

Rains County Leader

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Vol. 138, Issue 39 - 8 pages

EMORY, TEXAS - THURSDAY, MARCH 13, 2025

PRICE 75¢

At home on the range



Leader photo by TREY HILL

Cows lazed around Tuesday morning, March 11, enjoying a warm spring-like day. County residents are concerned that pastures like this one could disappear as solar farms become more prevalent.

RAINS COUNTY

Court to discuss 391 Commission for county

By **CHUCK FITTS**
Rains County Leader staff

Rains County commissioners will discuss a 391 Commission during the regular meeting on Thursday, March 13, at 10:00 a.m. in the courtroom of the Rains County Courthouse.

The name of the entity refers to Section 391 of the Texas Local Government Code that provides the authorization for local governments within the same region to join together and form a sub-regional planning commission for the pur-

pose of protecting the health, safety and welfare of the people. The section was added to the local government code in 1987.

The meeting is expected to be attended by members of the 391 Commission from Van Zandt County including Van Zandt County Judge Andy Reese.

Van Zandt County Commissioners Court discussed creation of a 391 Commission for their county during the January 29 meeting and later adopted a resolution to create the entity on February 12.

A local 391 Commission would be made up of elected officials, citizens and other entities that would work together to develop regional plans for future development such as water supply, transportation and utility construction.

The creation of local commissions in Texas have been spurred by locals wanting more input with in the surge construction of solar farms and battery energy storage systems in rural areas.

Everyone is invited to attend the regular meeting that is open to the public.

FOUNDER'S DAY

Stoney LaRue to headline day of food, fun and festivities

By **CHUCK FITTS**
Rains County Leader staff

The City of Emory Tourism board announced that Stoney LaRue will headline the Founder's Day Concert and Festival at Sandy Creek Park on May 3.

The annual festival will begin with the Lions Club Pancake Breakfast from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. in the park.

The JJ Texas Star Twirlers are scheduled to perform in the park around 11:00 a.m. The Emory VFD will host its annual chicken roast fundraiser beginning at 11:00 a.m.

During the day at Sandy Creek Park, there will be a patriotic costume contest, games, bounce house, face painting, a petting zoo, food trucks, vendors, carnival games, DJ Calvin and much more.

The evening festivities will begin at 6:00 p.m. when gates open for the concert. Dylan Wheeler, of Edgewood, will open at 7:00 p.m. with LaRue to follow.

Advance tickets to the concert are \$25 and available online at stubwire.com or by phone at 877-990-7882 until May 2.

Tickets at the gate will be \$40 with children 5 and under getting in free. Anyone under 18 must be accompanied by a ticketed adult.

Attendees are invited to bring lawn chairs and blankets, but no outside food or drinks will be permitted to the concert.

For more information on the annual Founder's Day festivities or to help out, call 903-473-2465 ext. 112.

CITY OF EMORY

Council approves contract with auditor; discusses May 3 election

By **CHUCK FITTS**
Rains County Leader staff

The Emory City Council considered an auditing firm for the 2024 fiscal year, discussed the May 3 election and heard about collection of delinquent taxes during the regular meeting on Tuesday, March 11.

During the meeting, the council considered an engagement letter for the audit of fiscal year 2024. They considered several companies, including last year's auditor, but Mike Ward Accounting & Financial Consulting, PLLC of Point had the lowest bid.

Ward had recently been hired to per-

form the audit of the county's fiscal year, and has done the audits of Point and East Tawakoni.

Accepting the recommendation of the city's financial officer, the council unanimously approved a motion to accept the engagement letter with Mike Ward for the audit of the 2024 fiscal year for Emory.

Council members were updated on the May 3 election and learned that it will be shared with Rains County. By sharing the election with the county, voters will be voting at their county precincts on election day.

Council members Travis Potts and Jacob Roan are unopposed, while incum-

bent Earl Hill III is being challenged by Katelyn Green for the mayoral spot. The last day to register to vote for the May 3 election is April 3. Early voting begins Tuesday, April 22.

In presentations, Kevin Dutton, the city's representative with Linebarger Goggan Blair & Sampson, spoke to the council concerning delinquent property tax collection in the city. He walked the council through the process on when his firm takes over the collection of delinquent tax. He said that the city pays nothing, as their fees come from collections. He then answered additional questions council members had.

The council discussed the regulation

of outdoor burning within the city limits. They discussed options, but took no action.

Council members looked over the annual Racial Profiling Report from the Emory Police Department and unanimously accepted it into the minutes of the meeting.

The council entered into closed session for about 20 minutes to discuss personnel matters and security.

All council members were present for the regular meeting.

The next regular meeting of the Emory City Council is scheduled for Tuesday, April 8, at 7:00 p.m. in the council chambers of Emory City Hall.

SPOTLIGHT

Kim Forester Haupt has been in the Livestock business since childhood

By **JUDY KRAMER**
Rains County Leader contributor

If anyone knows the livestock business it is Kim Forester Haupt, who earned her first paycheck at 13 years of age working for her dad and uncle at their livestock auction company in Athens. She and the boys in the families worked in the livestock pens. The boys were paid, but she wasn't until she began learning office work. Today, she is office manager of the family business at the Emory Livestock Auction location at 620 S. Texas Street.

"Our livestock auctioning business began in 1972 in Athens when the auction barn was built," said Haupt. "We expanded by building the auction barn in Emory in 1986. Our business has always been run by family."

Haupt said her mentor, "who was everything to me," was Mildrid Turner who was with the company from the begin-

ning until 2011 when she died. Haupt said that she taught her how to learn the keys on a calculator by typing the last four digits of phone numbers in a phone book. Her first job was to verify information about the livestock coming in. Haupt's daughter is now a bookkeeper and some of her cousins are employees. After a serious car accident in 1998, which resulted in her hospitalization for three months, Haupt has stepped back and presently only works four days a week.

Looking to the past, Haupt said that almost everyone in the area had cattle at one time. The only sale day was on Tuesday, but the numbers got so big that Saturday was added to the sale days. Currently, 2,000 to 2,500 people are at Saturday sales with 1,000 to 1,200 cattle, 700 head of goats and 20 to 50 head of horses on sale. Auctions for cattle on Tuesdays begin at 11:00 a.m. On Saturdays, goats,

sheep and horses are auctioned beginning at 9:00 a.m. and cattle around 11:00 a.m. She says it is a delight dealing with good customers and employees.

Haupt grew up in New York, Texas (near Athens). She moved to Emory 20 years ago and lives in Point with her husband, Steve, who was an owner of the True Value Hardware store in Emory. They have 12 grandchildren who live in the area and can be seen getting off the school bus at Emory Livestock where some of them play in the hay and water trough. They also attend Saturday livestock auctions.

Haupt loves to travel but now limits it to business-related trips several times a year. She and her husband belong to Help Yourself, a livestock organization in Texas and Nationwide. They travel to Washington D.C. to talk about agricultural problems with elected officials.

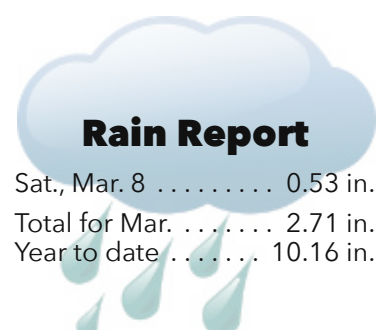


Kim Forester Haupt



City Girl:
One of
those weeks
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Jody Dyer:
Stranger things
on St. Patrick's...
page 3



Rain Report
Sat., Mar. 8 0.53 in.
Total for Mar. 2.71 in.
Year to date 10.16 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 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 - 1st Mon., 11:00 a.m., House of Prayer Family Life Center, 1382 FM 515, 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 Sat., 6:00 p.m., Rose Community Center

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

NEWS BRIEFS

Good Sam Clothes/ Thrift Shop Sales

The Rains County Good Samaritan 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 March from 8:00 a.m.-noon. Funds go to buy food for the needy and to operate the center.

Rains County Republican Meeting

Rains County Republicans welcome back Mark

and Jalise Middleton, from americanpatriotrelief.org. The meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 18, at 6:30 p.m., at RCRA 1382 FM 515, Emory, TX 75440, to hear from Texans sent to prison for praying outside the capital on January 6.

East Tawakoni Police Department Easter Egg Hunt

The East Tawakoni Police Department has set Saturday, April 12, as the annual Easter Egg Hunt date. The hunt will take place at 10:00 a.m. at the park behind East Tawakoni City Hall. Please note that the date is one week before Easter.

Carefully consider Social Security decisions

Your Social Security benefits can be an important part of your retirement income — but when should you start collecting them?



BRANDON ROBERTS
Edward Jones
Financial Advisor

You can start taking Social Security as early as 62, but your benefits will be about 30 percent higher if you wait until your full retirement age, which will be 67 if you were born in 1960 or later. Your benefits will "max out" once you reach 70.

So, in deciding whether to start early or wait until later, consider these factors:

First, if you simply need the money, you might not be able to wait. But if you have sufficient income from other sources, you could delay taking your benefits.

You also might want to wait before collecting if you're employed and you haven't reached your full retirement age. Otherwise, you'd temporarily lose benefits if your income exceeded certain amounts.

