

Rains County Leader

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Vol. 138, Issue 34 - 8 pages

EMORY, TEXAS - THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2025

PRICE 75¢

Celebrating Senior Night



Leader photo by CHUCK FITTS

Seniors Emma Knight, Jazzy Phillips and Madison Moczygamba celebrate their final home game as Lady Cats in Talkington Gym on Tuesday, February 4. The Rains Lady Cats beat the Prairiland Lady Patriots, 88-24.

RAINS COUNTY Former teacher arrested for sexual abuse of a child

By CHUCK FITTS
Rains County Leader staff

Jimmy Lee Hanks, a former teacher at Wills Point ISD, was arrested on Sunday, February 2, by the Rains County Sheriff's department for continuous sexual abuse of a child.

In a press release, Rains County Sheriff Michael Hopkins stated that the office received information regarding sex crimes against children.

Investigator Danielle Aly investigated the accusation and determined probable cause for an arrest warrant.

The statement said that a warrant was issued for Hanks for Continuous Sexual Abuse of a Young Child and he was taken into custody.

As of press time, Hanks remains in custody at the Rains County Jail.

"Due to the ongoing investigation, no other information will be released at this time," Hopkins stated.

Hanks is presumed innocent until proven guilty in the court of law.



Jimmy Lee Hanks

GENERAL ELECTION

Friday, February 14, deadline to sign up for May General Elections

By CHUCK FITTS
Rains County Leader staff

The deadline to sign up for a place on the May 3 General Election ballot is Friday, February 14, with seats open on the Rains Independent School District Board of Trustees, Emory City Council and East Tawakoni City Council.

The Rains ISD will hold an election for the four-year term of Place 1, 2 & 3 on the board of trustees which are held by Robert Burns, Dr. Maggie Salem and Philip Alexander, respectively. As of

press time, Burns and Salem have filed for re-election. Jason Hessbrook has filed for Place 3 on the board. Applications may be picked up at the Rains ISD Administration Office at 1759 W. US Hwy. 69 each weekday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Mayor of the City of Emory as well as seats 2 and 4 on the council are up for election in May. Mayor Earl Hill III, Council Member 2 Travis Potts and Council Member 4 Jacob Roan are facing expiring terms.

Potts and Hill have filed for re-election for another four-year term as Seat 2 and Mayor, respectively.

Application packets are available at the Emory City Hall at 399 N. Texas St. during regular business hours.

The City of East Tawakoni will hold an election for all seats on the council including mayor. The current council is Council Member Place 1 Terri Rose, Council Member Place 2 Kammi Garner, Council Member Place 3 William Moore, Council Member Place 4 Nastasia Ruffino and Council Member Place 5 Harold Chandler.

Residents that have filed are Chandler for Mayor, Rose for re-election to Place 1 and Edmundo Fortuna for Place 4.

Candidate packets for the two-year terms can be picked up at East Tawakoni City Hall at 288 Briggs Blvd every weekday during normal business hours.

To qualify to run for the offices that are up for election, you:

- Must be a United States Citizen;
- Must be at least eighteen (18) years of age at the time of the election for the po-

see **ELECTION** on page 2

NOAA

Severe Weather Education class scheduled for Emory on Thursday, February 20

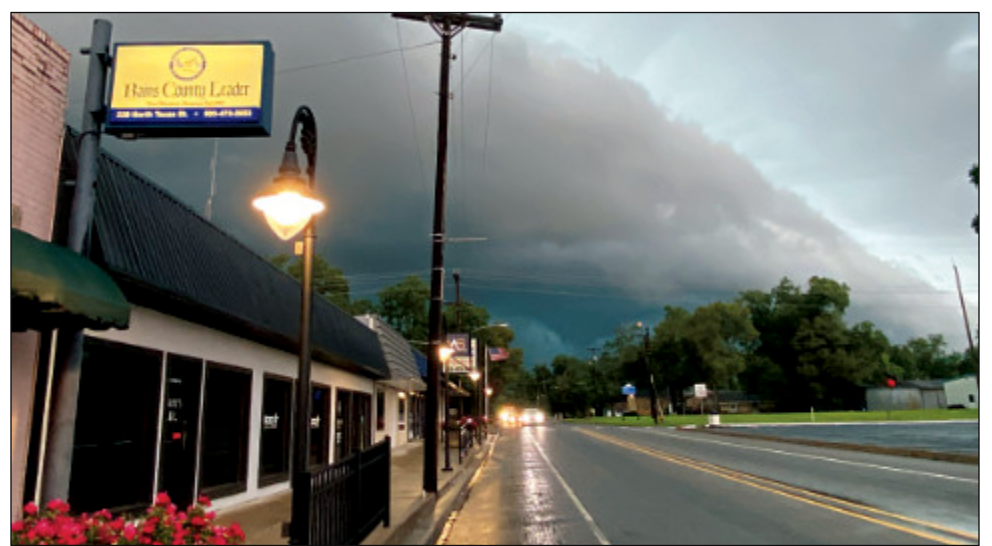
The 2025 spring severe weather season is not too far away, and the National Weather Service and local public safety officials want you to be ready. The National Weather Service (NWS) Office located in Fort Worth will be conducting a free Severe Weather Education class in Rains County on Thursday, February 20, 2025, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Emory Volunteer Fire Department. Officially known as the SKY-WARN Storm Spotter Training Class, the program will be held in partnership with the Rains County Emergency Management Coordinator. There is no cost to attend this class, no pre-registration is required, and you do not have to be a resident of Rains County to attend.

This class is for established storm

spotters and/or anyone who is interested in learning more about severe weather threats in North and Central Texas and how to be prepared. The class will feature an in-depth review and study of the various threats posed by severe thunderstorms. The program will also explore thunderstorm characteristics and features associated with severe and non-severe storms. Additionally, the program highlights severe weather safety and how you can report severe weather information to the NWS Fort Worth Office and local public safety officials.

The Rains County Severe Weather Education class is part of NWS Fort Worth's annual severe weather pre-

see **WEATHER** on page 2



Leader file photo by LEA REED

A storm cloud rolls in from the north and sweeps through Emory.



Teresa Aguilar

SPOTLIGHT

Teresa Aguilar keeps RVs safer with custom-made steps

By JUDY KRAMER
Rains County Leader contributor

Teresa Aguilar and her family run RV-CO Manufacturing that constructs a range of portable RV steps and decks that enhance accessibility and convenience. The business is in Emory and not only has clients in Rains County but has sent portable steps and decks to New Mexico for use during the filming of a TV show called Roswell. Aguilar started working for the business 10 years ago and ended up running it for the owner who does a lot of RV traveling.

"We send our products all over the U.S., Canada, Australia and New Zealand, and are trying to expand into Europe," said

Aguilar. "A lot of RVs, truck campers and food trucks have steps that are not always safe or comfortable. Our steps make it easier to get into an RV, and we even sell them to a lot of people who want their elderly dogs to go traveling or camping with them."

Aguilar also takes time to volunteer with the Rains County Chamber of Commerce (CC). She met the president, Katy Layne, when Layne called her to let her know that someone from up north had contacted the CC to verify that RV-CO was a legitimate business. The two ladies got to know each other, Aguilar was invited to join the chamber, and she now holds the office of treasurer.

"The one thing that I would love to

have the chamber bring back to Emory is the Eagle Fest which used to be a big event with vendors," said Aguilar. "One vendor, Last Chance Forever, brought out various birds including an eagle. I would also like to offer boat rides on Lake Tawakoni to look for eagle nests. Another event I would like to see return is Native American dancers. We need more volunteers to help, and want our own office space so people can go in to get brochures and do other business with us. The Chamber can be reached by calling 903-473-3913."

Aguilar was born in Quitman and went to school from K - 12th grade at Rains ISD. Her family has always been in Rains

see **SPOTLIGHT** on page 2



City Girl:
War With Kitty
page 3

Jody Dyer:
Goodbye Mr. Baseball...
page 3

Wildcat Sports
page 8

Rain Report

Wed., Jan. 29	1.21 in.
Thu., Jan. 30	2.36 in.
Total for Jan.	4.78 in.
Year to date	4.78 in.

Community outreach & organizations

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS
Emory - Tues. & Thurs. 7:00-8:00 p.m., Sat. 12:00-1:00 p.m., open meetings.
Emory United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall. For info call 903-243-6766 or 903-439-7573

AL-ANON - Thurs., 7:00 p.m., Crossroads Al-anon Group, 103 N. Houston St., Edgewood, 903-896-7270

AMERICAN LEGION POST 156, Rabb Bro. Mem. Rains Co. - 4th Mon., 5:15 p.m., 215 N. Duffy St., Emory, 903-438-6045. Buffet breakfast - 2nd Saturday 7:00-10:00 a.m.

ARBALA DANCE - Tues., 7:00-9:30 p.m., Arbala Community Center

CELEBRATE RECOVERY - every Tuesday, 6:30 p.m. Emory Baptist Church

EAST TAWAKONI SENIOR CITIZEN GAME DAY - every Wednesday, 9:00 a.m., 255 Oakleaf Trail.

EMORY LIONS CLUB - 1st and 3rd Tuesdays, 12:00 p.m., Dos Charros in Emory. Call for information 903-473-2311

FOOD BANK AT FREEDOM CHURCH OF GOD - 3rd Fri., 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., 10830 FM 514, Emory. 903-473-2457

FRIENDS OF RAINS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY - 3rd Thurs., 1:00 p.m., Meadows Cultural Center, Rains Co. Public Library

LAKE COUNTRY NEIGHBORS - 1st Thurs., 11:30 a.m., www.lakecountryneighbors.com

LAKE FORK BAPTIST CHURCH FOOD PANTRY - 2nd Tues., 1-4 p.m. 9483 W. FM 515, Alba

LAKE FORK CHAPTER OF THE WELL ARMED WOMAN - first Thursday, 4-7 p.m. at Winnsboro Gun Club, Winnsboro TX. Sue Parrish 903-473-9819

LAKE FORK SPORTSMAN'S ASSOC. - 2nd Tues., 6:30 p.m. Jamie's Restaurant, Lake Fork Marina

MARS HILL MASONIC LODGE #1440 - 4th Thurs., 6:30 p.m., Lodge on Hwy. 69

NORTHEAST TEXAS DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE - 4th Thurs., 6:00-7:30 p.m., Rose Community Center

PIECEMAKERS QUILT GUILD OF RAINS COUNTY - 3rd Mon., 7:00 p.m., AgriLife Extension and Conference Center

POINT LADIES CIVIC CLUB - 1st Thurs., 6:30 p.m., Point Community Center, 903-269-8446

RAINS AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION
2nd Sat. of each month 9:00 a.m. Emory Volunteer Fire Dept.,

RAINS COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE - 3rd Thursday, 5:30 p.m. Visitor's Center, 903-473-3913

RAINS GARDEN CLUB - 2nd Mon., 11:00 a.m., Scarbrough Haven, Email TheRainsGardenClub@gmail.com

RAINS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY - 3rd Mon., 6:00 p.m., Jan., Mar., May, July, Sep., Nov., Emory City Hall.

