforgiving early and late hours, battle through competitiveness, face raw economics, and embrace a caring spirit for creatures. The hours the ag teachers devote – evenings, weekends and school days – inspire the students to work hard.

The parents of these terrific kids must be fully engaged in raising them and instilling those honorable qualities in them. I have come to know quite a few of them, and all are so grounded, so committed to family, so faithful to Christian beliefs and teachings. The home is where the foundation is poured, but the school is reinforcing those same values. Thank you to all of the parents, teachers and students for making Burton an exceptional place to live. Your hard work does not go unnoticed but may have gone unspoken. I am not alone in recognizing how respectful and inspiring these young people are.

And that’s what makes Burton great.

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English is sometimes hard to understand. But it can be understood through tough thorough though though.

Some days I even amaze myself. Other days I look for my phone while I’m talking on it.

**Senior Fellowship and Meal**

We welcome those 55 and older to join us most Fridays for the Senior Fellowship and Meal. No reservations are necessary for dine-in service; the suggested price is \$4.

Where: St. John’s UCC, Family Life Center  
516 North Colorado, Burton Texas

When: Fellowship and games from 10 a.m. until noon  
Bingo at 11 a.m.  
Lunch is served at noon

**Upcoming Menus:**

- Oct. 3: Fried Fish, Mac n Cheese, Cole Slaw, Hush Puppies (catering by The Cannery, with volunteers from St. Paul Lutheran Church of Rehburg)
- Oct. 10: Meatballs & Spaghetti, Salad, Garlic Bread (catering by Cindy & Madeline, with volunteers from Greenvine Baptist Church)
- Oct. 17: Chile Con Carne, Rice, Corn Chips, Bread (catering by White Horse Tavern, with volunteers from St. John’s United Church of Christ)
- Oct. 24: King Ranch Casserole, Green Beans, Bread (catering by On Deck, with volunteers from Zion Lutheran Church)
- Oct. 31: Meatloaf, Mashed Potatoes, Squash, Dinner Rolls (catering by Madeline & Cindy, with volunteers from Greenvine Emmanuel Lutheran Church)
- Nov. 7: Fried Chicken, Potato Salad, Vegetables (chicken catered by Brookshire Bros., with volunteers from St. Paul Lutheran Church of Rehburg)
- Nov. 14: Chicken & Sausage Gumbo, Rice, Corn Casserole (catering by Madeline & Cindy, with volunteers from Greenvine Baptist Church)
- Nov. 21: Tater Tot Casserole, English Peas, Rolls (catering by White Horse Tavern, with volunteers from St. John’s United Church of Christ)
- Nov. 28: No meal (Thanksgiving break)

If you’re 55+ and have health issues that keep you homebound, let one of our volunteers deliver a hot meal to you each Friday at no charge. For more information, call the Bridge office at 979-337-3370. Our delivery area is limited to Burton. If you will not be home to receive your meal, call Lois Mooney at 979-421-0617 or tell your driver.

If you want a “to go” meal, you can pre-order the meal no later than Tuesday by calling the Bridge office at 979-337-3370. We will serve our dine-in seniors first and then prepare the “to go” meals. Arrive at 12:10 pm and please come inside to pick up your meal.

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If all is not lost, then where is it?

I may look lazy, but on a molecular level I’m quite busy.

# BRIDGE MINISTRY of BURTON TEXAS

## Bridge Ministry of Burton Texas

*Our mission is to build a bridge between racial, cultural, educational, and economic divisions within the community.*

*Volunteers are always welcome. Call us at 979-337-3370 or email burtonbridgeministry@gmail.com for more information.*

### ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

307 North Brazos, Burton, TX

#### Hours of Operation:

Monday 9:30 a.m. - noon  
Tuesday 9:30 a.m. - noon  
Wednesday 2:30 - 5 p.m.

For more information about Bridge Ministry of Burton Texas, email burtonbridgeministry@gmail.com or call 979-337-3370.