And think about your life expectancy: If you're healthy and come from a long-living family, you might lean toward waiting before collecting benefits.

Finally, your claiming decisions, or those of your spouse, could affect spousal and survivor benefits.

By making the appropriate choices, you can help maximize your Social Security benefits — and possibly enjoy a more comfortable retirement.

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

DOLLY PARTON IMAGINATION LIBRARY

Atmos Energy fuels bright minds for Rains kids



Courtesy photo

Natalie Shaddox-White (left), Atmos Manager of Public Affairs, Susan Montalvo (right), Rains DPIL Vice Chair and Grant Acquisition Co-Ordinator show Dolly their Atmos Grant of \$5,400 to purchase Dolly Books for Rains preschool children.

Atmos Energy believes in making a difference in the lives of children by collaborating with education foundations which provide resources which help children read at grade level by third grade.

Atmos Energy recently contributed \$5,400 to the Rains County Dolly Parton's Imagination Library to go towards achieving that goal. Rains County Imagination Library officials said in a press release that the funds will provide 1,932 books to be distributed to 161

preschool children enrolled in Rains County.

If you have a child that lives in Rains County, infant to five years old, Imagination Library officials encourage you to enroll them today. Complete the on-line registration form at www.dollypartonsimaginationlibrary.org or stop by the Rains County Library.

To make a donation to the Rains County Dolly Parton Imagination Library, you may donate by mail to Rains DPIL, PO Box 202, Emory, Texas 75440.

BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU

Beware of trademark, patent solicitation scams

Applying for a patent or trademark with the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) comes with an unexpected risk — your mailing and email addresses become part of the public record. Unfortunately, this exposure makes you a target for misleading solicitations.

How the scam works
Shortly after filing your application with the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), you may start receiving a flood of letters and emails disguised as official notices. These messages often appear legitimate, claiming to be from a "trademark office," a "U.S. agency," or even the USPTO itself. What makes them especially deceptive is that they may include accurate details, such as your application serial number or registration number, to make them seem more credible.

Scammers frequently send fake invoices or misleading letters, making it appear as though you must pay additional fees to comply with trademark regulations. One individual reported to BBB Scam Tracker that a scammer posing as a U.S. trademark attorney named Raul Gonzalez attempted to collect \$199 under the guise of a "Letter of Confirmation." The fraudster also requested personal identifying information, including an ID, driver's license, and social media accounts linked to the trademark application — a clear red flag.

How to avoid trademark scams

- **Review your application status regularly on the USPTO website.** By checking the official website regularly, you'll know for sure if you owe any fees or have any pending deadlines for responses during the application process.

- **Check the domain name.** If you receive an email you aren't sure about, check the sender's domain name. If it doesn't end in "@uspto.gov," it isn't from the USPTO and you are under no obligation to reply.

- **Check the return address.** Official communications from USPTO will only come from the United States Patent and Trademark Office in Alexandria, Virginia.

- **Research trademark companies before you hire.** If a company appears legitimate and you do need assistance with the application process, think twice before you hire. Research the company thoroughly and make sure an experienced trademark attorney will be overseeing the work. Remember, only an attorney can represent you before the USPTO; most companies can't.

- **Hire a trademark attorney.** If you can, the USPTO highly recommends hiring a trademark attorney to assist you with the federal trademark registration process, which is in fact a legal proceeding. If you do, the USPTO will communicate solely with the attorney regarding deadlines, unresolved issues, and Office Actions, and you can safely disregard any solicitations you receive personally — or you can consult with your attorney about them.

- **Understand that registries are optional.** The USPTO has the only official database of federally registered and applied-for trademarks in the U.S. Once you've paid the application fee, your trademark is automatically listed in the database. You don't need to pay fees to have it listed in the official database, and listing your trademark in other registries is entirely up to you.

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

Tom W. Hill - 1904-1937

Sam Fitzgerald - Before 1900

Earl Hill, Sr. - 1937-1960

W.O. Heblsen - Before 1900

Kathleen Hill Becknell - 1962-1995

A.S. Hornbeck - Before 1900

Earl Hill, Jr. - 1995-2019

J.H. Bradford - 1901-1904

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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!

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

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An open letter to Congressman Pat Fallon

As an elected representative of the people of Texas 4th Congressional District your comments were very hurtful and disrespectful to the voters of Our State who live in Rural Texas

The 4th Congressional District is comprised of hard working Texans who have dedicated their lives to helping Feed America and people around the world through their Farming Operations Your comments were regarding SNAP benefits and who was living off the dole. Many Veterans Senior Citizens women and children are struggling to get by and are receiving SNAP benefits helping sustain their lives!

You have also voted to Cut Veterans Services when we are Currently Losing 20 American Warriors per day by suicide due to delays in Accessing their benefits promised when they signed their names on the line.

Agreeing to follow the Military Code of Conduct following all Legal Orders in compliance with their obligations under contract with the United States Military Services.

Now members of Congress who are Supposed to Represent Their Constituents who elected them have placed Constituents on the Billionaires chopping block !

Texas 4Th is Home to Many Voters who Support Our Veterans and not a representative who doesn't advocate for all his constituents with the power to vote them out of office.

Mid Terms will be brutal for MAGA Party (republicans)!

I'm also wondering if you have room at your house for people in our local nursing homes ?

Concerned American voter

Marvin Henson
Texas 4Th Congressional District
Rains County Rural Texas Constituent

CITY GIRL

One of those weeks

By Linda Brendle

Last week started off pretty well as Mondays go, but it went downhill from there. We woke up Tuesday morning to the sound of thunder, rain and the thump of a limb falling on the roof. David hasn't felt like getting up there to check it yet, but so far nothing is leaking, so maybe it's not too bad.

Wednesday went okay until that night after we got home from church. David said he felt like he was coming down with something, and he was right. Thursday morning, he was stopped up and coughing, and I wasn't feeling that great. In an effort not to share our good fortune, we stayed home all day. I missed the weekly girls' coffee klatch, and we both missed lunch at the Senior Center. I made chicken noodle soup hoping the old-fashioned cure for what ails you would work.

It didn't - he was no better Friday morning. I felt pretty good, but I stayed home so I could make him endless cups of hot tea with honey and lemon. I also warmed up chicken soup since we missed lunch at the Senior Center again. We also missed our weekly home group potluck, so I decided to make him one of his favorite meals - pork chops, baked potatoes, pinto beans and cornbread. The beans were in the InstantPot and the potatoes were in the oven when I went into the kitchen to refill my water glass. Something in my peripheral vision caught my eye, and when I looked at the stove, I could see a disaster in the making

through the glass door of the oven. A small section of the lower element was glowing bright red, and sparks and small flames were shooting up. I quickly turned off the oven and watched it until the sparks died down and the red disappeared.

I finished baking the potatoes in the microwave and consulted Google on how to make cornbread on top of the stove. I ended up with what looked like a large, thick pancake made with cornmeal more commonly known as corn pone or hoe cake. The rest of the dinner was good, and although I wasn't thrilled with the bread, David seemed okay with it, and it gave him something to sop up his bean juice.

I had noticed that something had dripped on the overheated section of the heating element, so Saturday morning, I set about cleaning it. I sprayed it with some gentle cleaner, but when I touched it with a cloth, it crumbled. While David looked online for an element, I washed a few dishes that didn't make it into the dishwasher - until the sink backed up. Our social calendar for Saturday had been full. We had planned to go to the American Legion breakfast early and then attend an evangelism seminar in Sulphur Springs. Saturday night we were planning to help a friend celebrate eighty years at a surprise party. Instead, I made oatmeal for breakfast, warmed up soup for lunch, and tried to warm leftover pizza using only the broiler. The pizza was cold in the middle.

Sunday morning, I felt pretty good, and David seemed a little better, so I went to church. I spent a lot of time bringing people up to date on David's condition and trying to avoid hugs in case I might be a carrier.

After church I went to Brookshire's where I picked up some smoked sausage that I could warm in a skillet and some jalapeno cornbread that might be a bit better than the leftover corn pone. The sausage was good with the beans, but the cornbread was extremely sweet. If I had checked the ingredients, I would have noticed that sugar was the first ingredient listed, and each serving has 18 grams of sugar. I hope the local wildlife likes jalapeno cornbread.

The night before, we had worked on the sink using the last bit of drain cleaner, some RV holding tank treatment left from our camping days, hot water, and even baking soda and vinegar. The water drained out, but very slowly, so while I was out, I picked up more drain cleaner. By the end of the day, I was able to run the dishwasher and wash the pots and pans that had stacked up. As the day wore on, my throat began to feel sore, so I stayed home from church, and we spent the evening watching old movies.

As I sit here Monday morning writing this column, my throat is still a little sore, my head feels stuffy, and I'm suffering from stomach upset from the meds I took last night that are supposed to shorten the duration of my cold. David woke up feeling pretty good, but the longer he was up, the worse he felt. We're expecting the new heating element today, but other than that, today will probably be soup and hot tea for both of us. It's shaping up to be another one of those weeks.

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.

Stranger things on St. Patrick's Day



"May love and laughter light your days, and warm your heart and home. May good and faithful friends be yours, wherever you may roam. May peace and plenty bless your world with joy that long endures. May all life's passing seasons bring the best to you and yours!"