RAINS COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD - 4th Mon., 5:30 p.m., Feb., Apr., June, Aug., Oct., Meadows Cultural Center, Rains County Public Library

RAINS COUNTY GOOD SAMARITANS - Food Pantry open 1:00-4:00 p.m. Mon. & Thurs.

RAINS COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY - 3rd Sat., 1:00 p.m. Meadows Cultural Center, Rains County Public Library

RAINS COUNTY REPUBLICANS - 4th Thurs., 6:30 p.m., House of Prayer 1382 FM 515

STITCH AND LEARN QUILTING CLUB - Thurs., 9:00 a.m.-noon, 903-598-3021 Miracle Faith Baptist Church

WOMEN'S SERVICE CLUB - 2nd Mon., 6:00 p.m., Rose Community Center

WOMEN IN NEED, INC. - A Battered Women's Shelter. Call 903-455-4612 or 903-454-HELP

GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES

EAST TAWAKONI CITY COUNCIL
3rd Tues., 7:00 p.m., East Tawakoni City Hall

EMORY CITY COUNCIL
2nd Tues., 7:00 p.m., Emory City Hall

POINT CITY COUNCIL
2nd Thurs., 6:45 p.m., Point City Hall

RAINS COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT
3rd Thurs. of every month, Rains Tax Office at 12:00 p.m.

RAINS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' COURT
2nd & 4th Thurs., 10:00 a.m., Rains County Courthouse

RAINS ISD SCHOOL BOARD
2nd Monday, 6:30 p.m., Rains ISD Board Room

RAINS COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT #1
3rd Monday, 6:30 p.m., Emory Fire Station

RAINS COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE:
Mon., Tues. and Thurs., 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., 110 E. North St.
TRANSPORTATION:
To schedule a ride Call 903-474-7231

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H.W. Martin - 1887
Sam Fitzgerald - Before 1900
W.O. Hebisen - Before 1900
A.S. Hornbeck - Before 1900
J.H. Bradford - 1901-1904

Tom W. Hill - 1904-1937
Earl Hill, Sr. - 1937-1960
Kathleen Hill Becknell - 1962-1995
Earl Hill, Jr. - 1995-2019

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NEWS BRIEFS

Good Sam Clothes/ Thrift Shop Sales

The Rains County Good Samaritan Thrift Shop will have a SALE on Friday, February 7, from 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. The Clothes Shop will be open Monday-Thursday in the building behind the public library on Hwy. 69 in Emory. Hours for Mon.-Wed. are 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., closed noon-1:00 p.m. Hours for Thursday are 8:00 a.m.-noon. Thrift sales will be open every Saturday in February from 8:00 a.m.-noon. Funds go to buy food for the needy and to operate the center.

American Legion Breakfast Sat., Feb. 8

Rabb Brothers Memorial American Legion Post #156 will hold a breakfast buffet on Saturday, February 8, from 7:00-10:00 a.m. at the Post home at 215 N. Duffy St. in Emory. Takeouts are

offered. Payment is by donation, which goes towards the upkeep of the home and for veterans' projects.

Emory Methodist Church Valentine Dinner

Emory Methodist Church will host their annual Valentine Dinner on Saturday, February 15, at 5:00 p.m. Reservations are required and the cost is \$20/person. Call the church office at 903-473-2411 no later than Sunday, February 9, to make a reservation.

Rains County Republican Meeting

Champion of Freedom Award Recipient Rachel Hale will speak at the Rains County Republican Assembly meeting on Tuesday, February 18, at 6:30 p.m., at House of Prayer, 1382 FM 515, Emory, TX 75440.

Take steps to boost financial literacy

To achieve your financial goals, it's helpful to know as much as you can about issues such as saving, spending, borrowing and investing. So, what can you do to increase your own financial literacy?

For one thing, you can do some reading. There's certainly no shortage of written material — books, newspapers, magazines, blogs and websites — on all manner of financial topics.

You can also gain valuable knowledge and guidance from working with a financial professional.

Another source of finan-

cial literacy is your own self-knowledge. Are you naturally inclined to be a saver or a spender? What are your feelings about the amount of risk you're willing to take when you invest? Answering these types of questions can help you make informed financial decisions.

You may also want to help increase your children's familiarity with the financial world. Share the lessons you've learned about saving and spending and see if you can spark their interest in investing.

Everyone benefits from financial literacy — so add to your own and promote it to your loved ones.

This content was provided by Edward Jones for use by Brandon Roberts, your Edward Jones financial advisor in Emory at 903-473-1592.

ELECTION

Continued from page 1

sition; Have been a resident of Texas for at least twelve (12) months and resided in the jurisdiction of the entity you seek election to for at least six (6) months preceding election day;

Have a current voter registration certificate;

Not have been convicted of a felony or have not been

pardoned or otherwise released from the resulting disabilities;

Not have been deemed mentally incompetent by a final judgment of a court.

Early voting for the upcoming election will be held from April 22 through April 29 with the general election on Saturday, May 3.

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SUDOKU

The aim of Sudoku is to complete the entire grid using the numbers 1-9. Each number can only be used once in each row, once in each column, and once in each of the 3x3 boxes. Visit www.sudokuoftheday.com for further tips and help about how to play - and good luck!

8	5							1
	6					8	4	
		7	4	3			6	
	2	4						
			7	3	8			
					6	7		
	8		2	5		9		
	2	6					7	
9						2		3

TEXAS A&M FOREST SERVICE

Prevent the spread of oak wilt in Texas

COLLEGE STATION, Texas — Oak wilt is one of the deadliest tree diseases in the United States, killing millions of trees across 76 Texas counties. Texans can help prevent it from spreading by avoiding pruning or wounding oak trees from February through June.

"Prevention is key to stopping the spread of oak wilt," said Demian Gomez, Texas A&M Forest Service Regional Forest Health Coordinator. "Any new wound on an oak tree can be an entry point for infection including those produced by pruning, construction activities, livestock, land or cedar clearing, lawnmower, string trimmers and storms."

Small insects, called sap beetles, move spores of oak wilt fungus to new trees and are very active in late winter and early spring. Because of this, pruning or wounding trees should be avoided from February through June and no matter the time of year, all oak tree wounds should be painted immediately.

Oak wilt is caused by the fungus *Bretziella fagacearum*. The fungus invades the xylem, the water-conducting tissues, resulting in a lack of water to the leaves, slowly killing the infected tree.

All oaks are susceptible to oak wilt. Red oaks are the most susceptible and can die in as little as one month after being infected. Live oaks show intermediate susceptibility, whereas white oaks are the least susceptible, but they are not immune to infection.

Oak wilt can spread two ways — above ground by sap-feeding beetles or underground through connected roots.

The disease spreads above ground by sap beetles more rapidly in late winter and spring because of high fungal mat production and high insect populations. During this time, red oaks that died of the disease last year may produce spore mats under the bark. With a fruity smell, these mats attract small, sap-feeding beetles that can later fly to a fresh wound of any oak tree and infect it, starting a new oak wilt center.

The second way oak wilt can spread is underground by traveling through interconnected root systems from tree to tree. Oak wilt spreads an average of 75 feet per year by the root system. This occurs primarily in live oaks and is responsible for the majority of spread and tree deaths in Central Texas.

Oak wilt is often recognized in live oaks by yellow and brown veins showing in

leaves of infected trees, known as veinal necrosis. This time of year, it may be difficult to diagnose oak wilt due to seasonal transitioning of oak leaves in the spring — when evergreen oak trees shed their old leaves while simultaneously growing new leaves. The signs of oak wilt can be seen on a majority of leaves when a tree is fully infected. Landowners should contact a certified arborist if they are unsure if their tree is infected.

"For red oaks particularly, one of the first symptoms of oak wilt is leaves turning red or brown," said Gomez. "While red oaks play a key role in the establishment of new disease centers all oaks can move oak wilt through root grafts, particularly live oaks."

To stop the spread of oak wilt through the root system, trenches can be placed around a group of trees, at least 100 feet away from the dripline of infected trees and at least four feet deep, or deeper, to sever all root connections. Another common management method for oak wilt is through fungicide injection. The injections only protect individual trees that have been injected. The best candidates for this treatment are healthy, non-symptomatic oaks adjacent to and up to 75 to 100 feet away from symptomatic trees.

Other ways to help prevent oak wilt include planting other tree species to create diversity in the area; avoiding moving firewood; and talking with neighbors about creating a community prevention plan for oak wilt. Infected red oaks that died should be cut down and burned, buried or chipped soon after discovery to prevent fungal mats that may form.

Not only is saving oak trees important for our ecosystem and health, but also for property values and community aesthetics. Loss of trees due to oak wilt can reduce property values by 15 to 20 percent.

Some cities and municipalities, including Austin, the City of Lakeway, Dallas, Houston, San Antonio and Round Rock, have oak wilt programs in place with municipal foresters dedicated to managing the disease. Texans can also contact their local Texas A&M Forest Service representative with any questions about this devastating disease.

For more information on oak wilt identification and management, visit <https://texasoakwilt.org/> or the Texas A&M Forest Service website at <https://tfsweb.tamu.edu/>.

WEATHER

Continued from page 1

paredness campaign and is one of several severe weather training programs the NWS Fort Worth Office will conduct around the region between January and March 2025. Other classes across the region can be found at: <https://www.weather.gov/fwd/skywammmap>.

The National Weather Service Office in Fort Worth

provides forecasts, warnings, and weather-related services for 46 counties in North and Central Texas. For more information, visit the NWS Fort Worth Office website at <https://weather.gov/fortworth>, find us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/NWSDallasFortWorth> or on Twitter: @NWSFortWorth.

