

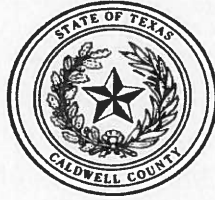
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LETTER TO THE EDITOR
Caldwell County Judge Hoppy Haden

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B.J. Westmoreland
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Edward "Ed" Theriot
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STAY HOME. STAY SAFE. BE COUNTED!

The sobering reality of the "new normal" confronting our communities, county, state and nation is that sometimes the sky really does fall. These times of uncertainty present an opportunity for our collective leadership and personal engagement in those activities of which we do maintain control. The 2020 Census is underway. Current self-response rates in Caldwell County are lower than desired (less than 30%). In 2010, Caldwell County Census response rates were about 68%.

Why is completing the Census important? Census data determines funding-formula allocations of more than \$675 billion in public assistance from 55 federal agencies. What's at stake is support for: school lunch programs, transportation and road construction-site priorities, housing assistance, rural development, veterans programs, job retention and creation endeavors, small business enhancements, nursing home aid, retirement programs, local homeland security and law enforcement programs, etc.

A comprehensive accounting of residents could result in Texas gaining up to three U.S. House of Representatives. The fastest population growth in Texas occurs in the Austin metropolitan area which includes Caldwell County. There is a strong possibility that an additional U.S. Representative who understands our needs and is familiar with our County could be elected.

Every 1% undercount in Central Texas is a loss of \$25 million a year of public assistance. Texas ranked #1 during the last Census in the number of children five-years of age and

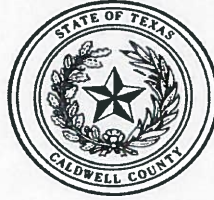
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younger that were NOT counted (over 120,000 children). That was a loss of over \$19 million for child, family, day care and school assistance programs.

I want to assure our residents that the information you provide in your Census report is confidential. It will not be shared with any federal or state agency or law enforcement. In fact, Census data is collected and stored and not available for release – by law – for 72 years!

The Census can be completed online by going to: www.2020census.gov. Phone access includes: English (844-330-2020) and Spanish (844-468-2020).

A frequently used adage says that "now is the time for all good men (and women) to come to the aid of their country". Now is the time to Stay Home. Stay Safe. Be Counted!



Hoppy Haden
County Judge