

Vol. 139, Issue 2 - 1 Section, 8 pages

EMORY, TEXAS - THURSDAY, JUNE 19, 2025

PRICE 75¢

RAINS COUNTY

Rains County Commissioners work through packed agenda in regular meeting

By CHUCK FITTS Rains County Leader staff

The Rains County Commissioners approved upgrades for security and the jail, tasked Rains County Road and Bridge with projects, and heard updates on road meeting on Thursday, June 12.

allow elected officials to view security \$24,462 for delivery and installation unanimously approved the motion to

and Courthouse Annex. The new equipment would increase safety for county employees with no access to review footage. The bid was unanimously approved by commissioners.

The commissioners court considered projects on Hwy. 19 during the regular the purchase of a commercial grade washing machine and dryer for the Rains During the meeting, the court was County Jail. The equipment would allow presented with a bid for installation of the county jail to meet jail standards and televisions, a video splitter and cables to fill a need by the department. The bid of

nance and Operation Contingency fund was unanimously approved by the court.

Commissioners considered options for removing a tin building behind the Hill Building on Texas Street. They considered having the Road and Bridge Department take the building down to allow salvaging of the materials for recycling. After coming to the conclusion that the department's time was better used on county roads, commissioners

feeds of the Rains County Courthouse with funds coming from the Mainte- have the department tear it down quickly and haul it off.

> The court discussed options for the resurfacing and repairing of the parking lot of the Rains County Courthouse. They noted that the parking lot was coated and minor repairs made for the county's 150th celebration in 2020. Commissioners unanimously approved the motion to have the Road and Bridge department solicit bids for repairing, re-

> > see **COURT** on page 2

Point City Council accepts Mayor **Briggs' resignation**

> **By CHUCK FITTS** Rains County Leader staff

The Point City Council accepted the resignation of Mayor Dustin Briggs during a special meeting presided over by Mayor-Protem Tammy Hooten on

The council was presented with the

In the letter, Briggs stated that he had always done what he thinks was best for the city including commitment of his time, resources and contacts for the betterment of the city. He noted that "in return, my character and integrity have been attacked by both appointed and elected officials causing an unstable environment to continue to

Briggs added that the list of job duties for the Mayor of Point listed in an ordinance that were presented to him on June 10 hindered him from doing

the job he ran for to the best of his abil-

see **POINT** on page 2

letter of resignation from Briggs.

POINT

Monday, June 16.

work within."

Recognized for 43 years of service



The Rains County Commissioners Court honored retired Rains County Tax Assessor/Collector Sheila Floyd with the gift of a clock to show the county's appreciation for her 43 years of service to Rains County. Marking the moment are (I-r) Commissioner Mike Willis, Commissioner Jeremy Cook, Floyd, Commissioner Lori Northcutt and Commissioner Korey Young.

RAINS COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT NO. 1 ESD board holds regular meeting Monday

By CHUCK FITTS Rains County Leader staff Abstract District, but took no action. They reminded departments to submit SALES TAX ALLOCATIONS County, cities see increase in tax returns

> **By CHUCK FITTS** Rains County Leader staff

has its year-to-date total increase to \$520,121,70. That total moves the

The Rains County Emergency Service District board discussed the tower ESD. contract and budgets during the regular meeting on Monday, June 16.

of accounts and minutes approval, the board discussed the tower lease agreement for the fire department's radio equipment. The current agreement is for five years and the board would like to renegotiate for two years. They took no action on the item as they continue to research options.

Board members reviewed the proposed budget from the Rains County

their budget requests and reviewed a preliminary proposed budget for the

In monthly activity reports for May, Hopkins County reported 159 requests Following monthly reports, payment for service, with 41 refusals. Response time on life threatening emergencies for city calls was 8 minutes and 42 seconds on average, while county calls averaged 10 minutes, 36 seconds. Of the 83 transported to a medical facility by EMS, 46 went to Sulphur Springs, 23 to Greenville, six to Quitman, four to Quinlan, three to other hospitals or air

see **ESD** on page 2

Rains County and all cities saw a marked increase in the amount of local sales tax allocations being returned from the office of Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar in June compared to 2024.