SPOTLIGHT

Continued from page 1

County and is "akin" to many people in the area. She has been married to her husband, Greg, since 1992 and they have three grown children. A daughter lives in

Utah and her two sons work with her in the family business. Her free time consists of taking photos, including a lot for the children.

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CITY GIRL

At war with Kitty

By Linda Brendle

Cats are temperamental animals. They can be sweet and loving when they want to be, curling up in the crook of your elbow or in your lap, purring while you stroke their fur or scratch their ears, and generally making you feel like they want to be your BFF. Or they can suddenly become snarky, biting your hand, hissing in your face, turning their back to you, and stalking off with their tail lifted high in the air. In the Brendle household, David generally gets the former treatment while I get the latter.

True, she sometimes shows David her cranky side, but in the evening when he lies down on the couch to watch TV, she lies on his legs or squeezes in next to his head where she hangs on for dear life to keep from falling off the edge. To make matters worse, she will occasionally give me a look of disdain like a queen looking down on her slave girl.

When she comes to my side of the room, she lies on the end table next to my work station, looking out the window and waving her tail over my cup of coffee or my water glass. Sometimes she lies on the back of the couch and flips her tail in my face. I don't mind this one too much because I can block her tail with my hand, and if I lean my head back, she makes a nice pillow and neck warmer.

She does get in my lap at night when I get in bed to read before turning out the lights. Of course, she only stays until the snacks I bring with me are gone. She is also my best friend first thing in the morning, making sure I put a fresh scoop of kibble in her bowl. And she rubs my legs when I get the coffee creamer out of the fridge in hopes she can talk me out of a tablespoon of milk. She also comes running when she hears me working with a knife and cutting board since she's learned that sometimes there's rotisserie chicken to be shared if she stretches up, puts her front paws on the edge of the counter, and looks hungry enough.

A few months ago, I posted about Kitty's new habit of settling into my recently vacated spot when I get up to go somewhere or do something that doesn't involve my computer or the TV. Some Facebook friends said she liked the warmth I left or my scent while others said she just wanted to be close to me. I doubted their theories then, but she did something the other day that proved without question that they were wrong.

I was at my computer, and she was lying on her TV tables next to my computer stand with her head on the edge of the mouse shelf. She began pushing her face against my hand. She does that when she wants me to scratch between her eyes, but this was a little different. Usually her lips are loose, and I've been told it's a way of getting her scent on a person or thing as a sign of ownership. That day, however, it was more demanding, and I couldn't figure out what she wanted. She allowed me to scratch her head a little bit, but then she moved to the end table and

put her front paws on the arm of the love seat. She stood there staring at my lap, so I moved my keyboard over to the side.

"Do you want to sit with me?" I asked hopefully, patting my lap.

She leaned forward and pushed at my hand a bit, so I scratched her a little more. She stepped down onto the cushion right beside me, and just when I thought she was going to move to my lap, she stared at me and hissed. I finally understood.

"Well, you little stinker!" I laughed. "You don't want to sit with me at all. You want me to move so you can have my spot. Well, it ain't gonna happen!"

She may not have understood the words, but she understood the tone of voice. She left, but she got the last laugh when I went to the kitchen to tend something on the stove. When I came back, she was curled up asleep, or at least pretending to be asleep. I left her alone because I was going to be up and down for a while getting dinner on the table.

The encounter didn't really change our relationship any. It was just one more skirmish in the war to see who will be the alpha female around here. I'll probably always come out on top because I have a bigger and more complex brain and I have thumbs. On the other hand, I keep remembering what my cousin Andy said when he read my first few columns about Kitty. He asked, "How does it feel being owned by a cat?"

Linda Brendle writes a weekly column for Believers' Baptist Church. She is a published author and also writes about caregiving, faith, and family on her blog at <http://www.LifeAfterCaregiving.WordPress.com>. You can e-mail her at LindaBrendle@yahoo.com.

MY TAKE ON TECH

CAPTCHA Alert

Last year I wrote a column about captchas (which stands for, "Completely Automated Public Turing test to tell Computers and Humans Apart"), which are applications that run on web pages to verify that you are a human rather than an automated system. I find it amusing that web sites are essentially using robots to make sure that those accessing the web site are not robots.

Today, cyber thieves are now using fake captchas that have malicious intent. These new fake captchas can appear on pages that claim to offer free stuff like movies or music, but they can appear almost anywhere while you surf the net. Most of us are used to the captcha test that instructs us to identify all the bicycles, crosswalks, traffic lights or other objects in a multi-picture diagram, or type in letters that are displayed in a mangled manner. There are other types as well.

The fake captchas trick a user into installing malware on their windows system. In some cases, the user is instructed to execute Windows commands as if it is just a part of the security routine. Don't be fooled by that!

Fake captchas may involve the use of the

Win+R, Win+V, Ctrl+V and/or the Enter key either separately or in sequence with the intent of installing malware. (The "Win" is the Windows key, often next to the "Alt" or "Ctrl" key. The + means holding the first key down while pressing the second key.)

The non-standard behavior of these fake captchas is a huge red flag that something is not right with the captcha, and do not do those things it instructs you to do. Following through with their instructions can lead to your computer.

There are several things you can look for or do to help identify and avoid fake captchas. This list is not exhaustive but is considered good practice.

First, never press the windows key in working with any captcha. Never use special keys with a captcha. Legitimate captchas will never have you press unfamiliar keys (like the Windows key).

Second, keep your web browsers up to date. Future updates may add safeguards to identify or avoid fake captchas. Anti-malware or anti-virus software, if installed, should be kept current.

Third, always verify the web site information at the top of the browser, to make sure it is "https" and to verify the name of the site you are going to. Look for incorrect spellings in the web site name or on the web page,

which may mean that the site is a fake web site designed to steal your login info or install malware on your device.

Fourth, only visit trusted websites, and never click on links in emails or texts you receive. Bookmark in your browser the trusted website links you regularly visit and use those to access your favorite sites.

Fifth, if you are on a Windows-based computer, never surf the web using a Windows "administrator" account. Only use a "user" account for surfing the web, which could help prevent malicious software from being unknowingly installed. Administrator accounts make it easier for malware to be installed and should never be used for browsing.

Most of us agree that captchas can be very irritating and challenging for us humans. Sadly, fake captchas can now help criminals steal our stuff if we are not super diligent. We may have to eternally put up with having to prove we are human, but now we must make sure that the captcha itself is not fake or malicious.

Bottom line: Now that you know about fake captchas, if you feel a captcha is behaving strangely or differently from the countless legitimate ones you have encountered in the past, do not proceed. And never use the Windows key with any captcha—ever.

John can be reached at john2645@mytakeontech.net.

Wild Saturday Night

On Saturday, February 1, at the Wildflower Event Center, the Rains County Special Needs Community enjoyed a great time with friends and family.

Members of the Rains High School Journalism Department took videos and photos of attendees dancing to the sounds provided by a DJ, with flashing lights and a jungle theme adding excitement to the event.

Many volunteers helped make the event happen, hoping that it would provide a catalyst for more events supporting our local special needs community.

The most beautiful people in our community can teach

us how to treat others with kindness, compassion and empathy while helping to encourage others to stay in the fight while living with their disabilities.

Great job to everyone involved in helping make this event happen!

Saying Goodbye to Mr. Baseball



"I had a great shoe contract and glove contract with a company who paid me a lot of money never to be seen using their stuff."

Bob Uecker



JODY DYER Typewriter Weekly

Sad news surfaced from the baseball world recently with the announcement of the passing of Bob Uecker at the age of 90. Affectionately known as Mr. Baseball, he was one of the funniest guys to ever walk this planet and swing a bat. He spent only six years in the majors, but he later turned his self-described mediocre career into comedy gold. The baseball world was better because of him. He was one of a kind.

I first became acquainted with Bob Uecker via late-night TV. He was a frequent guest with Johnny Carson and David Letterman in the '70s and '80s, when late night comedy was actually funny (not political). Johnny Carson gave Uecker his nickname by chance, and it stuck - Mr. Baseball.

Bob Uecker signed with his hometown Milwaukee Braves in 1956 and spent several years in the minor leagues before making it to the majors in 1962. He was a catcher, or chaser, as he sometimes described himself, and during his career he

played for the Milwaukee Braves, St. Louis Cardinals, Philadelphia Phillies, and Atlanta Braves. After the Cardinals won the World Series in 1964, many credited Uecker with helping them win. He evidently kept the team loose and laughing most of the time.

Uecker had a career batting average of .200, with 14 lifetime home runs and 74 RBIs over 297 games. He was a solid defensive player, completing his career with a fielding percentage of .981. However, in 1967, he led the league in passed balls, despite playing only 59 games. He spent most of that season catching for Phil Niekro, who threw a mean knuckleball, which may explain the statistic. Uecker often joked that the best way to catch a knuckleball was to wait until it stopped rolling and pick it up.

Uecker got his big comedy break while doing stand-up and opening for Don Rickles at an Atlanta nightclub in 1969. He soon appeared with Johnny Carson on the Tonight Show, later making over 100 appearances. Uecker was one of Carson's favorite guests. His deadpan, straight-faced comedy skills were masterful. Coupled with his storytelling ability and warm delivery, Uecker became a natural baseball commentator.

In 1966, the Braves moved from Milwaukee to Atlanta. Then in 1970, the Seattle Pilots became the

Milwaukee Brewers. Milwaukee had a baseball team again. As a hometown boy, Uecker was tapped to become a baseball broadcaster. In 1971 he began calling play-by-play for the Brewer's broadcasts. He became the voice of the Milwaukee Brewers, and his career spanned 54 seasons, ending only last year. At home in the broadcast booth, Uecker was wonderful. You could tell that he loved the players. It is said that he would never make a disparaging remark about any player on the field. He understood how hard it was to play this game.

Outside of baseball, Uecker had many other roles. In the TV sitcom, Mr. Belvedere, he played sportswriter George Owens. He appeared in many other TV and movie roles over the years. In the Major League film trilogy, he played broadcaster Harry Doyle, calling games for the Cleveland Indians.

Uecker is probably best known for a series of beer commercials he made for Miller Lite, beginning in the 1980s. In one of his funniest commercials Uecker is seen preparing to watch the game before an usher informs him that he is in the wrong seat. Uecker remarks "I must be in the front row." This became one of his popular catch phrases. In the commercial Uecker's seat is actually in the nosebleed section. Since then, in many Major League ballparks the seats farthest from the action are called the Uecker Seats.