JODY DYER
Typewriter Weekly

An Irish Blessing

As we slide into the month of March, we are again blessed with the coming of St. Patrick's Day. For those of us who are Irish, and the rest of society, things can get pretty fun.

As you know, Saint Patrick was a fifth-century Christian missionary in Ireland. He is considered the patron saint of Ireland, engineers, and people who fear snakes. And St. Patrick's Day, celebrated each March 17, has become one big party around the world, for the Irish and others alike.

Aside from the normal St. Patrick's Day festivities like the mass consumption of green beer, ingesting quantities of corned beef and cabbage, and the wearing of green, other traditions abound, especially here in the U.S. And some of them are strange...

In O'Neill, Nebraska, the official Irish capital of the state, St. Paddy's Day is celebrated every month. In the center of town, at the intersection of Route 281 and Hwy. 20, you will find a giant green shamrock painted on the highway. On the 17th of every month all the residents wear green and

gather there to celebrate their Irish heritage.

One of the most well-known St. Patrick's Day traditions takes place in Chicago. Every March the Chicago River turns green in time for the St. Patrick's Day parade. This tradition has been carried out by the Butler and Rowan families for the past 50 years. These folks use a special top-secret and eco-friendly vegetable-base dye. The river stays green for several days.

In Hot Springs, Arkansas, the world's shortest St. Paddy's Day parade takes place on Bridge Street. Bridge Street was dubbed "the shortest street in everyday use in the world" by Ripley's Believe It or Not in the 1940s. The hour-long parade includes a Blarney Stone kissing contest and accomplished Elvis impersonators.

If you like parades, the place to be is New Orleans. On St. Patrick's Day residents and visitors pour into the Irish Channel neighborhood for a giant street party and food fight (using all the ingredients that would go into a traditional Irish stew). The highlight of the event is the ceremonial throwing of the cabbages, memorializing how cabbages replaced potatoes, becoming a staple of Irish cuisine, after the potato famine.

Celebrations in Portland, Maine, include the famous ice-cold, mind numbing St. Paddy's Day Plunge. Participants jump into the freezing Atlantic Ocean at 5:30 a.m. to enjoy the frigid waters. They are rewarded with a free Irish breakfast to go along with the adrenaline rush.

New London, Wisconsin, is known for its annual Leprechaun Crawl. Members

of the local Shamrock Club, the leprechauns, prowl the city, changing street signs to "New Dublin" for the day, visiting schools, hospitals, and other establishments that will allow the inebriated entry.

But of all the strange happenings taking place on St. Patrick's Day in our nation, this one may take the cake, or the cabbage. Leave it up to the Texans to do things right. In the sleepy little town of Old San Patricio, Texas (population 384), they celebrate St. Patrick's Day by staging the only World Championship Rattlesnake Races. As you may remember, legend credits Saint Patrick with driving the snakes out of Ireland. And this small Texas town was settled by Irish immigrants, so there lies the connection. Residents and visitors are invited to race. For a small fee you can "rent" a rattlesnake and join the fun. The racecourse is a grass strip 80 feet long. Racers are given a 6-foot-long plastic rod (called a "gitter") to coax their snake down the track. Race rules specify that you may not smack your snake. Racers are encouraged to wear snake boots. To date, no racers, revelers, or innocent bystanders have been bitten, but things do get western. There are snakes all over the place.

Happy St. Patrick's Day! Do something strange to celebrate this year!

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. typewriterweekly.com © 2025 Jody Dyer

TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT

Chronic wasting disease detected in Kaufman County deer breeding facility

AUSTIN - Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) received confirmation of two cases of chronic wasting disease (CWD) in a Kaufman County deer breeding facility. This is the first CWD detection in a deer breeding facility in the county.

Two white-tailed deer - a 20-month-old male and an eight-month-old female - tested positive through antemortem testing conducted to meet CWD surveillance requirements prior to transferring deer from the registered deer breeding facility. Texas A&M Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory (TVMDL) initially analyzed the samples, and the National Veterinary Services Laboratory in Iowa confirmed the CWD detection.

CWD has an incubation period that can span years, so the first indication of the disease in a herd is often found through surveillance testing rather than observed clinical signs. Permitted deer breeding facilities must test all mortalities within the facility and conduct antemortem testing on any deer prior to movement from the facility, in compliance with surveillance and testing requirements. This positive facility and its premises were placed under a quarantine by Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) to help prevent spread of disease from the facility. TPWD and TAHC will be working with the facility owner to develop a herd plan to address disease mitigation in the facility.

CWD is a fatal neurological disease found in certain cervids including deer, elk,

moose and other members of the deer family. This slow, progressive disease may not produce visible signs in susceptible species for several years after infection. As the disease process continues, animals with CWD may show changes in behavior and appearance. Clinical signs may include progressive weight loss, stumbling or tremors with a lack of coordination, loss of appetite, teeth grinding, abnormal head posture and/or drooping ears, and excessive thirst, salivation or urination.

In Texas, the disease was first discovered in 2012 in free-ranging mule deer along a remote area of the Hueco Mountains near the Texas-New Mexico border. CWD has since been detected in Texas captive and free ranging cervids, including white-tailed deer, mule deer, red deer and elk.

For more information on previous detections in Texas, regulations, and CWD best management practices for hunters and landowners, visit TPWD's CWD page.

A man named Fred

Fred grew up in the late stages of the Great Depression, having learned how to live within his means.

Fred worked hard providing for his growing family, living frugally while managing to sock away a little bit each week.

Yes the family probably could have used this money to claw its way into another class of the American Caste system.

Fred knew the importance of being able to make it through when times get really tough and stayed the course in his approach to saving for the future.

I haven't mentioned Fred's wife Helen, they were married for over 75 years after starting their lives together in their early teens (this was Normal Activity during that time period)

Helen was always working 24/7 365 never earning a penny, only the love her family showed was her reward.

Helen became a prisoner of her own mind following her Alzheimer's diagnosis!

Fred would arrive daily at the same time to help Helen eat her breakfast, remaining until she had eaten lunch and then Fred would return home working towards getting her the best care possible Helen was the Love of his life!

Alzheimer's disease care is very expensive and after the Years of Frugality Fred's savings were exhausted in less than one year.

Fred sold off everything he owned so Helen could qualify for Medicaid and the continued care she needed and deserved for as long as required!

Not everyone receiving Medicaid is Undeserving of the life saving benefits Medicaid provides to their Nursing Home ,specialized care from underpaid individuals.

Fred is a great example of what we should realize occurs to the most Frugal and Responsible People who are now receiving Medicaid benefits and coverage.

Marvin Henson Point, Texas

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TEXAS CROSSWORD
by Charley & Guy Orbison
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ACROSS

1 TXism: "___ pipe cinch" (certain)
5 TXism: "got time on my hands"
6 1952 film made in Texas: "___ Zapata!"
7 TX Penal Code makes ___ offense to drive while intoxicated
8 TXism: "couldn't find neither hide ___ hair of him"
9 many cowboys once chewed it
16 Galveston has largest Mardi ___ celebration in Texas
18 TXism: "nervous as a frog ___ part"
21 elected county prosecutor (abbr.)
22 shallowest Great Lake
23 Pope ___ XIII established the diocese of Dallas
24 Toyota mid-sized truck
30 TXism: "mad as a rained-___"
34 Clint of film "Space Cowboys," also starring TX Tommy Lee Jones (init.)
35 farmer, e.g.
36 bad golf shot
37 loading areas in Texas coastal cities
39 former name: "Starr ___ Historical Park"
43 Texas "ragtime" Joplin

44 Texas Longhorn beef has ___ than many other breeds
45 early Texas film actress, Vinson (init.)
46 McAllen religious AM
47 Astro or Ranger common pitcher
48 ___ injury: ___ cuff
49 this TX Brown won bronze medal in shot put in 1950

10 Galvestone has ___ last drive-in theaters in Texas
11 honky tonks
12 TXism: "pitched ___" (tantrum)
13 systems of beliefs
14 Astro Mike Scott won 1986 ___ Young Award
15 TXism: "black gold"
17 rock found in Palo Duro Canyon and South Texas Plains
19 TXism: "Satan's ___" (barbed wire)
20 book "1941: Texas ___ War"
24 past Texas Rangers GM, Grieve (init.)
25 TXism: "costs an ___ and a leg"

26 TX Sissy's "___ Miner's Daughter"
27 Jerry Jones to the Cowboys
28 TXism: "a ___" (a lot)
29 label of soundtrack for 1999 film "Happy, Texas"
31 wagon track
32 TXism: "that's a horse ___ different color"

33 Houston NBA team
38 TXism: "___ dogs" (hair food)
40 TXism: "he's got the morals ___ alley cat"
41 singer and jazz pianist ___ King Cole
42 turn from liquid to vapor
48 wander
50 steak order
51 noted TCU football coach "Dutch" Meyer (init.)
56 TXism: "seein' eye ___" (agreeing)
57 fabric made from a loom

DOWN

1 TXism: "___ high off the hog"
2 VIP at the Tyler County Booster
3 in Johnson County off I-35
4 Texas sausage maker, James
9 TX semiconductor co.

