

News Writing

Invitational B Meet • 2018



You are a reporter for the Leaguetown **Press**, the student newspaper of Leaguetown High School. From the given information, write a **news story** as you would for the high school newspaper. You may use statements attributed to individuals as **direct or indirect quotes**. You may not change the meaning of a statement. You have **45 minutes**. Do not write your name or the name of your school on this sheet or your entry. **Put your number on your paper.**

Leaguetown High School, located in Central Texas, has 600 students enrolled in grades 9-12. In 1855, Leaguetown was founded by Harold League and his wife Irma. The couple also started the first school in 1857 for their four children and other children in the area. In the early 1960s, the town started a Founder's Day Festival to celebrate the League family and the town. The festival was a huge town event for more than 25 years. Then, in 1988 and 1989, the celebration was rained out two years in a row. After that, the tradition faded away.

In January, senior Trixie Renfro, the Student Council president, suggested the school revive the Founder's Day Festival. With the help of several teachers, the Student Council and the National Honor Society, Renfro began preparations to bring back the celebration.

After months of planning and preparation, Renfro announced today that the Founder's Day Festival will be held at Lakeside Park from noon to 4 p.m. on Saturday, March 31. The celebration will kick off with a barbecue lunch, provided by the Chamber of Commerce. Then, local band Fireside Nap will play from 1-3 p.m. Two bounce houses will be set up for children under the age of 13, and a petting zoo will be open from 2:30-3:30 p.m. Renfro and her committee said many activities are planned for the four-hour festival, including a dunking booth, staffed by the high school coaches, and a pie-eating contest.

All activities will be free, but Renfro said the group will have donation jars at each activity. She said the group hopes to raise enough money to create a League Memorial Scholarship in honor of the founders of the town and school. You are writing for the issue of the Press to be distributed Monday, March 5.

■ **TRIXIE RENFRO, Student Council president and senior**

"My mom used to always talk about how much fun she had as a kid going to the Founder's Day Festival. That's where my dad asked my mom to dance for the first time. I guess you could say without a festival, I wouldn't be here. And I am not the only one in town who was impacted by the festival. All my life I've heard stories about the event, but I never got to see it with my own eyes. I wanted to change that for me and the entire town.

"The Student Council tries to do a service project every year, and when I suggested we bring back the festival, we got unanimous support from our members. That almost never happens.

"At first, I didn't think we were going to pull it off. Every date we tried to select had a conflict. Finally, we all agreed to March 31 and, luckily, the park was available. After we picked the date, everything else started to fall in place.

■ **TRIXIE RENFRO, (continued)**

So many people are excited about this that it wasn't hard to find supporters and helpers. The Chamber of Commerce volunteered to do the lunch, and Mickey's Rentals agreed to donate the bounce houses. My family is providing the petting zoo. It's been a huge labor of love for me and everyone on the committee.

"We hope this celebration brings back that sense of community we seem to be missing. It's not that our town is bad, but everyone is so busy doing his or her own thing that we don't have big events anymore. After Friday night football, our community spirit dies down."

■ **JENNIFER LOMOS, National Honor Society sponsor and English teacher**

"I was born in Leaguetown. I grew up going to Founder's Day. It was always a huge celebration, and everyone in the town attended. We are so excited to bring this back to our community. We also are excited that we may be able to fund a scholarship from donations. We hope to raise \$2,000 for the scholarship. If we raise more, maybe we can give more than one scholarship."

■ **BEN BUDROSE, football coach**

"The coaches and I will take turns in the dunking booth. I am praying for warm weather. I overheard some of the football players taking bets on who can dunk us first. I hope they donate their winnings to the scholarship. Seriously, though, we are pumped that Founder's Day has been revived. Our community needs to celebrate together."

■ **RICK SPRINGER, junior**

"I am definitely participating in the pie-eating contest. Trixie said we will have 10 minutes to eat as many pies as we can. My mom is baking me some pies this weekend so I can practice. This is a practice I will not complain about. I hope that there aren't any coconut pies in the contest, though. I hate coconut."

■ **GAVIN SCHULENBERG, mayor**

"Trixie is my niece, and I can't say enough good things about her. I am gushing with pride. Founder's Day is a tradition that somehow got lost in our town. The Chamber of Commerce and I are thrilled to have the event back. We plan to cook about 2,000 hot dogs and 1,000 hamburgers for the event. I hope our whole town shows up for the day."

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Bob's Furniture and the Goldstein Group have donated \$500 each for the scholarship. The Chamber of Commerce and Rothchild's Ranch donated the hot dogs and hamburgers for the event.

DO NOT DISTRIBUTE TO STUDENTS BEFORE OR DURING THE CONTEST!