The press release from Wednesday, June 11, announced that \$\$1.2 billion would be returned this month to Texas cities, counties, transit systems and special purpose taxing districts based on sales made in April by businesses that in April as compared to \$6,051.37 rereport tax monthly.

With \$123,943.63 or 66.04-percent more expected to be returned, Rains County, with a half-cent sales tax rate, county 8.89 percent ahead of 2024.

As for the cities in the county, local municipalities saw a significant increase in the amount of money being returned in June from the 1.5 percent sales tax rate.

Compared to June of last year, the City of East Tawakoni moves 24.13percent ahead of the year-to-date total at \$60,781.68. They expect to receive \$8,143.00 from the state for sales made ceived in 2024.

Point saw a large increase of 32.36

see **SALES TAX** on page 2

SPOTLIGHT

Cynthia Willis teaches crafts to kids and helps feed families in East Tawakoni

By JUDY KRAMER Rains County Leader contributor

Children in East Tawakoni look forward to Tuesday and Thursday afternoons at the East Tawakoni Library when Cynthia Willis teaches them crafts and feeds them snacks. She hasn't missed a day showing up for her volunteer work that she loves since she began the program in 2022.

"We often make desserts including a Swedish apple cake which the children like, paint with acrylics and have splash days," said Willis. "The children are allowed some freedom in their paintings, so if one of them will only paint with orange or yellow it is allowed. We have field trips where we go outside and do things like collect grass blades to use as

paintbrushes or collect rocks to paint. Every craft can be done by kids aged three years up to 13. The very young are also allowed to spend time learning to use scissors. We play games like 'Simon Says' where they answer questions correctly so they can advance. The kids stay from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. Parent volunteers help with food and some crafts. On Wednesdays, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., senior citizens play Dominos."

Willis taught preschool for about eight years in different capacities. She also worked at Walmart where she eventually retired.

In the summer of 2022, the City of East Tawakoni wanted to reopen the library that had been closed during COVID and reached out to the community for volunteer help. Willis was not a librarian but became involved in cleaning out the building. At that time a quarter of the building and the bathrooms were filled with boxes, and the air conditioning didn't work. Willis and other volunteers got with the mayor and finally got a replacement air conditioner. Willis says there is a small play area in the building (that is also a storm shelter), and books are along the walls. The fire marshal limits occupants in the library to 36. Willis started out buying the supplies for the kids, but now gets donations.

A part of the library is the free food pantry located just outside the building. As Willis has spent more time volunteering, she has witnessed the food needs of the community. Susan Montalvo, another great East

see **SPOTLIGHT** on page 3



Cynthia Willis (upper left)



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., 1-3 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

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

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 Praver 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

MARS HILL MASONIC LODGE

GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES

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 pub-lic 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 June from 8:00 a.m.-noon. Funds go to buy food for the needy and to operate the center.

Dinner Sat., June 28 Rabb Brothers Memorial American Legion Post #156 will offer a dinner with desserts and drinks on Saturday, June 28, from 4:00-7:00 p.m. at the Post home at 215 N. Duffy St. in Takeouts Emory. are offered. Payment is by donation, which goes towards the upkeep of the home and for veterans' projects.

American Legion

COURT

Continued from page 1

doing or resurfacing of the courthouse parking lot.

With the retirement or suspension of county department heads, the court considered appointing a commissioner to sign time sheets for county departments with no department head. They began with the suggestion that Commissioner Jermey Cook should be assigned the task, but Commissioner Korey Young suggested that he sign the timesheet of the maintenance person as he is in continuous contact with him. Cook suggested that since he would like to sign one timesheet, then he could sign them all. A motion was unanimously approved to designate Young as the signatory of time sheets for departments without a department head with the exception of courthouse security. They would have the sheriff sign that department's time sheets.