At American Family Field, home of the Milwaukee Brewers, there is a special section of \$1 seating called the Uecker Seats, referring to where he sat in the Miller Lite commercials. These seats in the far upper deck have an obstructed view where the stadium's roof pivot comes together. There you can find a statue of Bob Uecker. He has the worst seat in the house.

Here's hoping we have baseball in heaven...

R.I.P. Mr. Baseball...

JODY DYER is a columnist, author, and former teacher. Described by some as a Renaissance man, he is a baseball fan, coffee roaster, and accomplished feral hog trapper. He likes to read, appreciates the outdoors, and is good with dogs and children. He is the father of three, and lives with his wife in Texas.

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Sam Houston State University Announces Fall 2024 Honor's Lists

Guadalupe Centeno, Leonel Centeno, and Samantha Houchins, all of Emory, were among the students named on the President's list at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville. Seven Hart of Point was

among the students named to the Dean's list at Sam Houston State University.

Students listed on the President's Honor Roll at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville are undergraduates who have achieved a perfect 4.0 grade

point average in all work attempted while enrolled in not less than 12 semester hours. Those listed on the Dean's list are undergraduates who achieved at least a 3.5 grade-point average while enrolled in not less than 12 semester hours.

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by Charley & Guy Orbison
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ACROSS

1 family dog or cat (2 wds.)

5 Dallas _____ kicks (pro indoor soccer)

6 TXism: "let sleeping _____ lie"

7 small bits

8 TXism: "_____ chaser" (early riser)

9 this can be acquired on So. Padre Island

12 TXism: "would jerk tears from a _____ eye" (very sad movie)

17 UT football team lost to this team twice in 2024

19 Merton's county was named for Robert _____

21 removing wrinkles from clothes

22 TX King Vidor directed 1937 film "_____ Dallas"

23 a director _____ actor for a scene

28 silly, foolish

29 "hungry enough to _____ horse"

30 TXism: "useless _____ on a bald eagle"

31 Zsa Zsa or Eva

35 Texas television journalist and author: Catherine _____

36 highest waterfall in Texas (2 wds.)

42 TXism for "laughed hard" (3 wds.)

44 Texas actress Annette O' _____

46 Guadalupe Mountains peak (2 wds.)

DOWN

1 TXism: "silent as a _____ tomi"

49 female deer

50 major African river

51 most racehorses are descended from this breed

52 popular Bible translation (abbr.)

53 Allen of 1953 film "Down Laredo Way"

54 Denver _____ Texas

56 Tyler FM before KOYE

57 TXism: "dull as week-_____ soda pop"

58 "legal eagle" payment

10 TXism: "_____ sense" (dumb)

11 TXism: "two-bit _____" (poor horse)

12 Texas makes more of this than any other state

13 lasting written works

14 "Hill Country Natural _____"

15 fine sand deposited as a sediment

16 pith helmet, aka _____ topee

18 a single-stranded molecule needed for life (abbr.)

20 Texas' continent (abbr.)

21 at governor: _____ Cuberson

24 California's oldest private univer. _____

25 TXism: "still wet behind the _____"

26 used a credit card

27 Danny of Texas-based film "Rubby"

32 TXism: "chompin' _____ the bit"

33 TX Buddy Holly's "That'll _____ the Day"

34 "out _____ kilter"

36 Cowboys and Texans have a "salary _____"

37 TXism for "against"

38 Russian president

39 noted Texas folklorist, Alan _____

40 Bausch & _____ (eye products company)

41 Texas-born musician Stone _____

43 when repeated, goodbye in Britian

45 RB Emmitt (init.)

47 actor Brand of TV's "Laredo" (1965-67)

48 St. _____ University in San Antonio

55 ocean movement

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Sheriff's Report

The Rains County Sheriff's Office took the following reports of activity during the week of January 27- February 2:

Arrests



MICHAEL HOPKINS
Rains County Sheriff

1-27: Milton Kole Frazier. Driving with license invalid, agreement with Emory municipal court; failure to maintain insurance, \$75 cash bond.

1-27: Daymon Lloyd Wallace. Cruelty to non-livestock animal; \$150,000 bond.

1-29: Rickey Lynn Bell. Boond forfeiture/criminal trespass, \$6,000 cash only bond.

1-29: Robert Cary Bishop. Abandon/endanger child/individual, \$25,000 bond.

1-30: Hunter Nickolas Wasilew. Criminal trespass, \$50,000 bond.

1-31: Charles Wayne Heathcock. Assault causing bodily injury family member, \$3,000 bond.

1-31: Timothy Wayne Fehse. Disorderly conduct discharge/display firearm, \$1,500 bond.

1-31: John R. Hampton. Assault causing bodily injury family member (release of surety), \$3,000 bond.

2-1: Dylan Blake Ingram. Violation of promise to appear, \$409.50 fine.

Calls

1-28: FM 2946 Livestock on the roadway; Hwy. 276 Cow or big pig in the roadway; CR 1235 Horse on the roadway; Briggs. Blvd. Animal welfare concern 6-month-old kitten stuck in a tree; CR 1633 Aggressive dogs keep getting out; Sheriff's Office (SO) Three stolen guns were recovered and need to be picked up; FM 515 Two-vehicle accident; CR 2160 Five cows out; Duffy St. Medical assist 75-year-old male dizzy and has had the flu for a couple weeks; Hwy. 276 Medical assist 82-year-old possibly having a stroke; E Lennon

Dr. Welfare concern for female on the side of the road throwing things at vehicles; CR 1140 Medical assist female with chest pains; CR 4480 Medical assist 80-year-old female having trouble breathing; Hwy. 2324 Vehicle struck a deer; CR 4455 Medical assist 72-year-old male fell and can't get up; CR 4455 Medical assist 72-year-old fell again; Hwy. 276 Agency assist for structure fire; CR 1308 Structure fire; Locust St. Dispute for person who has been ordered out of home and is still there; CR 3333 Suspicious activity; Hwy. 69 Female receiving harassing messages; Hwy. 276 Controlled burn; CR 4252 Structure fire; CR 3412 Grass fire; CR 3333 People going through trash pile at residence and no one is supposed to be there; SO call concerning trespassing cows; Austin Way MacBook stolen from the car wash in East Tawakoni and someone is trying to use it.

1-29: Hwy. 19N Medical assist 77-year-old is unresponsive; CR 4252 Structure fire; Hwy. 69E iPhone notification of accident and vehicle found in a ditch; Hwy. 19S Vehicle stuck in the mud in the ditch; CR 3324 Medical assist 82-year-old female fell and needs transport; CR 2400 Livestock on the roadway; Rains County Jail Inmate needs to report stolen car that was found before it disappears again; Hwy. 19N Civil matter concerning a child; W Lennon Dr. Criminal trespass male on the porch and won't leave; SO lobby Complainant reporting info on possible child grooming out of Kaufman; FM 2081 Livestock on the roadway cows out and horses about to get out; FM 275 Suspicious person male walking; CR 2235 Medical assist 83-year-old male with low blood pressure; CR 3324 Medical assist 82-year-old female needs help getting into the house; CR 2420 Report of an account being hacked; FM 779 Welfare concern for elderly female who may be at cemetery; FM 2795 Medical

assist 61-year-old female having trouble breathing; Rains Co. Jail Female having trouble breathing; W Lennon Dr. Male knocking on door and making female uncomfortable; PR 7702 Welfare concern for male who hasn't been seen in a couple days; N Texas St. Medical assist 85-year-old male incoherent; PR 7715 Medical assist 58-year-old female having trouble breathing; CR 1302 Medical assist 89-year-old male fell and is unresponsive; S Texas St. Suspicious activity male walked in through locked gate and knocked on camper door.

1-30: CR 2120 Suspicious person; Hwy. 19N Pickup truck hydroplaned and went off the roadway; Littlefield Dr. Street blocked by downed tree; Hwy. 19N CPS removing child from the residence; CR 2350 Medical assist 94-year-old can't stand up or walk; CR 1621 Questions about what to do with 15 dogs that roam free in Holiday Hills; Ave. B Animal at large; Meadowview Ln. Dog at large with litter of puppies; CR 1540 Medical assist 62-year-old female fell and can't get up; CR 1315 Female needs information concerning a civil standby; Rains Co. Jail Medical assist inmate who can't breathe and feeling sick; Duffy St. Welfare concern; FM 275 Traffic hazard water over the road; CR 1280 Brush fire; CR 3319 Noise complaint; FM 2737 Brush fire getting out of control; CR 3319 Verbal disturbance.

1-31: PR 7715 Medical assist 60-year-old female having a hard time breathing; E Lennon Dr. Vehicle ran out of gas and driver needs help getting the vehicle out of the road; Hwy. 276 Medical assist 73-year-old male with shoulder and chest pain; Barge Point Landing Medical assist Male with high blood pressure and chest pain; Hwy. 19N Welfare concern for female in back of vehicle seen screaming and being assaulted; CR 4430 Controlled burn; Duffy St. Medical assist female dehydrated; PR 5800 Medi-

New Emory chief sworn in



Courtesy photo

Emory Mayor Earl Hill III (left) congratulates Tom Parsons on becoming Chief of Police for the City of Emory after administering the oath of office on Thursday Morning, January 30.

cal assist for female found not breathing; CR 3025 Burglary and door kicked in; Hwy. 276 Child custody issues mother refusing to let grandmother pick up the children; FM 2795 Livestock on the roadway; CR 3319 Noise complaint.

2-1: FM 2795 Harassment regarding cows that keep coming onto the property; FM 514 Gas leak; FM 2795 Harassment; Hwy. 69 Reckless driving dark colored BMW; FM 515 Suspicious person juveniles in the field behind RV park; E Lennon Dr. Male harassing minors and making sexual comments; Briggs Blvd. Medical assist 77-year-old not feeling well; CR 3330 Welfare concern for 62-year-old male with several issues; Wood St. Medical assist 35-year-old female possibly having a seizure; CR 1156 Grass fire; S Texas St. City ordinance violation; Tawakoni Dr. Medical assist 70-year-old wants to go to the hospital; FM 2795 Medical assist female with breathing problems; CR 1540 Animal welfare concerns about a dog maybe being abused; CR 3345 Gas leak; CR 3319 Noise complaint for loud party; Hwy. 19N Two-vehicle accident semi vs. pickup truck and road shut down; CR 3319 Noise complaint at

a party involving cars racing up and down the road, drinking and several stripper poles; CR 4320 Suspicious vehicle; CR 1540 Noise complaint loud radio coming from a neighbor; CR 3319 More noise complaint at party still going on; Clark Dr. Domestic disturbance neighbors screaming and yelling.