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-Mark Twain

Sheriff's Report

The Rains County Sheriff's Office took the following reports of activity during the week of March 3-9:

Arrests

3-3: Ezequiel Vasquez. Driving while intoxicated second, \$4,000 bond.

3-3: Roger Chapline Griffith. Assault causing bodily injury to family member, \$6,000 bond.

3-4: Ryan Heath Simmons. Stalking, \$100,000 bond.

3-4: Donna Lynn Warren. Possession of a controlled substance PG 1/1-B less than 1 gr., (probation violation) bond denied.

3-4: James Kyle Echols. Theft of property greater than or equal to \$2,500 less than \$30,000, \$150,000.

3-5: Kirk Daniel Ramey. Burglary of building, \$15,000 bond; burglary of building, \$10,000 bond.

3-6: Caitlyn Denise Wilson. Probation violation/arson intending to damage habitation/place of worship if at trial, \$150,000 bond.

3-7: Terry Ray Trewin. Driving while intoxicated third or more if at trial, \$10,000 bond.

3-7: Garon Duane Skelton. Failure to comply sex offender duty to register life/annual, \$30,000 bond.

3-7: Jeremy Wayne Farrar. Probation violation (possession of a controlled substance PG 1 less than 1 gr., \$150,000 bond.

3-8: Jessica Daniel Quinn. Failure to comply with probation, \$1,500 bond; failure to appear - inhalant paraphernalia use/possession to inhale, \$1,500 bond; failure to appear - driving with license invalid with previous conviction/suspension without financial responsibility, bond denied.

3-9: Paul Kevin Williams. Credit card or debit card abuse, unknown bond.

3-9: Stephanie Dawn Drake. Arson with a person present or attempting to be present, causing substantial damage to a building, habitation, or vehicle, unknown bond.

Calls

3-3: Hwy. 19N Driver struck a deer and she's not sure the deer was dead or not; CR 1275 Medical assist for male having trouble

breathing; CR 1396 Medical assist for a male who had a seizure; Hwy. 276 Reckless driving grey Toyota all over the road; Sheriff's Office (SO) lobby Male reports a dog attacked his dog; CR 1315 Medical assist 77-year-old male with sharp chest pain; Hwy. 69 at FM 47 Reckless driving blue Chevy Cruz; CR 3390 Medical assist 70-year-old female unable to get out of chair and fell; CR 1525 Medical assist 20-year-old male throwing up non stop; CR 1470 Medical assist male with low blood pressure; PR 5402 Yelling and screaming heard from down the street; E Lennon Dr. Medical assist 24-year-old cut her finger; FM 515 Side by side struck by a vehicle; FM 3274 Male damaged another vehicle; CR 3335 Male shining his laser all over caller's walls and into his windows; Hwy. 19S Two-vehicle accident; CR 3335 Neighbor dispute and threats made.

3-4: 1st St. Carport blew onto a porch and female can't get out of her house; 3rd St. Tree in power lines sparking and causing a fire; Hwy. 19 Piece of roofing laying at the side of the roadway; Hwy. 276 Tree down on the highway; CR 1410 Two trees down on the road; CR 4325 Tree down on the road; CR 2570 Tree blocking the road; Ravine St. Bus backed into the telephone pole and wire is hooked to the bus; Forbis St. Tree down on the road; CR 1605 Tree down on the road; CR 4252 Metal hanging on the power lines; Hwy. 276 East Tawakoni Damaged property at the dollar mart; CR 3220 Tree blocking the roadway; CR 1530 Trees in the roadway; CR 1605 Tree blocking the roadway; FM 275 Downed power lines; CR 3151 Tree blocking in the roadway; E Lennon Dr. Sonic sign blew down and debris in the parking lot; CR 1310 Trees blocking the roadway; Hwy. 276 Debris in the roadway; CR 1315 Tree blocking the roadway; FM 47 Motorist assist to help clear road; FM 514 Debris in the roadway; Quitman St. Downed power lines by CBTX and Calhoun's Gym; Hwy. 276 Limbs on the power line; Forbis St. Tree down on the roadway; Ave. D Debris in the roadway; CR 1460 Welfare concern that there may be someone inside a damaged house; CR 4320 Downed power lines; FM 2946 Livestock on the road-

way; 4th St. Downed power lines; CR 1525 Repossession; Lakeland Loop Structure fire; Braziel Bay Possible deceased female; CR 1250 Downed power lines; CR 1250 Medical assist for male out of oxygen; E Lennon Dr. Medical assist for male having issues with his leg; CR 1621 Report of dogs not being taken care of and neighbor is having to feed them; CR 3231 Lift assist; PR 5529 Lost phone pinging at an address on a private road; FM 3299 Report of shots fired; FM 3274 Livestock on the roadway; Hwy. 69 Issues with traffic due to traffic lights being out; SO lobby Hispanic male needs translator in regards to a female in the jail waiting for ICE to pick her up; Rhodes Dr. City ordinance violation; Smith Cir. City ordinance violation; Katy Dr. Two large aggressive dogs running around; Smith Cir. City ordinance violation; CR 2355 Debris in the roadway; CR 3335 Male pulling his vehicles to the fence and shining the lights into the house.

3-5: Duffy St. Noise complaint; North Shore Rd. Agency assist for a fire; Smith Cir. City ordinance violation; CR 1402 Medical assist 84-year-old female leg swelling and fever; CR 4460 Livestock on the roadway; N Texas St. Medical assist for male with difficulty breathing; CR 3325 Medical assist 80-year-old female fell; S Texas St. Medical assist 74-year-old female with nausea; N Texas St. Medical assist for patient with low oxygen; CR 3425 Medical assist 70-year-old female with headaches and nausea; FM 275 Neighbor's dogs are out; E Lennon Dr. Medical assist for male at the gym who may have had a stroke; FM 275 Livestock on the roadway; SO lobby Female just bought a vehicle and she got the title but wants to know if she can drive the vehicle with no plates on it; CR 3150 Two vehicles racing across a pasture; Oakleaf Tr. Welfare concern for 82-year-old who lost her purse in Rockwall Co.

3-6: Hwy. 69 at FM 779 Vehicle in a ditch; CR 3500 Welfare concern for male with dementia who thinks someone is out to kill him; N Texas St. Medical assist for female in her 70s who fell and hit her head; SO lobby Male is about to buy an ATV and wants to know if it can be driven on the roadway; W



Leader photo by TREY HILL

Emory Police Department, Rains County Sheriff's Department, DPS, and Emory Volunteer Fire Department respond to a three-vehicle accident Tuesday afternoon, March 11. The accident occurred at the intersection of Hwy. 69 and Quitman St. in Emory.

Quitman St. Medical assist 70-year-old with chest pain; Hwy. 69W Medical assist for person choking on a corn dog; FM 275 Livestock on the roadway; McMillan Rd. Neighbor has a camera that is pointed towards caller's house and they don't appreciate it; Rains County Jail inmate was informed that a 1979 Blazer had disappeared from her property while she was in jail; Hwy. 69W Reckless driving small truck passing with oncoming traffic; Hwy. 276 at FM 47 Three people panhandling at the intersection; PR 5505 Concern for missing money from bank account; White Rock Rd. Male states his son's girlfriend's dog just attacked him and bit him; Hwy. 69 Medical assist at the high school gym for adult having a seizure; CR 2180 Male states there are 2-3 men in his yard with sticks messing up his yard items.

3-7: Hwy. 276 Suicidal female; FM 514 Deer in the road still alive; FM 2946 Medical assist 82-year-old female keeps passing out; Briggs Blvd. Aggressive dog has attacked three different people in the neighborhood; CR 3130 Accident and one arrested for intoxication; FM 47 Male reports his neighbor's dogs are trying to attack his little dog; CR 1235 Road sign was dropped in the middle of the road and caller moved it to the ditch; E Lennon Dr. Medical assist for female in early 20s with heart failure; SO call Medi-

cal assist for 53-year-old female with breathing problems;

3-8: Hwy. 276 Welfare concern for male in vehicle on the side of the road who didn't wake up when caller shined a light on him; PR 8515 Medical assist 93-year-old female having a hard time breathing; Hwy. 276 Livestock on the roadway; CR 4254 Domestic issues; FM 3274 Caller reports her boyfriend kicked her out of her house and set her belongings on fire; N 1st St. Point Boyfriend and brother-in-law are fighting in the yard and EMS needed for cuts and possible head injury; FM 275 Load was delivered and customer isn't paying; FM 2737 Medical assist 41-year-old female having trouble breathing; FM 2946 Livestock on the roadway; CR 2250 Motorist assist and female found to be wanted out of Denton and she was detained.

3-9: E Lennon Dr. Problems with a 13-year-old juvenile making threats to hit anyone who comes in the room; Quitman St. Suspicious male looking through the window of the bank; FM 2324 Vehicle ran off the road and into the ditch; W Lennon Dr. Female would like a deputy to go with her to get her property; SO call Report of stolen mail; E Lennon Dr. Medical assist for female unable to get out of the tub and is recovering from two broken legs; FM 2795 Medical assist 53-year-

old female having a hard time breathing; CR 3202 Warrant service and one arrested; PR 7707 Warrant service and one arrested; FM 513 Suspicious person near warehouse where damage had been done previously; SO lobby Male wanting to turn himself in for probation violation; CR 1320 Medical assist for male with possible internal bleeding; CR 3210 Male reports female and her friend are harassing him; Shoreline Dr. Agency assist tanker needed to help West Tawakoni; Swearingen Beach East Tawakoni Camper on fire.