The court considered a request from the Women's Service Club to use Heritage Park for the Poppers in the Park event on July 5. The request was unanimously approved with an addendum that any use of the park would be approved by the court on a case-by-case basis.

Commissioners approved the replat of a lot in the Green Meadow Estates and the final plat of Oak Trails. County Courthouse.



minutes of the meeting the bylaws of the Andrews Behavioral Health Center, the proposed budget of the Rains County Appraisal District and the minutes of the prior meetings. The court went into

They unanimously approved

the motion to enter into the

recess and reconvened at 2:00 p.m. to meet with officials from the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT). TxDOT officials from Paris updated the court on the installation of a stop light at the intersection of Quitman Street and Hwy. 19. The new light would be synced with the lights at the intersection ofHwy. 19 and Hwy. 69 to help improve traffic flow. They stated that the project to replace the blinking lights and four stop signs is expected to start in October.

The officials stated that studies are still being done and plans drawn to help alleviate the traffic congestion at the Hwy. 19 and Hwy. 69 intersection with the overpass plan still the top option.

All commissioners were present for the regular meeting. The next regular meeting of the Rains County Commissioners Court is scheduled for Thursday, June 26, at 10:00 a.m. in the courtroom of the Rains

Member SIPC

POINT

Continued from page 1

"It has been my absolute honor to have been given the opportunity to serve the citizens of Point, Texas for these 4.5 years," Briggs said. The council unanimously

approved the motion to accept the letter of resignation from Briggs.

Council members unanimously approved the motion to remove Briggs as a signa-

ESD

Continued from page 1

transport and one to Winns- intent calls, two hazardous boro. The most common calls were for falls, chest pain, a person feeling sick, breathing problems and motor vehicle accidents.

Emory VFD responded to 91 calls during the month of May. The department responded to 64 medical assists, 11 good intent calls, six motor vehicle accidents, four fires, three service calls

and three false alarms. The Point VFD went on 23 medical assists calls, seven fires, seven motor vehicle accidents, two good the Emory VFD Fire Station.

SALES TAX

Continued from page 1

percent in the amount of sales tax allocations being returned compared to last year. The state will return \$12,685.00 in June, and the city moves 3.18 percent ahead of the year-to-date total at \$75,869.35.

The City of Emory is expecting to receive made from sales in May for \$144,771.92 from the state those reporting monthly durin June. Though the monthly ing the second week of July.

allocation is a 7.26 increase compared to last year, the city remains 7.19 percent behind the total sales tax allocations for the current year at \$807,179.20.

The Texas Comptroller's office is expected to release local sales tax allocations made from sales in May for