2-2: FM 779 Criminal trespass; Dunbar Ln. Medical assist 69-year-old male with stomach pain; CR 4015 Medical assist for newborn with problems breathing; CR 3325 Medical assist 51-year-old female with pain and vomiting; FM 2946 Medical assist 83-year-old male fell; FM 275 Controlled burn; PR 5804 Burglary; CR 3319 Reckless driving vehicles racing up and down the road; N Texas St. Medical assist 86-year-old male fell and is bleeding; FM 2795 Male was living in RV and now owner won't let him on the property; CR 1629 Neighbor dispute; Egret Cir. Medical assist 57-year-old female with chest pain; Dunbar Ln. Medical assist 62-year-old male with abdominal pain; FM 2795 Deadly conduct bullet hole found in front of house; S First St. Medical assist 64-year-old female with difficulty breathing; FM 779 Medical assist 54-year-old female was

bucked off horse and now has chest pain; FM 2737 Livestock on the roadway; CR 3425 Controlled burn; FM 2795 Male having a difficult time getting his camper back from a male; CR 3345 Gas leak; E Lennon Dr. Motorist assist for vehicle that died; Smith Cir. Medical assist for unresponsive female; CR 2222 Welfare concern for juveniles; SO lobby Domestic disturbance information.

The Sheriff's Department reported 220 calls for the week. Among the calls were: 2 criminal trespass; 1 deadly conduct, 2 domestic disturbance, 3 brush fires, 4 harassments, 3 structure fires, 1 fraud, 4 harassments, 3 structure fires, 3 gas leaks, 8 livestock on roadway, 38 medical assists, 8 noise complaints, 1 grass fire, 4 reckless driving, 1 street blocked, 2 suspicious activities, 5 suspicious person, 5 suspicious vehicles, 1 theft, 49 traffic stops, 7 welfare concerns, 6 accidents, 5 controlled burns, 2 agency assists, 3 animal at large, 2 animal welfare concerns, 2 motorist assists, 2 burglary, 3 child custody calls, and 3 city ordinance violations. There were 15 citations given, 21 EMS transports, 6 fires extinguished and 27 warnings given.

TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION SERVICES

Healthy Heart

Cardiovascular disease remains the leading cause of death for both males and females in the United States with someone dying every 34 seconds as a result. Written a different way, nearly 2,500 Americans die each day from cardiovascular disease. While these numbers may be shocking at first, they should not be overly surprising if you look at health trends across the nation. According to the American Heart Association (2025), nearly 47 percent of adults live with high blood pressure, 72 percent of adults are overweight, and roughly 57 percent of have type 2 diabetes. If you find yourself or a loved one in one (or more) of these statistic groups, it might be time to look at making some lifestyle changes.



SARAH LATHAM
Rains County
AgriLife Agent

Lowering the risk of cardiovascular disease involves making lifestyle changes and managing health conditions. Start out by slowly making changes and gradually work toward a healthier heart. Look at these tips and identify areas you might need to focus to help you get started.

Maintain a Healthy Diet

- Eat heart-healthy foods, such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins.
- Choose healthy fats (unsaturated fats from olive oil, nuts, and fish) and avoid trans fats.
- Limit processed foods, refined sugars, and high-sodium foods.
- Reduce red and processed meats.

Stay Physically Active

- Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise (e.g., brisk walking, swimming) or 75 minutes of vigorous exercise (e.g., running, cycling) per week.
- Incorporate strength

training exercises twice a week.

- Reduce sedentary behavior by taking breaks from sitting every 30-60 minutes.
- **Manage Weight**
- Maintain a healthy BMI (18.5-24.9).
- Reduce abdominal fat, as excess belly fat is linked to a higher risk of heart disease.
- **Quit Smoking and Limit Alcohol**
- Quit smoking completely—tobacco damages blood vessels and increases CVD risk.
- Limit alcohol intake to moderate levels (1 drink/day for women, 2 drinks/day for men).
- **Reduce Stress**
- Practice mindfulness, meditation, yoga, or deep breathing techniques.
- Ensure adequate sleep (7-9 hours per night).
- **Get Regular Check-Ups**
- Monitor blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar levels regularly.
- Follow your doctor's

advice and take medications as prescribed if needed.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension's Dinner Tonight Program is a great resource for healthy, tasty, and budget-friendly recipes. Visit <https://dinnertonight.tamu.edu> or follow Dinner Tonight on Facebook for daily recipes and health tips.

Having a healthy heart requires a mixture of activities and lifestyle changes. Strive to create a healthy balance between exercise, diet, and lifestyle. If healthy habits are new to you, start out slow by making small changes over time. Healthy habits do not form overnight, so it is important to be patient with your progress.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact me, (903) 473-4580 or email Sarah.Latham@ag.tamu.edu. To view upcoming events or additional information please visit <https://rains.agrilife.org/> or follow Rains County AgriLife on Facebook.

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STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

Patrick releases 25 legislative priorities

Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick has released his top 25 legislative priorities as the legislative session gets underway, The Texas Tribune reported. They include banning all forms of consumable THC, the psychoactive ingredient in CBD products; increasing the school homestead exemption from \$100,000 to \$140,000; a Texas version of a government oversight department to improve governmental efficiency; and measures to shore up the state's electric grid and water supply.

Patrick released a statement saying his priorities guarantee the Texas Senate, over which he presides, "will continue to lead as the preeminent legislative body in America by passing our bold, conservative agenda, helping President Trump deliver on his promise of making America great again."

He said he plans to release an additional 15 priority bills soon, for a total of 40.

Flu cases spiking across the state

The number of influenza cases is rising rapidly, the Austin American-Statesman reported, particularly in North Texas where at least two school districts were forced to close because of excessive absences. Data from the Texas Department of State Health Services indicates a 34 percent positivity rate in the week of Jan. 12-18.

A Fort Worth children's hospital last week reported nearly 700 patients visiting its emergency rooms within a 24-hour span.

"Which is just an astronomical number," Dr. Stephanie Felton, attending physician at Cook Children's Medical Center, said. "Every year, we obviously see the flu. This year, I will say, that we're seeing an abundance of it, as far as the numbers."

Flu symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, muscle aches, headaches, and a runny or stuffy nose. Severe symptoms can last up to three days, while less-severe symptoms can hang around for up to two weeks.

Abbott seeks fed reimbursement for border security

Gov. Greg Abbott has asked the federal government to reimburse Texas for the \$11.1 billion the state has spent in the past four years in Operation Lone Star.

"Over the past four years, OLS efforts successfully reduced illegal immigration

into Texas by 87 percent, demonstrated the ongoing effectiveness of President Donald Trump's border measures, and shone a spotlight on a national crisis," Abbott wrote in a letter to U.S. congressional leadership.

Abbott has long been critical of federal border enforcement efforts under former President Joe Biden, claiming his policies left Texas "defenseless" against infiltration across the border of violent gangs and other criminals.

Measles cases confirmed in West Texas, Houston

Two cases of measles have been confirmed in school-aged children in West Texas a few weeks after two cases were reported in a pair of Houston residents, the Houston Chronicle reported. The West Texas cases were children living in Gaines County who had not received the measles, mumps, and rubella vaccine, according to DSHS. The children were hospitalized for a time in Lubbock but have since been discharged.

The cases in Houston involved two unvaccinated adults who had recently traveled internationally.

DSHS has warned that additional cases may occur, given the highly contagious nature of measles. The virus is transmitted by contact with infectious droplets that travel airborne when an infected person breathes, coughs or sneezes. The virus can remain infectious in the air for up to two hours. Measles can cause life-threatening illness to unvaccinated persons.

More than 20 bills filed to weaken vaccine requirements

More than 20 bills have been filed for this legislative session that aim to claw back vaccine requirements, The Tribune reported. The proposed legislation would make it easier for parents to opt out of vaccinations for their children; give the Legislature final approval on any new vaccinations required by schools; apply more rules for dispensing the COVID-19 vaccination; and demand more transparency regarding possible adverse effects of vaccines.

The founder of Texans for Vaccine Choice, Rebecca Hardy, said her group is not anti-vaccine.

"We're not here to restrict anybody's access to vaccines or to dismantle the vaccine program," she said. "So, we do not take a stance on if children should get all, some or no vaccines."

Carrie Williams, a spokesperson for the Texas Hospital Association, said

vaccines have become politicized and their importance overlooked because of their efficacy.

"Vaccine decisions impact the availability of care, hospital workforce and wait times, and the people around you," she said. "We're always going to be on the side of policies that help prevent epidemics."

Data centers are booming across Texas

The Lone Star State is "ground zero" for the boom in data centers to meet growing demand, including a new joint venture between OpenAI, SoftBank and Oracle announced recently by President Trump.

The Texas Standard reported 10 data centers are already under construction, with 10 more on the way. Each building will occupy half a million square feet.

"The demand for digital services continues to increase and continues to be necessary to build out our capabilities for the 21st century economy," said Dan Diorio, senior director of state policy at the Data Center Coalition, an industry trade group. "Texas is uniquely poised to benefit from that."

The expansion, along with population growth and more frequent extreme weather events, could stretch the capacity of the state's power grid. Officials with the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) predict power demand will nearly double by 2030. A growing number of crypto mining facilities is also contributing to the demand for more power.

The state had 279 data centers as of September, according to the state comptroller's office.

State's population now surpasses 31 million

For the past two years, Texas has gained an average of 1,542 residents each day, according to the Texas Demographic Center. The U.S. Census Bureau now estimates the state surpassed 31 million residents in 2024, driven largely by international migration.

For example, of those 1,542 new daily residents, 876 were from international migration, the report showed.

"These figures highlight the state's position as a key destination for global migrants, as well as its continued appeal to those relocating from other parts of the United States," according to the report.

Gary Borders is a veteran award-winning Texas journalist. He published a number of community newspapers in Texas during a 30-year span, including in Longview, Fort Stockton, Nacogdoches and Cedar Park. Email: gborders@texaspress.com.

Obituaries

Doris Cooke Giles

1943 - 2025



A graveside service for Doris Cooke Giles, 81, of Emory, was held on February 1, at Daugherty Cemetery.