### MANNA FOOD PANTRY

*Serving those who live within the Burton Independent School District area.*

307 North Brazos, Burton, TX

#### Hours of Operation:

Monday 10 a.m. - Noon  
Tuesday 10 a.m. - Noon  
Wednesday 3 p.m. - 5 p.m.  
Saturday 9 a.m. - Noon

### THE CORNER SHOPPE

*Clothing, shoes, home decor, furniture and appliances*

307 North Brazos, Burton, TX

#### Hours of Operation:

Thursday 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
Friday 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
Saturday 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

*Our donation box for clothing, shoes and home decor is open 24/7*

For information about clothing and home decor, call 979-289-2223, or visit Facebook.com/burtoncornershoppe

For information about our furniture, visit Facebook.com/people/Burton-Bridge-Furniture-Store/61556829382230

For donations of large furniture, estates, or working appliances, contact Karla Bailon at 979-551-6865 or 979-530-5533 or Barbara Donnelly at 281-686-4822 or barbarajodonnely@gmail.com.

### SENIOR FELLOWSHIP & MEAL

We welcome those 55 and older to join us most Fridays. No reservations are necessary for dine-in service; the suggested price is \$4.

Where: St. John's UCC, Family Life Center, 516 North Colorado

When: Fellowship and games are from 10 a.m. until noon; Bingo is at 11 a.m.; lunch is served at noon

If you want a "to go" meal, you can pre-order the meal no later than Tuesday by calling 979-337-3370. We will serve our dine-in seniors first and then prepare the "to go" meals. Arrive at 12:10 pm and please come inside to pick up your meal.

*This institution is an equal opportunity provider. Esta institución es un proveedor de igualdad de oportunidades.*

### OUR PARTNER CHURCHES

- Bethany Church
- Christway Temple Full Gospel Baptist Church
- First Baptist Burton
- Greenville Baptist Church
- Greenville Emmanuel Lutheran Church
- Hollow Springs Baptist Church
- St. John's United Church of Christ
- St. Mary's Missionary Baptist Church
- St. Paul Lutheran Church of Rehburg
- Pilgrim Rest Baptist Church
- Zion Hill Baptist Church
- Zion Lutheran Church

### TRANSPORTATION MINISTRY

Neighbors can book free rides within Burton or to neighboring cities for groceries, prescriptions, to pay utilities or for physician appointments.

Our transportation coordinator will either schedule a driver and send our bus or refer riders to the Brazos Transit District.

#### Transportation Hotline (979) 530-5626

We can help pay for additional transportation services through Brazos Transit District, a general public transportation provider that operates Fixed Routes, ADA Paratransit Service, and Demand and Response.

#### Brazos Transit District 979-778-4480 or 1-800-272-0039

<https://www.btd.org>

### SOCIAL SERVICES

#### Your Texas Benefits

By appointment, a representative from the Brazos Valley Food Bank can be on site at 307 North Brazos to provide no cost application assistance

for social services. They also can connect eligible applicants with local resources for employment assistance, housing and rental assistance, utility assistance, and more. For more information and to ensure you are bringing the required documentation, contact our administrative office at 979-337-3370 or email burtonbridgeministry@gmail.com.

To make an appointment, contact:

Melissa Roy,  
Benefits Assistance Coordinator  
Brazos Valley Food Bank  
1501 Independence Avenue,  
Bryan, TX 77803

Email: [MelissaR@bvfb.org](mailto:MelissaR@bvfb.org)  
Tel: 979-779-3663, ext. 105  
Fax: 979-821-2111  
Web: [www.bvfb.org](http://www.bvfb.org)

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## Burton October Calendar

October is a busy month in our small town of Burton. Listed are some of the events happening in our quaint community.

### Thursday October 2:

Antique shows starts around Burton and the surrounding areas including the Round Top areas.

### Saturday October 4

**Burton Treasure Trail** from 8am to 5pm in various locations. See page 6 for details.

**Farmers Market and Artisans** from 10am to 2pm at Texas Cotton Gin pavilion located at 307 N. Main Street.

**Junk in Yer Trunk** celebrating its one year anniversary from 9am to 5pm located at 12601 W. Washington Street

**Fun in the Park** Fundraiser for the Burton Beautification Association at Laas-Weeren Park from 2pm to 7pm located at 12500 W. Texas Street. See page 2 for details.

**Steak Night** Burton Short Stop Ice House and G's seasoning 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Steak Night featuring live music on 2 stages with Jackson O'Malley and Tim Branch. This requires a ticket. For more information call Burton Short Stop at 979-347-2371. 6pm to 1am. Located at 12400 FM 390.

### Sunday October 5

**Deeply Rooted Ranch** Sunday Brunch located 5255 at Ganske Road. 10am to 2pm. 979-319-5030.

### Tuesday October 7

**National Night Out** The Burton Community and First Responders invite you to National Night out at the Texas Cotton Gin Pavilion located at 307 N. Main Street from 5:30pm to 7:30pm.