J	UN	IE '25 \$	SALES	TAX	STATIS	STICS	
County City	Taxed	Net pymt. this period	Net pymt. prior year	Pct. change	'25 pymt. to date	Net pymts. prior year	Pct cl from '
Rains	0.5%	\$123,943.63	\$74,643.43	66.04%	\$520,121.70	\$477,643.99	8.89
East Tawakon	i 1.5	8,143.00	6,051.37	34.56	60,781.68	48,965.21	24.
Emory	1.5	144,771.92	134,967.56	7.26	807,179.20	869,750.18	-7.
Point	1.5	12,685.00	9,583.13	32.36	75,869.35	73,529.47	3.
Hopkins	0.5%	\$373,721.31	\$334,937.17	11.57%	\$2,229,335.07	\$1,862,874.67	19.67
Como	1.0	5,939.69	5,342.37	11.18	36,672.02	32,785.61	11.
Cumby	1.25	10,247.82	12,423.54	-17.51	76,978.46	80,430.74	-4.
Sulphur Spring	gs 1.5	939,923.81	734,964.23	27.88	4,826,284.61	4,552,323.23	6.
Hunt	0.5%	\$751,235.08	\$711,220.38	5.62%	\$4,540,200.09	\$4,333,972.23	4.75
Caddo Mills	1.5	106,891.22	84,866.36	25.95	670,169.10	521,157.80	28.
Campbell	1.5	15,871.38	13,565.27	17.00	84,179.59	72,759.58	15.
Celeste	1.25	11,337.77	10,357.39	9.46	86,225.90	64,447.76	33.
Commerce	1.5	180,555.84	169,883.93	6.28	1,202,014.39	1,156,175.04	3.
Greenville	1.5	1,152,755.32	1,052,191.44	9.55	6,860,952.78	6,703,643.85	2.
Hawk Cove	1.0	2,468.88	2,333.43	5.80	13,172.46	13,363.90	-1.4
Lone Oak	1.5	20,537.13	17,302.31	18.69	127,474.95	116,385.86	9.
Neylandville	1.0	957.85	637.09	50.34	4,646.80	4,360.29	6.
Quinlan	1.5	174,288.15	154,900.24	12.51	1,020,997.09	944,420.71	8.
Union Valley	1.0	4,118.19	3,913.13	5.24	26,876.34	23,882.37	12.
West Tawakor	i 1.5	14,850.70	15,049.07	-1.31	111,136.50	103,456.41	7.
Wolfe City	1.5	18,129.97	14,289.71	26.87	121,884.92	104,622.78	16.
Van Zandt Co	unty d	oes not Colle	ct sales tax				
Canton	2.0	420,173.78	430,432.71	-2.38%	2,611,010.35	2,594,488.27	0.
Edgewood	2.0	58,013.18	36,639.69	58.33	296,351.78	247,073.13	19.
Edom	1.0	1,869.54	2,304.90	-18.88	13,444.34	14,100.97	-4.
Fruitvale	2.0	7,242.70	7,593.61	-4.62	210,391.24	48,163.96	336.
Grand Saline	2.0	70,676.65	63,220.42	11.79	391,702.52	386,460.09	1.
Van	2.0	110,920.77	96,347.27	15.12	629,555.77	623,250.25	1.
Wills Point	2.0	197,185.36	191,829.58	2.79	1,130,458.71	1,145,922.59	-1.3
Wood	0.5%	\$258,688.15	\$235,688.65	9.75%	\$1,533,111.47	\$1,461,176.61	4.92
Alba	1.5	31,848.61	31,796.89	0.16	204,224.75	181,548.63	12.
Hawkins	1.5	46,779.97	44,017.90	6.27	271,995.85	248,430.79	9.
Mineola	1.5	249,753.42	235,473.44	6.06	1,562,046.82	1,509,422.24	3.4
Quitman	1.5	80,738.50	78,667.18	2.63	498,033.75	472,693.30	5.
Winnsboro	1.5	122,861.08	110,872.81	10.81	730,813.43	712,428.56	2.
Yantis	1.5	10,722.97	11,763.83	-8.84	77,836.61	74,148.11	4.

tory on the city's bank

accounts and add the Finan-

cial Manager for Point Cori

Decker was not present for

of the Point City Council is

scheduled forTuesday, July

8, at 6:45 p.m. in the council

chambers of Point City Hall.

conditions, a false alarm and

a service call for a total of 43

requests for service during

East Tawakoni VFD was

dispatched on 24 calls including 17 medical assists,

three public assists, two

smoke investigations, a

structure fire and a haz-

of the Rains County ESD

Board is scheduled for Mon-

day, July 21, at 6:30 p.m. at

The next regular meeting

ardous situation.

In the month of May, the

May.

The next regular meeting

Becky

Vest as a signatory.

the regular meeting.

Councilwoman

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 Tues., 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

RAINS COUNTY ROAD & BRIDGE Open Mon.-Fri, 7 a.m.-4 p.m. 903-473-5099 or 5098

132 N Texas St | P O Box 1221 Emory, TX 75440 903-473-1592

132 N Texas St | P O Box 1221 Emory, TX 75440 903-473-1592

Holly Wasson

Financial Advisor

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Brandon R Roberts

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CFP^{*}

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NOTHING!