Mrs. Giles died on January 27, 2025. She was born on December 11, 1943, to Thurman D. Cooke and Annie R. Cooke (Spradling). She was a graduate of Rains High School.

In the 1960s, Mrs. Giles and her husband embarked on numerous adventures across the country for his job, a journey that fostered her love for travel and exploration. She embraced every experience, collecting knick-knacks and treasures.

She was known for her selflessness and

willingness to help others. She was a devoted mother, actively involved in the PTA and supported her children's sports teams. She took immense pride in their accomplishments and worked tirelessly to create a loving and supportive home.

She is survived by her children, Jeff Giles and Emily, Jason Giles and Tabitha, and Jonathan Giles and Amber; many grandchildren and great-grandchildren; and numerous cousins.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband, Lloyd E. Giles; and numerous cousins.

Myllinda Mae Cason Jones

1954 - 2025



Myllinda Mae Cason Jones, 70, died on January 24, 2025, with her family around her. She was born on September 8, 1954, in Emory, to Bobby and Irene Cason.

Mrs. Jones was a woman of God and a lifelong member of Clarks Chapel. She was blessed with a servant's heart and loved serving others through her gifts. She was a talented baker and created delicious sweets for the church youth group's bake sale. Her lemonade pie was an extremely coveted dessert at fundraisers and family functions. She was a proud nanny who loved caring for and spending time with her family. When she wasn't helping or caring for others, she enjoyed art, puzzles, coloring, bingo and dirt track racing.

Mrs. Jones is survived by her three

daughters, Misty Miller, Cristy Jones and Lisa (Dan) Higgins; sixteen grandchildren, Cristina, Jonathan (Danielle), Erica, Jessica (Bobby), Vallerie, Anthony Jr., Kevin, Amber, Alyssa (Mikeal), Makaylee, Shayla, Johnny Jr. and Benjamin; seven great-grandchildren, Samantha, Madeline Rose, Brileigh, Jordan, Jace, Julia Rose, Amarie and Devin; siblings, Vickie Cason, Kanetha Burchett, Eddie Klump (Jeannie), David Cason, and Lynn Cason (Debbie); and her Aunt Margret and niece Tonia, who had a special place in her heart.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband, Jon Rodney Jones; brother, Ronnie Cason; sister-in-law, Gale Tuttle; and great-grandson, Mikey.

Carol Calvin Kelly

1934 - 2025



Funeral services for Carol Calvin Kelly, 90, of Alba, will be held on Saturday, February 15, at 2:00 p.m., at First Baptist Church of Alba Family Life Center. Dr. Kelly Burton will officiate under the direction of the church and family.

Mr. Kelly died on January 14, 2025, in Grand Saline. He was born on October 29, 1934, in Palestine, to Otis and Sallye Mae Lightfoot Kelly. He grew up in Palestine and graduated from Palestine High School in 1955.

Mr. Kelly lived in Tyler, before marrying Melba Kindle in 1984 and moving to Alba. He worked for General Electric and Trane for 35 years, and retired in 1997. He loved working in his workshop, fishing and

hunting. He raised cattle until his health wouldn't allow it anymore. He also loved mowing the grass. He didn't mind giving up his pickup key but was reluctant to give up the lawnmower key.

Mr. Kelly is survived by his wife of 40 years; son, Cevin Kelly of Mt. Vernon; stepsons, David Kindle and wife Jennifer, Keith Kindle and wife Lori, and Darren Kindle and wife Kristi, all of Quitman; and sister, Bela Hafner of Palestine.

He was preceded in death by his parents.

Memorials may be made in his name to the Bright Focus Foundation, 22512 Gateway Center Drive, P.O. Box 1950, Clarksburg, MD, 20871-1950, or at www.brightfocus.org, in support of Alzheimer's Disease Research.

Mildred "Mickie" Carol Sizemore King

1958 - 2025



Funeral services for Mildred "Mickie" Carol Sizemore King, 66, of Yantis, were held on February 1, at Wilson-Bartley Funeral Home, Alba.

Mrs. King died on January 28, 2025, in Tyler. She was born on July 16, 1958, in Hyden, Kentucky, to Carroll and Alpha Lewis Sizemore. On July 21, 2006, she married Mark King in Las Vegas, Nevada. She lived in Yantis for 24 years and was a member of Lake Fork Baptist Church, Alba. She enjoyed being outdoors, gardening, watching hummingbirds and spending time with her family. She loved beach vacations, especially in Destin, Florida. She also had a special fondness for Corvettes, the Dallas Cowboys, and the University of Kentucky.

She is survived by her husband of 34 years; mother; son, Anthony Lewis and wife Tami of Canton; four daughters, Dr. April

Estrada of Wylie, Courtney Barnoskie and husband Isaac of Vian, Okla., Meagan Pohlmeier and husband Kevin of Alma, Ark., and Erica King of Vian, Okla.; brother, John Henry Sizemore and wife Cathy of London, Ky.; two sisters, Maggie Lewis and husband Chris of London, Ky., and Becky Sizemore Osborne of Hyden, Ky.; fourteen grandchildren, A.J., Makenzie, Hayden, Kamryn, Brody, Mason, Bella, Brynn, Joseph, Elias, Lucia, Simon, Nora and Magdalen; niece, Ashley Roark and husband Bryan of Ky.; great-niece and nephew, Kacie and Chase; and numerous other relatives and friends.

She was preceded in death by her father; nephew, Brian Sizemore; stepfather, Ford Simpson; and brothers-in-law, Carlo Osborne, Robert King and Steven King.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that you plant a tree in memory of Mickie.

JR Willyard

1945 - 2025



JR Willyard, 79, of Emory, died on January 25, 2025, in Emory. He was born on September 6, 1945. He was a cherished father, grandfather, brother, son and friend. He was a retired businessman, land developer and entrepreneur.

Mr. Willyard is survived by his children, Deana Larimore, Denise

Dixon and Terry Willyard; 10 grandchildren, Danielle, Brandon, Lysine, Casey, Alley, Ryan, Trevor, Taylor, Alena and Darienne; 13 great-grandchildren; and three sisters.

A celebration of life will be held in his honor, with details to be announced at a later date.

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Believer's Baptist Church

By Linda Brendle

And He sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal.

Luke 9:2

This week's sermon was called "The Incomparable Christ: A biblical foundation of missions." The final phase of Jesus' earthly ministry begins with the calling and training of the twelve Apostles (the sent ones) who will tell His story once He goes back to heaven. After He called them, He took them with Him, taught them, and empowered them to do what He did: 1) To exercise power and authority over demons and disease. 2) To proclaim the kingdom of God and the message of repentance. 3) Not to take extra provisions for the journey, but to trust Him for their needs. 4) To choose proper places to stay, not the greatest or most comfortable but a hospitable base. 5) To have a permanent testimony against

those who rejected their message, to shake the dust off their feet and move on. Today we go with the power and authority of the Word, knowing He will provide, and we continue even when it's scary or even dangerous. We aren't all called to international missions, but we are all responsible to help those who go, both spiritually and financially. We are also all responsible to share the gospel wherever we are.

February Schedule:
 • February 9, 4:45 p.m. – Berean Ladies
 • February 9, 6:30 p.m. – Sunday Night Worship, Elder Patrick Covington will teach Psalm 88.
 • February 23 – During morning worship - the Great Commission Offering
 • February 23 – After morning worship – Directory Pictures will be taken.
 • February 23, 6:30 p.m. – The Church Praying

SAVVY SENIORS

Driving with Dementia and Knowing When to Stop

Dear Savvy Senior,
 When should someone with dementia stop driving? My 83-year-old father has some dementia issues but still drives himself around town pretty well.



JIM MILLER
Savvy Senior

Concerned Daughter
 D e a r Concerned, Most doctors agree that people with moderate to severe dementia should never get behind the wheel, but in the early stages of Alzheimer's or other types of dementia, driving performance should be the determining factor of when to stop driving, not the disease itself.

With that said, it's also important to realize that as your dad's driving skills deteriorate over time from the disease, he might not recognize he has a problem. So, it's very important that you work closely with his doctor to monitor his driving and help him stop when it is no longer safe for him to drive. Here are some additional tips that can help you.

Watch for Warning Signs

The best way to keep tabs on your dad's driving abilities is to take frequent rides with him and watch out for warning signs. For example: Does he have trouble remembering routes to familiar places? Does he drive at inappropriate speeds, tailgate, drift between lanes or fail to observe traffic signs? Does he react slowly or make poor driving decisions? Also, has your dad had any fender

benders or tickets lately, or have you noticed any dents or scrapes on his vehicle? All of these are red flags.

If you need some assessment help, hire a driver rehabilitation specialist who's trained to evaluate older drivers. See Myaota.aota.org/driver_search or Aded.net to locate one in your area.

Transition Tips

Through your assessments, if you believe it's still safe for your dad to drive, you should start recommending some simple adjustments to ensure his safety, like driving only in daylight and on familiar routes, and avoiding busy roads and bad weather. Also, get him to sign a dementia "driving contract" that designates someone to tell him when it's no longer safe to drive. Go to Alz.org/driving and click on the "Download" button to print one.

You may also want to consider getting a GPS car tracking device (like Bounce.com or MotoSafety.com) to help you monitor him. These devices will let you track where he's driving and allow you to set up zones and speed limits that will send you alerts to your smartphone when he exits an area, or if he's driving too fast or braking harshly.

Time to Quit

When your dad's driving gets to the point that he can no longer drive safely, you'll need to talk to him. It's best to start having these conversations in the early stages of the disease, before he needs to quit driving so he can prepare himself.

You also need to have a plan for alternative transportation (including a list of family, friends and local transportation options) that will help him get around after he stops driving.

For tips on how to talk to your dad, the Hartford Center for Mature Market Excellence offers a helpful guide called "At the Crossroads: Family Conversations About Alzheimer's Disease, Dementia and Driving" that you can download at TheHartford.com/Publications-on-Aging.

Refuses to Quit

If your dad refuses to quit, you have several options. First, suggest a visit to his doctor who can give him a medical evaluation, and prescribe that he stops driving. Older people will often listen to their doctor before they will listen to their own family.

If he still refuses, contact your local Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to see if they can help. Some states will automatically revoke a license when a person is diagnosed with Alzheimer's or dementia, while many others require retaking a driving test.

If these fail, consider hiding his keys or you may need to take them away. You could also disable his vehicle by disconnecting the battery, park it in another location so he can't see it or have access to it, or sell it.