The Sheriff's Department reported 254 calls for the week. Among the calls were: 6 paper services, 2 damaged property, 21 debris in the roadway, 2 disturbances, 6 downed power lines, 2 harassments, 1 structure fire, 7 livestock on the roadway calls, 31 medical assists, 2 neighbor disputes, 4 reckless drivers, 1 repossession, 1 shots fired, 1 stolen vehicle, 1 suicidal subject, 3 suspicious activities, 3 suspicious persons, 55 traffic stops, 4 warrant services, 6 welfare concerns, 5 accidents, 1 death, 2 aggressive animals, 3 animal at large, 4 animal welfare concerns, 6 motorist assists, and 5 city ordinance violations.

There were: 27 citations given, 21 EMS transports, 3 fires extinguished, and 27 warnings given.

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THIS WEEK IN TEXAS HISTORY

Four brothers robbed banks and trains too

by Bartee Haile

Breaking their habit of working strictly at night, a bandit band of brothers robbed the bank at New Braunfels in broad daylight on Mar. 12, 1922.



BARTEE HAILE
Historical Columnist

If Willis Newton can be believed, and that is a big "if," the Newton Boys were the most successful

bank and train robbers of all-time. Their total take from 87 banks and six trains in a five-year crime spree was "more money than the Dalton Gang, Butch Cassidy's Wild Bunch and the James-Younger Gang combined."

The matriarch of the Callahan County clan entertained her 11 children with exciting tales of outlaws. While her bedtime stories may have influenced Willis' career choice, his refusal to follow in his cotton-chopping father's footsteps probably had more to do with it.

Eighteen year old Doc Newton was caught stealing a small amount of unprocessed cotton from a gin in 1909. Despite his protests of innocence, older brother Willis, one year out of his teens, was charged as a party to the pilferage and sent to prison along with Doc to serve a two-calendar stretch.

Punishment for an escape turned the term into half a decade of hard time. Released ahead of schedule by a pardon from Gov. Oscar Colquitt, Doc went home to Uvalde, where the Newtons had moved, but his big brother jumped head-first into a life of crime.

Petty thievery kept Willis from starving, but on occasion he did step up his game. On New Year's Eve 1914, he relieved Southern Pacific passengers of \$4,700 in cash and valuables and two years later participated in an Oklahoma bank heist that netted \$10,000.

When a burglary landed Willis back in the state slammer, the clever convict

merely forged his walking papers. Though not quite as resourceful, Doc proved to be the ultimate flight risk breaking out of jail no fewer than five times.

Following his last escape in 1920, Doc headed straight for Tulsa where Willis had formed the gang that would be known as the Newton Boys. Ready and waiting were brothers Jess and Joe, the baby of the brood, along with an explosives expert and skilled safecracker named Glasscock.

Working from a list of banks with vaults Glasscock could open in his sleep, the gang busted small-town banks from Texas to Canada. Striking in the dead of night, Willis cut the telephone lines in advance of Glasscock blowing the walk-in safes with nitroglycerin and dynamite caps. Two Newtons stood watch with shotguns, while their brethren loaded the loot into a waiting getaway car.

The system was foolproof. The loud explosion rarely woke anybody, and even insomniacs did not bother to investigate. That gave the gang the time to completely clean out the vault and even lug heavy bags of coins, at Willis' insistence, out the door. So much time, in fact, they managed to empty not one but two banks in Hondo.

The hours the burglars kept made them invisible phantoms. No one ever saw their faces much less knew their names. As far as law enforcement was concerned, the nocturnal crimes were committed by different suspects in different parts of the state and country.

Were it not for their leader's greed and ambition, the Newtons might have gone on indefinitely. But their daytime stick-up of bank messengers on a Toronto street in July 1923 ended in a gun battle that attracted the attention the gang had so scrupulously avoided.

Rather than retreat to old and safer haunts in Texas, Willis threw in with Chicago mobsters and a corrupt

postal inspector to pull the biggest train robbery in American history. On the plus side, the proceeds were mind-boggling – three million dollars – but the down side was the Texans' worst nightmare come true.

Doc nearly died from bullets pumped into him by Glasscock, who in the dark mistook him for a railroad guard. Chicago cops trailed an underworld doctor to the hotel room, where Joe sat holding the hand of his badly wounded brother, and took both into custody. Willis was arrested the next day, when he dropped in to see how Doc was doing.

Joe succeeded in skipping town with \$35,000 and made it all the way back to San Antonio. But he got stinking drunk, buried the money, promptly forgot where and walked into a Ranger trap on the border.

Luckily for the Newton brothers, the prosecutor was more interested in making examples of the postal inspector and mobsters than four presumably minor characters. In exchange for testifying against their Windy City accomplices, the Newtons received amazingly light sentences. Jess was out of Leavenworth in nine months, Joe in a year, Willis in four and Doc in five because of extra time tacked on for his 1920 escape.

In the 1930's, Willis and Joe spent seven and ten more years behind bars on a robbery rap most sources agree was trumped-up. Willis was the last brother to wander back to Uvalde before the members of the Newton Gang began dying off with Joe the last to go in 1989.

The 1998 motion picture "The Newton Boys" played fast and loose with the facts. Two redeeming features of this mediocre movie may be that it was filmed on location around the Lone Star State and starred a couple of actors actually born in Texas.

Contact Bartee Haile at barteehaile@gmail.com or by mail at P.O. Box 130011, Spring, TX 77393.

FISHING REPORT

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department released the following information for Lake Fork and Lake Tawakoni taken on March 5:

Fork: Good. Water Stained; 60 degrees; 0.20 feet below pool. Water level is about 4 inches low with temperatures 56-65 degrees. Bass have made a big move to the shallows with some on beds in 1-3 feet. Flukes and senkos are good in these areas. Chatterbaits and small swimbaits are good in the backs of the pockets and shallow flats with grass. Look for some main lake points to start producing with square-bill crankbaits and Carolina rigs in 3-5 feet. Report by Marc Mitchell, Lake Fork Guide Service.

Catching small bass shallow with bait fish streamers. Larger females will become more active as warm days continue around structure and brush. The crappie should be moving shallow and Woolly buggers can be a good choice. Report by

Guide Alex Guthrie, Fly Fish Fork Guide Service.

The Lake Fork crappie bite is really good, if you can stand the cold weather and beat the winds. Patterns are changing daily due to the inconsistent weather patterns. Some days fish will stack up on bridges and the next they will disappear. Timber in 14-34 feet seems to be the most consistent pattern. If you find a crappie and hold an artificial bait above it still enough most fish are crushing that bait. Use smaller profile jigs in deeper water mid lake, or on bridges. On the north end in shallower and muddier water use longer and bigger profile jigs. Try to fish lighter, more neutral colors in deeper water and darker colors in shallower water. Soft plastics and minnows will still get you bit as well. We should see the fish push shallower and shallower over the next few weeks with warmer temps in the forecast after the next week. Report by Jacky Wiggins, Jacky Wig-

gins Guide Service.

Tawakoni: Fair. Water lightly stained; 51 degrees; 0.32 feet above pool. Lake Tawakoni is starting to warm up but the spring bite has not turned on yet. The recent arctic weather cooled the main lake temperatures. Hybrid stripers and white bass are slow on the main lake. We have been seeing good numbers of these fish fishing different creeks and rivers above the lake on crappie jigs. The trophy catfish bite is still very good in 15-30 feet of water. Still seeing quality fish to 55 pounds landed on fresh cut shad and drum. The eating sized catfish bite is starting to turn on when we have warmer days. Tiny pieces of cut shad are the ticket in 3-15 feet. Crappie are good in 2-5 feet on jigs when we have a warm up. Bass have been slow, but anticipate the largemouth bass bite to turn on in the next 10 days. Report by Captain Michael Littlejohn, Lake Tawakoni Guide Service.

Updated Property Tax Information Now Available for Texas Taxpayers

New and updated property tax information has just been compiled by Rains Appraisal District and is available now to assist taxpayers. This property tax information is current and covers a wide range of topics, such as taxpayer remedies, exemptions and appraisals, and has information for select groups, such as disabled veterans and persons aged 65 or older.

The Appraisal District can be contacted about any property tax issues, we will provide the most complete, accurate and up-to-date information available to assist you or you can search our website RainsCAD.org.

This includes information about the following programs.

