

**EDITOR'S NOTE**

# What you'll find in this week's Art of Living

**By Kaitlin Bain**

EDITOR

Several months, if not a year, ago, I was invited to be a part of a Day of Discussion on Extreme Weather and Inequality at Lamar University.

The day was put together by the Ancient to the Future Project and was actually the first project for the initiative, which focuses on inequality and climate through local people's experiences.

I quickly accepted the opportunity for a number of reasons. Firstly, I have fallen hard and fast for this community in the several years I've lived here. You don't have to look hard for the impacts of the changing

climate — regardless of what you think the cause is — and inequality. It's something I saw almost every day as a reporter, and it's now one of the guiding lights in coverage decisions I make for

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Courtney Pedersen/The Enterprise

**The Economic and Social Inequality panel answers questions during the Day of Discussion on Extreme Weather and Inequality conference at the Mary John Gray Library at Lamar University.**

## NOTE

*From page A1*

our newspaper.

Secondly, and more importantly, I wholeheartedly buy into Ancient to the Future's assertion that democracies are still important. But to be a part of a functioning democracy, the media, and largely local media, must be a partner in spurring conversation between and amplifying the voices of more than just the loudest in the room.

I'll admit I was surprised at some of the conversation that was had during the Day of Discussion, which covered the region's history, economic and social inequality, and the future of the area, including other topics. I think I expected it to focus more on extreme weather, and I also thought all of the speakers and I would be on very similar pages.

But it didn't, and we weren't. There was enough space between our opinions, experiences and proposed solutions that I had the opportunity to spend some time in thought — determining how I felt about what was said and how those experiences can be worked into my own worldview.

The only way we're

going to push Beaumont forward, however, is if we're all given the opportunity to express our opinions and think about those expressed by others.

So it was a no-brainer when Ancient to the Future gave us the opportunity to partner with them to print comments from the Day of Discussion. And Art of Living — a tab all to itself — was the perfect place to allow those conversations to exist in print so you all can come back to them as often as necessary.

We don't envision this as the end of the conversation, nor do we think the individuals included are the only ones with opinions worth printing. Instead, we hope it will spark more in-person conversations in a formal setting or simply at the kitchen table.

If you'd like to publicly add to the conversation, we'd be honored to print it in the form of a Letter to the Editor in our bi-weekly opinions section.

All I ask is that you refrain from personal attacks and spreading conspiracy theories.

I'm excited to continue on this journey with all of you in the hopes we can work together to build a better Beaumont.