### Friday October 17

**Wine and Wander** 6pm to 8pm. Shopping, Food, Drinks and Dolly-Themed fun all around Burton. Trail Stops include Burton Ice House, Bluebonnet Leather, Brazos Belle Restaurant, Faubian Studio, Junk in Yer Trunk, Los Patrones, Neon Moon Coffee, Orvie's Hall, Texas Cotton Gin Museum, Texas Toast Mobile Bar, White Horse Tavern. Catch a ride with Half Azz Wagon Company. Dolly Prom Dance Party at Orvie's Hall from 8pm to Midnight

### Saturday October 25

**Trick or Treat Trail 2025** Downtown Burton 5:30 to 7:30pm Bring the kids for a fun time

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I found my computer problem. I need a user upgrade.

I'm trying to be independent, but no one will help me.

Silence is golden, unless you have kids. Then it's suspicious.

I just wanted you to know that someone cares....not me, but someone does.

## Burton City Hall Meeting

The City of Burton held its regular meeting on September 9, 2025 at 5:30 pm

The first action on the agenda was the city discussion of the increase of property tax rate. Several city citizens and business owners were in attendance to voice their concerns and displeasure of the city wanting to raise their property rates due to the cost of a new well being drilled especially since the city had raised the rates approximately \$30 a month. Some said they were told in previous meetings that the cost of the well would not cause an increase in their property taxes. The council voted to approve the ordinance adopting a tax rate of \$0.3363 per \$100 valuation tax rate (approximately 13% increase) with Councilman Jeff Eckhardt voting no and Councilman Nathan Kalkhake being absent.

The second action was the closing of E. Texas Street between North Railroad Street and N. Main Street between the hours of 2pm to 7pm for "Fun in the Park" hosted by the Burton Beautification Association on October 4<sup>th</sup>. Motion was passed unanimously.

The third item on the agenda was allowing friends and neighbors to purchase and install a metal covering over the seating area at the ball field at a cost of \$44,000 at no cost to the city.

The city hall will be closed on Monday, October 14<sup>th</sup> for observance of Columbus Day and will hold their regular council meeting on October 14 at 5:30pm.

Dumpster Days are Friday, October 24<sup>th</sup> to Sunday, October 26<sup>th</sup> for utility customers only.

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## Letter to the Editor

### Decorum and Respect are Important

(I received this letter anonymously and thought it brought up some valid points. So, I decided to share it.)

Burton is an amazing and kind community, and I think it has an image of being a very desirable place to live. But as with any town, there's room for improvement, especially with public meetings.

Here are some improvements that would benefit everyone in town.

Requesting a tax increase only after:  
Gathering solid facts.  
Scrubbing every expenditure for cuts and  
Compiling the facts in a simple but complete summary for taxpayers.

Following guidance from bond and debt issuers to recommend adequate revenues to cover indebtedness would support the need for an increase.

Distributing the summary to taxpayers for at least 30 days prior to a vote or posting it on the city website homepage.

Addressing citizens with respect and patience, regardless of the citizens' approach to sharing feedbacks. Decorum matters. Mutual respect also matters and citizens should equally be respectful to neighbor elected officials.

Feedback from citizens to public officials should be considered, not dismissed.

Evaluating the impact of a tax increase on citizens, no matter how small. \$10 per month is food money for a lot of people.

Allowing citizen comments after laying out the issues in public hearings so that all can hear the council's perspective.

Engaging in "shutdown" tactics to discourage or stop public feedback is not appropriate.

Inviting law enforcement to public meetings is intimidating and unnecessary.

Presenting information in a straightforward way is courteous. If a "mistake" is made by the city, disclose it up front so that the public can process the information.

We need to raise the bar on public communications and decorum in Burton City Council meetings. In the September meeting, not one person in attendance spoke favorably about the 13% tax increase. Every commenter spoke against the increase. Public comments were focused on lack of good information about the need for raising taxes, a strong signal that improvements can be made in sharing details. Speakers included homeowners and local business owners. Our local business will bear a bigger share of the increase because they have no homestead exemption, including citizens who own rental homes in town.

The list above was spurred by that September meeting and shortcomings in communications from city personnel. Improvements are easy to make, and I hope all can participate in future meetings in respectful ways.

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### **Peacock Perch – Burton, Texas**

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