- **Property Tax Exemptions for Disabled Veterans** – The law provides partial exemptions for any property owned by disabled veterans or surviving spouses and surviving children of deceased disabled veterans. Another partial exemption is for homesteads donated to disabled veterans by charitable organizations at no cost or not more than 50 percent of the good faith estimate of the homestead's market value to disabled veterans and their surviving spouses. The exemption amount is determined according to the percentage of service-connected disability. The law also provides a 100 percent homestead exemption for 100 percent disabled veterans and their surviving spouses and surviving spouses of U.S. armed service members killed or fatally injured in the line of duty.
- **Property Tax Exemptions** – Non-profit organizations that meet statutory requirements may seek property tax exemptions and must apply to their local appraisal district by a specific date. Child-care facilities; medical or biomedical property; businesses that receive tax abatements granted by taxing units; ship inventory out of Texas that may be eligible for the freeport exemption; store certain goods in transit in warehouses that are moved within 175 days; construct, install or acquire pollution control property; own and operate energy storage systems; convert landfill-generated gas; or store offshore drilling equipment while not in use may also be eligible for statutory exemptions.
- **Rendering Taxable Property** – If a business owns tangible personal property that is used to produce income, the business must file a rendition with its local appraisal district by a specified date. Personal property includes inventory and equipment used by a business. Owners do not have to render exempt property such as church property or an agriculture producer's equipment used for farming.
- **Appraisal Notices** – Normally, taxpayers receive a notice of appraised value from the appropriate local appraisal district. The city, county, school districts and other local taxing units use the appraisal district's value to set property taxes for the coming year.
- **Taxpayer Assistance Pamphlet** – This Comptroller publication explains in detail the functions of a taxpayer liaison officer, how to protest a property appraisal, what issues the county appraisal review board (ARB) can consider and what to expect during a protest hearing. The publication also discusses the option to request limited binding arbitration to compel the ARB or chief appraiser to comply with a procedural requirement and the options of taking a taxpayer's case to district court, the State Office of Administrative Hearings or regular binding arbitration if the taxpayer is dissatisfied with the outcome of the ARB hearing.
- **Homestead Exemptions** – A homestead is generally defined as the home and land used as the owner's principal residence on Jan. 1 of the tax year. A person who acquires property after Jan. 1 may receive the residence homestead exemption for the applicable portion of that tax year immediately on qualification for the exemption if the preceding owner did not receive the same exemption for that tax year. A homestead exemption reduces the home's appraised value and, as a result, lowers property taxes. Applications are submitted to the appropriate local appraisal district.
- **Productivity Appraisal** – Property owners who use land for timberland production, agricultural purposes or wildlife management can be granted property tax relief on their land. They may apply to their local appraisal district for an agricultural special appraisal which may result in a lower appraisal of the land based on production, versus market value.
- **Residence Homestead Tax Deferral** – Texas homeowners may postpone paying the currently delinquent property taxes due on the appreciating value of their homes by filing a tax deferral affidavit at their local appraisal district. This tax relief allows homeowners to pay the property taxes on 105 percent of the preceding year's appraised value of their homestead, plus the taxes on any new improvements to the homestead. The deferral postpones the remaining taxes, with interest accruing at 8 percent per year but does not cancel them.
- **Property Tax Deferral for Persons Aged 65 or Older or Disabled or Disabled Veteran Homeowners** – Texans who are age 65 or older or disabled, as defined by law, or who qualify for a disabled veteran exemption may postpone paying current and delinquent property taxes on their homes by signing a tax deferral affidavit. Once the affidavit is on file, taxes are deferred, but not cancelled, as long as the owner continues to own and live in the home. Interest continues to accrue at 5 percent per year on the unpaid taxes. You may obtain a deferral affidavit at the appraisal district.
- **Protesting Property Appraisal Values** – Property owners who disagree with the appraisal district's appraisal of their property for local taxes or for any other action that adversely affects them may protest their property value to their county's ARB.
- **Informal Meetings** – Property owners can request an informal meeting with appraisal district staff to try and resolve their disputes prior to attending ARB hearings.

For more information about these programs, contact Rains Appraisal District at 145 Doris Briggs Pkwy, Emory, Tx. 75440 or visit our website at RainsCAD.org. Information is also available on the Comptroller's Property Tax Assistance Division's website at comptroller.texas.gov/taxes/property-tax/.

SAVVY SENIORS

When to Worry About Your Memory

Dear Savvy Senior, At age 70, I've become more and more forgetful lately and am concerned it may be an early sign of dementia. Are there any memory screening tools or services that you can recommend to help me gauge my problem, without going to a neurologist?



JIM MILLER
Savvy Senior

Forgetful Frank

Dear Frank, Many older adults, like yourself, worry about memory lapses as they get older fearing it may be the first signs of Alzheimer's disease or some other type of dementia. To get some insight on the seriousness of your problem, here are some tips and resources you can turn to.

Warning Signs

As we grow older, some memory difficulties – such as forgetting names or misplacing items from time to time – are associated with normal aging. But the symptoms of dementia are much more than simple memory lapses.

While symptoms can vary greatly, people with dementia may have problems with short-term memory, keeping track of a purse or wallet, paying bills, planning and preparing meals, remembering appointments or traveling out of the neighborhood.

To help you recognize the difference between typical age-related memory loss and a more serious problem, the Alzheimer's Association provides a list of 10 warning signs that you can assess at 10signs.org.

They also provide information including the signs and symptoms on other conditions that can cause dementia like vascular dementia, Lewy body dementia, frontotemporal dementia, Parkinson's disease, Huntington's disease, chronic traumatic encephalopathy and others – see ALZ.org/dementia.

Memory Screening

A great resource and first step to help you get a handle on your memory problem is the Alzheimer's Foundation of America, which offers a National Memory Screening Program. This is a free, confidential, face-to-face memory screening done virtually in real-time that takes about 10 to 15 minutes to complete and consists of questions and/or tasks to evaluate your memory status. Once the screening is complete, the screener will review the results with you.

Available to everyone, these memory screenings are done daily Monday through Friday, and are given by doctors, nurse practitioners, psychologists, social workers or other healthcare professionals across the country.

A smart phone, computer, tablet or any other device

with a webcam and Internet capability is all that's needed. Appointments can be requested online at ALZFD-N.org/memory-screening or by calling 866-232-8484.

It's also important to know that this screening is not a diagnosis of any particular condition but can indicate whether you should see your doctor for more extensive assessment.

See Your Doctor

If you find that you need further evaluation, make an appointment with your primary care doctor for a cognitive checkup and medical examination. Depending on what's found, you may be referred to a geriatrician or neurologist who specializes in diagnosing and treating memory loss or Alzheimer's disease.

Keep in mind that even if you are experiencing some memory problems, it doesn't necessarily mean you have dementia. Many memory problems are brought on by other factors like stress, depression, thyroid disease, side effects of medications, sleep disorders, vitamin deficiencies and other medical conditions. And by treating these conditions he can reduce or eliminate the problem.

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.

For the latest in local sports news subscribe to

Rains County Leader

Call 903-473-2653

Believer's Baptist Church

By Linda Brendle

But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you.

Luke 6:27

Sunday morning's sermon was titled "The Incomparable Christ: How Do I Love Thee? Part 1" The surprising command from Jesus was "Love your enemies." This isn't natural, but it is the Law. What does it mean to love them? Love them with your actions: do good, bless, pray. And love them with your heart. We must love our enemies because it is an exceptional, supernatural way to live our lives beyond the common ways the world lives. We must overcome evil with good. It's hard, but He gives us the grace to do it.

Twenty-five members of BBC attended an Evangelism Seminar at Journey Baptist Church in Sulphur Springs on Saturday. One of the attendees described the event this way: "The presentation was very encouraging and inspiring, and the fellowship was super sweet."

Join us March 16 at 6:00 p.m. for an old-fashioned hymn sing.

We will meet for The Church Praying, a time of intentional prayer as a congregation, on Sunday, March 23, at 6:00 pm.

The Asking for a Friend Podcast Episode #211 is titled "What about Evangelism?" Find the link at www.bbcmemory.org.

Emory Baptist Church

By Ronnie Witt

It was a cold start to spring break, but was nice to begin the week in worship on Sunday. Bro. Richard Piles shared a message from the book of Luke on Sunday morning titled "Following Jesus 101." In it, Jesus' followers were encouraged to avoid the religious hypocrisy of the Pharisees. Instead, believers should fear God, confess and repent of sin, and trust the Holy Spirit who empowers believers to follow God. The worship service closed with the observance of the Lord's Supper. In the evening, Bro. Richard shared a message from the book of Daniel titled "The King's First Dream Interpreted."

It was a different kind of week at EBC because of spring break. There were no activities on Wednesday evening. Senior

Adult Ministries Lunch and Game Day is at noon on Thursday, March 13. Family Fun Night is Saturday, March 15 at 5:30 p.m. in the fellowship hall. Family Fun Night begins with a potluck meal and devotional, followed by board games and other games around the tables. Come join the fun.

Looking ahead to next week, join us on Sunday, March 16, for "3:16 on 3/16." Bro. Richard will share a special message from the book of John for EBC folks and guests. T.E.L. will meet on Tuesday, March 18, at noon in the fellowship hall for the March fellowship and meeting. The word for the month is "hope." Sandwiches and chips will be provided. We are signing up right now for Preteen Camp and Youth Camp, both July 14-18. Contact the church office for more information.

Emory Methodist Church

By Mary White

"The Lord will bless his people with peace."

Psalms 29:11

Come Christian, come and sing! That is just what we did this Sunday of worship. It was a wonderful day of songs and scripture. Jon Weddle was our song leader and Nolan House was on stand by. They both have great voices. The congregation had the privilege to pick the songs. As it says in scripture, serve the Lord with gladness and come into His presence with singing. It was a great day and we just might start a 5th Sunday singing. We'll see.