Send your senior questions to: Savvy Senior, P.O. Box 5443, Norman, OK 73070, or visit SavvySenior.org. Jim Miller is a contributor to the NBC Today show and author of "The Savvy Senior" book.

Emory Methodist Church

By Mary White

Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

I Corinthians 12:27

Rev. David Banks continued his series "The Theophany: You Are The Body Of Christ" with scripture text taken from I Corinthians.

We encounter Christ on our journey in this life just as Paul did. We have scales on our eyes as we travel along the way. David said we need each other and we need to accept our gifts with joy. Christ will remove the scales if you follow Him and the greatest gift of all is Love.

Upcoming dates to remember: AA meets in the fellowship hall every Tuesday and

Thursday at 7:00 p.m. and Saturday at noon. On Saturday, February 15, the Methodist Women will host their annual Valentine Party starting at 5:00 p.m. Everyone is invited so make your reservations now. Contact Linda Ross at 214-535-3680 or call the church office at 903-473-2411. Funds will support our different missions. \$20/per person. Transportation can be scheduled with advance notice. Come and celebrate Valentine Day with us.

Birthday wishes go to Dorothy Riddle and Bessie Neff.

Pray for Leo Trimble, Dee Woods, Trudi Adams and Johnny Christian.

It's going to be a wonderful warm week so get out and enjoy God's creation.

What gain has the worker from his toil? I have seen the business that God has given to the children of man to be busy with. He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also, he has put eternity into man's heart, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end. I perceived that there is nothing better for them than to be joyful and to do good as long as they live; also that everyone should eat and drink and take pleasure in all his toil—this is God's gift to man.

Ecclesiastes 3:9-13 (NIV)

FISHING REPORT

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department released the following information for Lake Fork and Lake Tawakoni taken on January 29:

Fork: Good. Water Stained; 43 degrees; 1.75 feet below pool. Bass are fair suspending jerk baits, spinner baits, and square bill crankbaits around creek channels in 5-10 feet. Off-shore bass bite is fair with Alabama rigs, spoons and dropshots in 17-22 feet.

Lake Fork crappie fishing has been as up and down as the weather and wind. With surface temperatures in the low 40s some crappie seem to be in shock. If you can get a

day with light winds it seems the bite is a little better. If the winds are howling you may want to get some work done around the house or work on tackling that day. Downsizing baits and lines are helping to get a few more bites. Small minnows, small hand ties and small soft plastics are the key until we see the bite pick back up. Hold those baits super still just above crappie and they will either bite or swim off. If they swim off it's time to find fish that will bite.

Tawakoni: Fair. Water lightly stained; 44 degrees; 2.04 feet below pool. Lake Tawakoni continues to fish well despite dropping tem-

peratures on the main lake. The hybrid striper and white bass bite is decent. Fishing is very technical at this point targeting schools of fish in open water. Presenting crappie jigs or small flukes and swimbaits is key suspended over deep water. If you locate the massive schools of threadfin shad, that is a great place to start. The eating sized catfish bite has been slow. The trophy blue catfish bite has been good. We are seeing fish to 60 pounds and most fish are coming from 30-50 feet. Fresh gizzard shad and drum are working best. Crappie are good on bridge pilings and deep timber in 30 feet of water.

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 NE Texas Farmers Co-op

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Dr. David Banks
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 Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
 Worship Time 10:30 a.m.
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Sunday School 9:00 a.m.
 Worship Service 10:00 a.m.
 Wed. Night Youth 5:30 p.m.
 Wed. Night Service 6:30 p.m.

Pastor: Robert Burns II
 Church: 903-473-3238

Pilgrims Rest Baptist Church
 1140 FM 2964, Emory

Sunday School.....9:45 a.m.
 Morning Worship...11:00 a.m.
 Evening Worship....6:00 p.m.
 "Reaching Out Because We Care"

Pastor Keith Prather
www.pilgrimsrestbaptistchurch.org

Point Church of Christ

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 Worship Service 10:00 a.m.
 Evening Worship 6:00 p.m.
 Wed. Eve. Service 7:00 p.m.

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Richard Kellam
www.pointchurchofchrist.org

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 6:00 p.m. Worship

Pastor: Jimmy Jarrett
 Hwys 515 & 779
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 903-474-9463

Daugherty Baptist Church

2 miles west of Hwy 19N on FM 514

Sunday School 10:00 a.m.
 Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.
 Evening Worship 6:00 p.m.

Pastor Joe Pierce
 903-259-1147 & 903-259-0348

St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church

Rev. Michael Ledesma
 551 East FM 2795
 903-473-5116

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Freedom Church of God

10830 FM 514
 6 mi. N on Hwy. 19, east on 514

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 Wed Evening 7:00 p.m.

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 Sunday Evening Worship 4:00 p.m.
 Wed. Bible Study 7:00 p.m.
emorychurchofchrist.org

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 Point, TX

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 6:00 p.m. .. Wednesday Service

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emorybaptist.org

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Chris Henderson—Minister of Music & Sr. Adults
Ronnie Witt—Minister of Youth & Education

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 Morning Worship 10:30am
 Evening Worship 6:30 pm

Wednesday
 Wed. Worship 6:30pm
 (Adults, Youth, Children)
 Choir Practice 6:30pm

Believers' Baptist Church

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 Sunday School 9:15 a.m.
 MorningWorship 10:30 a.m.

Wednesday
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 Student Ministry 6:30 p.m.

Dr. Jason Rolan — Pastor
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903-473-2653 to have your church placed in this directory

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The Rains County Good Samaritan Thrift Shop will have a SALE on Friday, February 7, from 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. The Thrift/Clothes store will be open Saturdays in February from 8am - noon. Clothes sale is open Mon.-Wed., 8 am-12 pm, and 1 pm-4 pm. Open 8 am - noon on Thurs.

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PUBLIC NOTICE
NOTICE TO ALL PERSONS BUYING PROPERTY IN THE VICINITY OF THE CITY OF POINT WATER SYSTEM
 City of Point Water urges all prospective land buyers to verify with the water operator or city secretary at City of Point at our office located at 320 N Locust Street Point, TX 75472 or by calling 903-598-3296 ext. 220 whether or not water service is available to the property in question.

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 Miller Grove Water Supply Corp. urges any prospective land buyers to verify with the manager at our office located at 14966 FM 1567W in Miller Grove or by calling 903-459-3383 whether or not water service is available to the property in question.

PUBLIC NOTICE
NOTICE TO ALL PERSONS BUYING PROPERTY IN THE VICINITY OF THE SHIRLEY WATER SUPPLY CORP.
 Shirley Water Supply Corp. urges any prospective buyer to verify with the manager at the office, located on FM 1567, east of Hwy. 19, north of Emory, Tex., or south of Sulphur Springs, Tex., whether or not water is available at the tract of land in question.
 Shirley Water Supply Corp.
 6684 FM 1567W
 Sulphur Springs, Texas 75482

PUBLIC NOTICE
NOTICE TO ALL PERSONS BUYING PROPERTY IN THE VICINITY OF THE EAST TAWAKONI WATER SYSTEM
 The City of East Tawakoni understands that property is sometimes sold with the representation that water is available to the property from the City of East Tawakoni water system. Such is not always the case, and the City of East Tawakoni urges any prospective buyer to verify with the City of East Tawakoni at 288 Briggs Blvd., East Tawakoni, Texas, or call 903-447-2444 that water is in fact available at the particular tract in question.

PUBLIC NOTICE OF SALE
 Bright Star-Salem Special Utility District is accepting sealed bids for 2008 Dodge Ram 3500 flatbed w/ 50,352 miles. Sealed bids must be received in the District office no later than Monday, February 24, 2025 @ 12:00 noon.
 A minimum bid of \$12,000 is required.
 The truck may be viewed at the District office located at 238 N Osborn Street in Alba. The Board of Directors reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids. The truck is sold as is with no warranty expressed or implied.

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 South Rains SUD understands that property is sometimes sold with the representation that water is available to the property from South Rains SUD water system. Such is not always the case, and the South Rains SUD urges any prospective buyer to verify with South Rains SUD at 121 N. Dunbar Lane, Emory, Texas, or call 903-473-2122 that water is in fact available at the particular tract in question.

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NOTICE TO ALL PERSONS BUYING PROPERTY IN THE VICINITY OF THE CITY OF EMORY WATER SYSTEM
 The City of Emory understands that property is sometimes sold with the representation that water is available to the property from the City of Emory water system. Such is not always the case, and the City of Emory urges any prospective buyer to verify with the City of Emory at 399 North Texas Street, or call 903-473-2465 that water is in fact available at the particular tract in question.

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LEGAL NOTICE:
 This Texas Lottery Commission scratch ticket game will close on February 13, 2025. You have until August 12, 2025, to redeem any tickets for this game: #2496 Power 10X (\$2) overall odds are 1 in 4.37. These Texas Lottery Commission scratch ticket games will close on March 19, 2025. You have until September 15, 2025, to redeem any tickets for these games: #2593 \$5,000 Lucky 7s (\$1) overall odds are 1 in 4.95, #2499 Extreme Green (\$5) overall odds are 1 in 4.07, #2502 Bingo Times 20 (\$5) overall odds are 1 in 4.37. Texaslottery.com is the official source for all pertinent game information. Game closing procedures may be initiated for documented business reasons. These games may have prizes unclaimed, including top prizes. In addition, game closing procedures will be initiated when all top prizes have been claimed. During closing, games may be sold even after all top prizes have been claimed. Must be 18 or older to purchase a ticket. For help with a gambling problem, ncpgambling.org. © 2025 Texas Lottery Commission. PLAY RESPONSIBLY.

Sports

RAINS LADY CAT & WILDCAT BASKETBALL

Lady Cats finish second in district, Wildcats closer to playoffs



Leader photo by CHUCK FITTS

Jacob Schrub (10) flies in front of the Patriot defender to take the layup during the 62-53 district victory over Prairiland on Tuesday, February 4, in Talkington Gym.

By CHUCK FITTS

Rains County Leader staff

The Rains Lady Cats finish second in District 12-3A while the Rains Wildcats move closer to securing a spot in the Class 3A playoffs.

The high school teams traveled to Mount Vernon on Friday, January 31, for district games.

The Lady Cats jumped out early and rolled to a 63-35 victory over the Lady Tigers. The Wildcats secured a victory over the Tigers, 64-

33, in the second game of the evening.