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NEWS WRITING CONTEST TIPS AND SAMPLE STORY

Contest Director: Give one copy to each judge to use during critique/judging. Also, staple one copy of the contest and one copy of the contest tips to each student's returned entry. The purpose of the tips is to provide immediate feedback to students. However, it is not meant to replace written comments from the judge.

1. Open with a future lead under the present circumstances. In this instance, the Founder's Day Festival has yet to happen.

After more than 25 years, the Founder's Day Festival is back this spring thanks to months of planning and preparation from the Student Council, the National Honor Society and several teachers. The festival will be held at Lakeside Park from noon to 4 p.m. on Saturday, March 31.

2. Use direct quotes and get those quotes early in the story. After you introduce quotes, use the transition/quote formula. Be sure you attribute after the quote. An attribution should be: subject of attribution followed by the verb of attribution ("Trixie said," not "said Trixie.") Avoid stacking quotes. Avoid putting two or more quotes from different people together without placing a transition between them. Also, make sure transitions provide information to help the action of the story and the quote does not repeat information revealed in the transition.

transition

Every year the Student Council does a service project, so Renfro suggested bringing back the festival. She received unanimous support from members.

direct quote

"At first, I didn't think we were going to pull it off," she said. "Every date we tried had a conflict. Finally, we all agreed to March 31 and, luckily, the park was available. After we picked the date, everything else started to fall into place."

transition

The celebration will kick off with a barbecue lunch provided by the Chamber of Commerce.

direct quote

"The Chamber of Commerce and I are thrilled to have the event back," Mayor Gavin Schulenberg said. "We plan to cook about 2,000 hot dogs and 1,000 hamburgers for the event. I hope our whole town shows up for the day."

3. Use third person. Don't say "our students" or "Our student Trixie Renfro" or "Some of our students..." Also, do not editorialize. For instance, you should not say "The students are pumped..." without attributing that quote to someone or "The school should ..." These statements are personal opinions and cannot be made in a news story.

4. Note how in the earlier example of transition/quote, each quote is its own paragraph. Don't be afraid to use one and two-sentence paragraphs. Journalistic writing consists mostly of one and two-sentence paragraphs.

SAMPLE STORY

After more than 25 years, the Founder's Day Festival is back this spring thanks to months of planning and preparation from the Student Council, the National Honor Society and several teachers. The festival will be held at Lakeside Park from noon to 4 p.m. on Saturday, March 31.

"All my life I've heard stories about the event, but I never got to see it with my own eyes," Student Council president Trixie Renfro said. "I wanted to change that for me and the entire town."

Every year the Student Council does a service project, so Renfro suggested bringing back the festival. She received unanimous support from members.

"At first, I didn't think we were going to pull it off," she said. "Every date we tried had a conflict. Finally, we all agreed to March 31 and, luckily, the park was available. After we picked the date, everything else started to fall into place."

The celebration will kick off with a barbecue lunch provided by the Chamber of Commerce.

"The Chamber of Commerce and I are thrilled to have the event back," Mayor Gavin Schulenberg said. "We plan to cook about 2,000 hot dogs and 1,000 hamburgers for the event. I hope our whole town shows up for the day."

NHS sponsor Jennifer Lomos said she grew up going to the festival, which celebrates the founders of the town, Harold and Irma League.

"It was always a huge celebration that everyone in the town attended," she said. "We are so excited to bring this back to our community."

All activities for the event are free, but donation jars will be at each booth to raise money for a League Memorial Scholarship in honor of the founders of the town.

"We hope to raise \$2,000 for the scholarship," Lomos said. "If we raise more, maybe we can give more than one scholarship."

Activities at the festival include a performance from local band Fireside Nap, bounce houses, a petting zoo, a dunking booth and a pie-eating contest.

"The coaches and I will take turns in the dunking booth," football coach Ben Budrose said. "I am praying for warm weather. I overheard some of the football players taking bets on who can dunk us first. I hope they donate their winnings to the scholarship."

Junior Rick Springer said he is preparing this weekend for the pie-eating contest.

"Trixie [Renfro] said we will have 10 minutes to eat as many pies as we can," he said. "My mom is baking me some pies this weekend so I can practice. This is a practice I will not complain about."

The town began the Founder's Day Festival in the early 1960s. It continued for more than 25 years, but in 1988 and 1989, the festival was rained out and the tradition faded away.

"We hope this celebration brings back that sense of community we seem to be missing," Renfro said. "It's not that our town is bad, but everyone is so busy doing his or her own thing that we don't have big events anymore. It's been a huge labor of love for me and everyone on the committee."