Spring break is this week so it seems really quiet and nothing much happening. We do

look forward to April when the Methodist Women have a plant sale after worship on April 13 from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. You are welcome to come by after worship and pick up a plant.

AA meets every Tuesday and Thursday at 7:00 p.m. and Saturday noon.

Pray for Dorothy Riddle, Stan McNear, Colby Ross, MayBeth McMahan, Joe and Danielle Weddle's baby, Jason Pierce Cooper Krantz.

Birthday wishes go to Lori Thomas. Have a wonderful week and it sure is looking like spring. Have a safe Spring Break and remember it's better to be kind than right

Velma Louise York

1940 - 2025

A graveside service for Velma Louise York was held on March 10 at Hooker Ridge Cemetery in Lone Oak.

Mrs. York, 85, died on March 5, 2025, in Sulphur Springs. She was born on February 28, 1940, to Loyd Mack and Bessie Mae Steen (Stapleton) in Lone Oak.

Mrs. York enjoyed gardening and was often found in her garden before sunrise, picking okra to prepare a warm and filling breakfast for her grandson. She also adored her chickens and enjoyed sharing her love for horses. She was always eager to saddle up a for a ride. She loved children and would often open her home to



babysit for friends and family.

She was married to Joseph York for 60 years until his death. They created a warm and loving home filled with laughter and joy.

Mrs. York is survived by her children, Mary Jo York, Billy York and Virginia Moss, and Sue Essary; sister, Bessie Mae Whitson; and numerous grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Joseph York; parents; daughter, Barbara York Perry; and four brothers and three sisters.

Obituaries

Helen Zene Dudley Cain

1930 - 2025

Funeral services for Helen Zene Dudley Cain, 94, will be held on Thursday, March 13, at 2:00 p.m., at First Baptist Church, Alba, with Dr. Kelly Burton officiating.

Interment will follow at Enon Cemetery, Alba. Serving as pallbearers will be Tom Neal, Bryan Holland, Travis Littlejohn, Levi Littlejohn, Scott Reynolds and Shane Reynolds.

Mrs. Cain died on March 9, 2025, at her residence in Alba. She was born on June 25, 1930, in Beckville, to James Burford and Lena Blanche Garrison Dudley. On June 24, 1951, she married Dr. Glen T. Cain in Alba. She lived in Houston for 27 years, before moving back to Alba 35 years ago. While in Houston, she enjoyed performing in the choir at Second Baptist Church, and was also involved in other music activities in her



church and directed the school choir. She graduated and received degrees from Mary Hardin Baylor in Belton and from Baylor University in Waco. She taught school for 37 years and was a member of First Baptist Church, Alba.

She is survived by her two nieces, April Wilcox of Alba and Kriste Kline of Lawrenceville, Ga.; and nephew, Shawn Spriggs of Reed City, Mich.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Dr. Glen T. Cain; foster son, Gary Rose; sister, Katie Beth Noneman; and nephew Patrick Spriggs.

Memorials may be made to Samaritan's Purse, P.O. Box 3000, Boone, NC, 28607.

Services are under the direction of Wilson-Bartley Funeral Home, Alba.

Rhonda Gale Simmons

1956 - 2025

A graveside service for Rhonda Gale Simmons will be held on Friday, March 14, at 10:00 a.m., at Emory City Cemetery.

Mrs. Simmons, 68, died on March 7, 2025. She was born on May 4, 1956, in Dallas, to Melvin and Maxine Foster (Gaby). She spent her life in Rains County.

She met and married Roy Simmons and they spent 42 beautiful years together. She became a nurse in 1983 and was known for pouring her heart into her profession, working in home health. She was an enthusiastic cook and delighted in preparing meals for family and friends. She also cherished her time outdoors, particularly during deer season which became one of her favorite annual traditions.

She is survived by her husband, Roy



Simmons; mother, Maxine Foster; children, Chad Simmons, and Kimber and David Combs; grandchildren, C.J. Simmons, Cortni Simmons, Chelsie and Michael Stafford, Dawayne and Chloe Arbour, Emelyn Dulude, Sadie Dulude, Kendall Combs, and Braeley Combs; great-great-grandchildren, Luke Spence, Audrey Spence, Hopelynn Lee, Nova Lee Arbour, and Michael Arbour; and sister, Susan Foster.

Rhonda was preceded in death by her father, Melvin Foster; brother, Michael Foster; nephews, Derek and Jarrod Tanton; and niece, Lacy Hill.

A visitation will be held on Thursday, March 13, from 6:00-8:00 p.m. at Wilson Orwosky Chapel in Emory.

Mary Frances Snyder (Cline)

1933 - 2025

Funeral services for Mary Frances Cline Snyder, 91, of Canton, were held on March 12, 2025, at Emory Church of Christ, with Cody McCoy officiating, under the direction of Bartley Funeral Home, Grand Saline. Interment was in Pilgrim Rest #1 Cemetery, in Emory. Serving as pallbearers were Jerot Snyder, Jonas Snyder, Randy Snyder, Robert Snyder and Chad Perry.

Mrs. Snyder died on March 4, 2025, in Canton. She was born on July 9, 1933, in Emory, to Okey B. and Billie McCullum Cline. She was a lifelong resident of Emory where she was a member of the Emory Church of Christ. She graduated from Emory High School, Class of 1950. She married John Burt Snyder on January 18,



1963, in Garland and was a credit union bookkeeper for many years.

Mrs. Snyder is survived by her three stepdaughters, Carrie Davis of Albuquerque, N.M., Lori Foster of Mesquite, and Stephanie Fawcett of Holly Lake Ranch; two grandchildren, Randy Snyder and Jonas Michael Snyder; three great-grandchildren, Jerot Snyder, Robert Snyder and Victoria Michelle Snyder; and numerous other relatives and friends.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband of 57 years; two children, Vickie Louise Norris and Robert Michael Norris; two sisters; and two brothers.

Memorials may be made to Mission Printing, 2707 Medline Dr., Arlington, TX, 76015.

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820 SH 276 • Emory
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.
Everyone welcome!
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11:00 a.m. Worship
6:00 p.m. Worship
Pastor: Jimmy Jarrett
Hwys 515 & 779
2-1/2 Miles East of Emory
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
Visit stjohnemory.org for Mass times.
From Brookshires, go east 1.2 miles. Turn right onto FM 2795

Freedom Church of God
10830 FM 514
6 mi. N on Hwy. 19, east on 514
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Sun Worship 11:00 a.m.
Sun Evening 6:00 p.m.
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6:00 p.m. .. Wednesday Service
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Wednesday
Wed. Worship 6:30pm (Adults, Youth, Children)
Choir Practice 6:30pm

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MorningWorship 10:30 a.m.
Wednesday
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The Rains County Election Administration's office has a part-time position open for a deputy election administrator/registrar. Qualifications: Must have excellent customer service skills, phone etiquette and communication/writing skills, ability to adapt to change, knowledge of basic computer programs such as Adobe Acrobat and Microsoft Office, ability to type at least 50 wpm, work well alone and as part of a team. Must be able to lift the election equipment (20-50 pounds) during election time. The general application is available at www.co.rains.tx.us Drop off completed application, along with resume, to the Rains County Elections office at 220 W. Quitman St., Ste. E, Emory, Tx 75440. <mailto:rains.early.voting@co.rains.tx.us>

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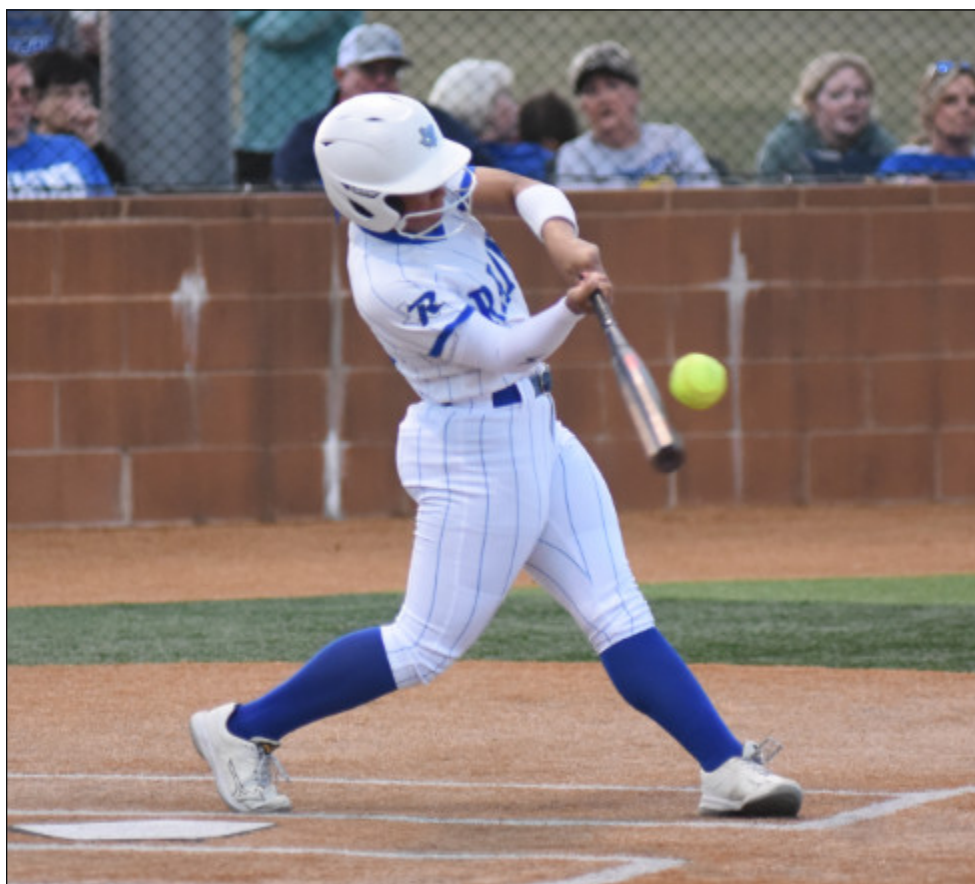
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Sports

RAINS LADY CAT SOFTBALL AND WILDCAT BASEBALL

Wildcats endure up-and-down weekend, Ladies fall to 0-2 in district



Leader photo by CHUCK FITTS

Peyton Bryant (10) launches the pitch from a Lady Tiger over the fence in the second inning on Friday, March 7, during the 7-6 loss to Mount Vernon at Rains High School.