In their final home game, the Lady Cats beat the Prairiland Lady Patriots, 88-24, on Tuesday, February 4.

The Wildcats stayed even with the Prairiland Patriots until they pulled away for the 62-53 victory.

The Lady Cats finish the regular season at 29-4 and 10-2 in district. The Wildcats move to 20-7 and 7-3 in district.

The Lady Cats are ranked 15 in Class 3A by the Texas

Association of Basketball Coaches.

As the second place team in District 12-3A, they will take on the #3 ranked Gunter Lady Tigers on Monday, February 10, at 6:30 p.m. in Farmersville.

The Wildcats will continue District 12-3A play with a home game against the Chisum Mustangs on Friday, February 7. Their final regular season game will be played in Lone Oak on Tuesday, February 11, against the Buffaloes.



Leader photo by CHUCK FITTS

Splitting the Lady Patriot defenders, Jazy Phillips (11) takes the running jump shot during the 88-24 district win over Prairiland on Tuesday, February 4.

THIS WEEK IN TEXAS HISTORY

Fort Clark Stands Watch on Border Badlands

After almost a century of standing watch on the border, Fort Clark was deactivated on Feb. 9, 1946 and turned into, of all things, a dude ranch. Hellbent-for-leather horse soldiers must have turned over in their graves.

BARTEE HAILE
Historical Columnist

Sam Maverick, a renowned signer of the Texas Declaration of Independence, drove a hard bargain with the Army in July 1852. He talked the free-spending strangers into paying \$50 a month for the rights to 4,000 acres of western range worth no more than a nickel an acre on the open market.

The isolated site was on Las Moras Creek, 150 miles west of San Antonio and a mere 25-mile gallop from the Rio Grande. It was a hot, inhospitable region where the handful of hardy inhabitants lost count of 100-degree days and rarely saw more than 20 inches of rain in the course of a normally bone-dry year.

The post was named for a Major Clark killed in action during the Mexican War, an ironic choice since the cavalry stationed at Fort Clark spent most of their time chasing renegades and bandits holed up on the south side of the river.

The first detachment of five officers and 109 enlisted men arrived soon after the lease was signed with Maverick in the summer of 1852. Few were thrilled with the assignment, and an AWOL epidemic swiftly thinned the restless ranks taking a crippling toll. Within a month, a first lieutenant disappeared, followed in the fall by the captain and not long after by his replacement. By the time Christmas rolled around, a green second lieutenant was left in charge of only 75

troopers. The bored recruits believed the searing heat and monotonous routine would be the death of them, but the Comanches, Apaches and other red nomads took care of that. A scared stiff soldier wrote the folks back home that in the wilds of West Texas he was up against "the fiercest savage warriors the Army had ever encountered," and he was dead right.

Patrols stayed in the saddle for days on end tracking elusive raiding parties as far as 600 miles. These futile man-hunts usually came to an abrupt halt on the banks of the Rio Grande after the Indians slipped across the international boundary. The Army tried every trick in the book, including a short-lived treaty, but the marauders continued to run amuck.

Following the secession of Texas in March 1861, the federal horsemen abandoned Fort Clark. The best known incident that occurred during the Confederate occupation involved a lowly private with a lightning quick draw.

In an argument with the cold-as-ice Reb, a mess sergeant reached for his pistol but was shot through the stomach before he ever cleared leather. The bullet registered a second casualty, when it struck a bystander in the leg.

Screaming, "You murderer! I'll cut you in two!" a young officer drew his sword and rashly rushed the private. A second slug tore through his throat.

After the smoke cleared, the sharp-shooting culprit surrendered and was chained spread-eagle on the guardhouse floor. The officer succumbed to his gaping wound, while the prisoner somehow escaped before a court-martial could be convened. Private Ben Thompson went on to leave a bloody trail across Texas as one of the deadliest

gunfighters in Lone Star history.

By 1870 the Army was forced to admit the border cleanup was going nowhere fast. The military turned in desperation to the Seminole blacks living in Mexican exile since their eviction from Florida half a century earlier. In return for serving as scouts, they were promised regular pay and standard benefits plus land grants and full citizenship upon completion of their enlistment.

Lt. John Lapham Bullis assumed command of the Seminole scouts in May 1873. A Civil War veteran from New York, he would later be hailed by many experts as the greatest Indian fighter of all time. Ignoring the waterway which afforded their prey an off-limits sanctuary, Bullis and his outcasts carried the war into the outlaw heartland.

After eight years of no-quarter combat, the borderland was purged of the Indian menace. In countless skirmishes, the remarkable Bullis never lost a single soldier. When he was done, a dozen expeditions crisscrossed the barren countryside without sighting the slightest sign of the raiders.

Texans showed their gratitude by presenting Bullis with an engraved sword inscribed, "He has protected our homes -- our homes are open to him." But his brave scouts were left empty-handed without land or citizenship, as the Army cruelly reneged on all their lofty promises.

A fresh outbreak of border banditry in 1912 saved Fort Clark from extinction. However, the eventual demise of the cavalry as an essential cog in the modern war machine sealed the fate of the outdated installation. Thirty-four years later, the Army pulled out and weekend cowboys took over.

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LUKE CLAYTON

What do you enjoy most, hunting or fishing?

I've often been asked what I like best, hunting or fishing. I have often pondered question and have finally come to realize that whether I'm engaged in tug of war with a big catfish or striper, running a trot line, fishing a creek for spawning white bass or setting my sights on a wild hog with intentions of putting the meat on my smoker, I like most what I'm engaged in at the moment! A famous outdoors writer once said that you don't really have to 'be there' to enjoy hunting and fishing. He was alluding to the fact that once experienced, an outdoor adventure can be relived many times simply by recalling the event in one's memory.

Oh, some trips I've enjoyed in the past remain etched in my memory, such as fishing remote fly-in lakes up in Saskatchewan, waters where the fish have never seen a lure and catching is as easy as getting a bait in the water, or possibly sitting in a bow stand on the end of a shelter belt in North Dakota within a few yards of a heavily used deer trail with a harvest moon as big as Texas rising in the east. But looking back, were these experiences any more fun than spending a few solo hours after dark with my rifle and thermal scope in my 'hog blind' situated a half mile from my home on a friends place? I understand not everyone loves the thrill of pursuing fish and game as much as I and I truly consider these 'born in' traits a blessing.

My love of the outdoors has helped me through some challenging times such as the many hours I spent in heavy traffic in the Metroplex driving 27 miles one way to work on one of the busiest freeways in the state. I remember well those days when I would focus on the tail lights in front of me but my thoughts would be far away. I would be thinking about a past hunt or upcoming fishing trip rather than the fact that I had to 'put in' X number of years until I could retire. At age 51 I was able to cash in on my retirement and for the past 24 years, have been able to focus on what I truly love, enjoying a career as an outdoors writer, radio show host and for the past several years, part of the weekly outdoor TV show, "A

Sportsmans Life" on Carbon TV and YouTube.

If you were to ask me last week what I enjoy most about the outdoors, I would have replied, "Being right here in far west Texas with my good buddies Larry Weishuhn and Jeff Rice hunting deer!"

Larry is on a huge lease out in Sterling County that is under the Texas Parks and Wildlife managed lands program where biologists set a quota of bucks and does to be removed each year to keep the deer herd in balance with the habitat. Larry has had a busy fall and early winter with hunts and speaking engagements and he still had several deer permits to use. This was our second year to enjoy what I named our yearly 'venison procurement' hunt. With the warm weather we have experienced early in deer season the past couple years, I have come to enjoy late season hunting more than ever.

The old camphouse we used for headquarters reeked with nostalgia. The concrete block structure was constructed back fifty or sixty years ago and has been headquarters for not only many hunters in the fall but as lodging for cowboys working cattle on the ranch. Equipped with a kitchen, old army bunks to sleep on and a bathroom, the old structure made an ideal headquarters for the three of us.

Jeff and I were hunting management bucks, which consisted of mature deer with less than 10 points, and doe. Through the years, I've hunted all sorts of ranches, sometimes targeting a specific trophy buck which can be somewhat challenging. I've killed a good number of what is considered trophy class whitetail and thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to hunt any buck with less than ten points that had some age. Deer numbers are extremely high on this ranch and on the first hunt, I saw a total of 7 bucks that were coming to the feeder and the grape hull based Vineyard Max deer attract that I had placed strategically around my hunting blind. I spotted a big eight-point that never presented the broadside shot I was looking for. I felt completely confident with my 6.5 PRC CVA Cascade rifle topped with a Stealth Vision Scope loaded with Hornady bullets out to several hundred yards but the fat 8 point weaving through the juniper trees never gave me the shot I needed on the first hunt.

Our first evening meal

consisted of barbecue chicken and pork ribs with camp beans and potato salad and as usual at hunting camp we were all extra hungry after a day in the field. Do I need to tell you we all ate way too much? Jeff had taken a fat doe and back at camp we made fast work of hanging the venison to chill in the cold west Texas night air.

During the course of our two and one half day hunt, Larry managed to take a fine ten point buck and Jeff made a good shot on an old eight pointer that was still in prime condition even this late in the season. The general consensus was that the buck was past breeding age and had not lost body weight during the rut.

On the last afternoon of the hunt, I again spotted the eight point that I hoped to take and made a good shot at 130 yards. The buck ran about 125 yards as is often the case. I watched the deer running through the brush but lost sight of him in the thick cover. I did see two other deer he was with running to the left which is the direction I went in pursuit.

Reading sign and trailing is a necessary part of deer hunting. It was interesting taking Larry Weishuhn to the spot where I shot the buck. He read the sign on the ground perfectly and very accurately described to me where the buck was hit and insured me it was a lethal shot that would result in venison. With so many deer tracks in the area, it was impossible to trail the buck and after about 50 yards there was no sign to follow. The buck had taken a trail off to the right instead of to the left as I had guessed. When we began searching that area, Jeff Rice quickly found my buck. Back at camp we discussed the importance of never assuming a shot made at game was not a good one until every effort to find the game is exhausted. With a combined 175 years of deer hunting under our belts (none of us are spring chickens) we had all been on recoveries of deer that might have seemed more luck than skill but persistence is the key and staying positive is a must. May this lifestyle go on forever!

Listen to Luke's weekly radio show on www.catfishradio.org, one of the many stations that airs the show or the podcast just about everywhere. "Catfish Radio with Luke Clayton and Friends"

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**Welcome to our Emory
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