Leader photo by CHUCK FITTS

Alexus Wilkins (1) zones in on a Lady Tiger batter during the 7-6 loss to Mount Vernon on Friday, March 7, at the softball field on the campus of Rains High School.

By CHUCK FITTS
Rains County Leader staff

The Rains Wildcats finish a tournament on a high note, while the Rains Lady Cats suffer their second district loss.

The Wildcats spent the weekend at a tournament in Canton where they finished 2-3.

The baseball team started the tournament on Thursday, March 6, with a 4-3 loss to the Sunnyvale Raiders.

Memphis McNew started on the mound and had four runs, five walks and three

strikeouts in four and two-thirds innings, while Toby Herndon finished with three hits in four at-bats and an RBI.

Game two for the day saw the Wildcats fall behind early before falling to the Caddo Mills Foxes, 12-4.

Daniel Alvarado pitched two and one-thirds innings, allowed three runs and struck out two batters, while Hunter Chandler had two hits and one RBI.

On Friday, March 7, the Wildcats jumped out early and cruised to a 12-7 win over the Terrell Tigers.

Frankie Payne finished with three hits in three at-bats, two RBIs and a run scored.

On the mound, Gage Cook pitched four innings, allowed a run on four hits, walked three and struck out two batters.

Later that day, the Wildcats were shutout in a 10-0 loss to the tournament hosts, Canton Eagles.

Jayden Sheridan started on the mound and allowed nine runs, three walks and two strikeouts, while Cook had the only hit for Rains.

The Wildcats finished

the tournament by rallying in the fourth inning to score a win over the Scurry-Rosser Wildcats, 5-3.

Herndon finished with a run, a hit and a RBI, while Gavin Pierce allowed two runs, four hits and two walks, but struck out nine batters.

The Lady Cats hosted the Mount Vernon Lady Tigers for a district game on Friday, March 7, and their late rally fell short in the 7-6 loss.

Alexus Wilkins started in the circle and allowed four runs on eight hits, walked one and struck out seven.

Emma Knight homered twice, while Peyton Bryant hit a solo shot to start the second inning. Knight finished with two runs scored, two RBIs and two hits.

The Wildcats traveled to Van on Tuesday, March 11, where they suffered a 12-2 loss to the Vandals.

Kaidan Briggs pitched two and a third innings, allowed five runs, walked six and struck out three, while Herndon had two hits and scored once.

The Rains Lady Cats fall to 8-9-1 for the season and 0-2 in District 12-3A, while

the Rains Wildcats move to 8-6.

The Lady Cats continued district play on Wednesday, March 12, when they traveled to Commerce to take on the Lady Tigers. No scores were available as of press time. They will host Chism on Tuesday, March 18.

The Wildcats will host the Mineola Yellow Jackets on Friday, March 14.

They will travel to Harmony for a game against the Eagles on Saturday, March 15.

LUKE CLAYTON

A visit with Luke

I try not to write much about myself. After all, I'm just an old outdoors writer and broadcaster with a passion for writing and, more importantly, spending time in



Luke Clayton
Outdoor Columnist

the woods, fields hunting or on the water fishing. Through the years, I've had favorite writers that I read on a regular basis. Its human nature for a reader to wonder what makes his or her favorite writer tick. I'm sure many of you have been reading this corner of this fine publication for quite some time, I've been here a long time and I thoroughly enjoy coming to you via the written word each week. Hopefully, some of the experiences and people I meet and write about will help provide you with helpful information and cause you to reflect upon outings you have enjoyed.

Now, about Ole' Luke! If you ran into me while fishing out on the lake and didn't recognize me from my mug shot, you'd probably think "Heck! I'm catching more fish than that old boy but he seems to be enjoying himself, even though he's obviously not the best fisherman!" Should you walk into one of my hunting camps or into a hunting lodge with a big fire going in the fireplace and see me warming up from a cold stand in the woods, you'd never know the unassuming old guy sitting by the fire was me and, I'd probably never tell you that I make my living writing about the outdoors. If I did, I'd be afraid you might ask me something about hunting of fishing that I could not answer! In truth, I'm not the most technical of guys; I couldn't tell you where the sear is on a shotgun's trigger any more than I would know how to repair a hole in a fiberglass boat. I'd rather sit there by the fire with you and listen to YOUR stories. I've known few outdoor writers that I considered 'good' that weren't great listeners.

The late Bob Hood, a veteran outdoors writer from Texas that was outdoors editor for the Fort Worth Star Telegram for over 40 years is one of the best listeners... and outdoor writers that I've known. Bob and I were great friends and we've

hunted and fished together on many occasions through the years. I've watched Bob 'interview' pro anglers and guides in a manner that was very relaxed. He gleans the information he needed for his article through casual conversation and he has excellent recall. If, a few years ago, you walked up on Bob and I at deer camp, you'd probably find a couple of old guys that share your love for just being 'out there', enjoying the simple life. It just so happens we earn our living writing about the outdoors.

Before you begin to get the idea that I'm a greenhorn Nimrod, I better set the facts straight. You need to know that I have some knowledge to pass along! I've been tramping the fields and wood for sixty five years now, (I just turned seventy five) and could tell you story after story about my adventures in the outdoors through the years. I've bass fished in Japan, hunted the Rockies for elk deer, caught northern pike and Arctic Grayling from wild remote waters near the Northwest Territories where the fish have never seen a hook, shot upland birds and waterfowl up on the Canadian border and, went south of the border in quest for game and fish. When it comes to spending time in the outdoors, I've been around!

I love bow hunting and I'm a pretty good bow hunter and do much of my hunting from the ground. To be good at anything, whether it be writing or shooting a bow, one has to be actively involved and I shoot a bow, just as I write, on an almost daily basis. As a full time outdoors writer, I write about myriad topics and in order to write from an authoritative perspective, I need to be out there 'doing it'. Sometimes 'doing it' equates to hunting with a muzzleloader, big bore air rifle or hunting hogs at night, trying out a new thermal scope.

I might be learning a new catfish catching technique from a pro or hunting with a predator pro and learning new tricks to call coyotes in close. Regardless, it's a pretty good bet that I was 'out there' actually doing what I'm writing about. I can quickly pick out a writer that is simply relating details from one that is personally knowledgeable on a given topic.

I'm really no different than you (assuming you love the


outdoors)! I have a tendency to stretch the truth about the size of that bass or catfish that broke off or the B & C score of that buck that walked by my bow stand last fall with affording that standing broadside shot that I need. My son kids me every time I hold up my outstretched arms, showing the length of the last bass or crappie I landed. I've got long arms and he says the dimensions I span more closely depict the length of an adult tiger shark than a keeper crappie!

So, should we cross paths at the boat ramp out at a hunting lodge, try not to expect too much from me. Please don't ask technical questions about parallax of rifle scopes or the best way to install a new impeller on your outboard engine. But, if you want to talk about patterning wild hogs or possibly bow hunting elk, I'm your man. Get me off to the side of the campfire and I'll talk your ears off about how to bait a hole for channel catfish or tighten those groups with your hunting bow. But, put me in front of a crowd and my reclusive nature comes to light. I've found most outdoors writers, when I finally met them face to face, to be pretty quiet, introspective folks. Keep in mind the fact that we are accustomed to spending a lot of 'quiet' time in the great outdoors or, back at the desk hammering out our next article. Don't expect the majority of us to enjoy being in the limelight, after all, we're WRITERS who accomplish our work from quiet places, rather than in a setting with bright lights in our faces!

I sincerely hope you will continue to read about the outdoors in this space my editors provide. I promise to continue to 'keep it real' and write only about topics that you and I can relate to. When I hit on a new outdoor endeavor in which we both are learning, I'll make it a point to let you know the tips are from a bonafide pro. When I'm writing about a facet of the outdoor life that I feel well qualified to share with you, well, I hope you will be able to know through my writing that I have truly been 'out there'!

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