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		9		1		3
3	9		5				2	
Ĩ.	1	9		8	3			
	8			4			6 9	
			6	2		8	9	
	3				9		1	6
5		4		3		9		

Studies show that locales with local newspapers are less corrupt. Local papers report the ins and outs of the communities that they serve and function as a beacon of truth to their communities.

Support your local newspaper! The Rains County Leader

Little Marco

I thought it was a bad nickname coming from a Bully

Following the White House Shameful Behavior towards Volodymer Zelenskyy President of Ukraine and his Country and his people.

"Little Marco " sat passively by on a bench in the room where the Smackdown took place and he Didn't Utter a Word in defense of our Allies.

The title of the post Little Marco holds is: The United States Secretary of State and his inability to Stand Up for

Diplomacy conducted away from cameras. If it was Made for TV, Reality TV I'm sure some devotees of Trump were celebrating the bad treatment Zelenskyy received!

I don't place much confidence in Little Marco growing a spine . If he had one Marco Rubio would have

immediately resigned in protest of the Russian Bromance between Putin and Trump.

Marvin Henson Point, Texas



FORMER EDITORS AND PUBLISHERS OF THE RAINS COUNTY LEADER:

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

Fighting the Tomato Wars

"Knowledge is knowing that Damping Off disease, Fusara tomato is a fruit. Wisdom is knowing not to put it in a fruit salad."

Brian O'Driscoll

Tomatoes

our



Typewriter Weekly

favorite vegetables, or fruits. I suppose we can say both. Here's some tomato trivia for you.

In 1893 the U.S. Supreme Court, in the case of Nix vs. Hedden, legally classified the tomato as a vegetable for the purpose of tariffs. The ruling stemmed from a dispute over whether tomatoes should be taxed as vegetables or fruits under the Tariff Act of 1883. The Court ruled that tomatoes are vegetables based on their culinary application and common usage, despite their botanical classification as a fruit. Bow-tie botanists classify tomatoes as fruit because they develop from the ovary of the plant's flowers and contain seeds. Tomatoes are the fleshy seed-bearing product of a flowering plant. They are fruit, but we use them as vegetables. Call them what you want, tomatoes are good to eat and fun to grow.

For those of us who love homegrown tomatoes, nursing our plants to fruition can sometimes be a problem. We grapple against enemies seen and unseen. We fight the tomato wars.

Enemies of the tomato are many. Topping the list are They diseases. tomato include Early Blight, Late Blight, Mosaic Virus, Powdery Mildew, Blossom End Rot, Gray Leaf Spot, Septoria Leaf Spot, Anthracnose, Yellow Leaf Curl, Sunscald,

ium & Verticillium Wilt, and Tomato Spotted Wilt Virus.

Besides diseases, tomatoes attract numerous dastardly insect pests, including Aphids, Spider Mites, Cutincluding worms, Whiteflies, Thrips, Blister Beetles, Leaf Miners, Nematodes, and Tomato Hornworms.

planet Adding to the above tomato hazards, you will always have those opportunistic predators ready to pounce on your crop, including birds, squirrels, and fence-climbing neighbors.

So, given these gardening perils, what can you do to keep your tomatoes healthy, thriving, and producing. You can begin by planting disease-resistant varieties. Consider crop rotation to prevent diseases from building up in your soil. Practice proper watering (avoid overhead watering and try to water in the early morning). You can also prune diseased leaves as needed. For pests, use organic options, including soap and pepper sprays. But there is one other simple and inexpensive tool that you can use in this fight against your tomato enemies. And I believe it is one of the gardening world's best kept secrets – aspirin water.

Common aspirin contains acetylsalicylic acid, which is what makes this gardening trick work. When attacked by pests or disease, your plants produce a hormone (salicylic acid) that triggers a systemic acquired resistance response (SAR). This SAR response is the plant's system defense, immune which can be naturally slow. Acetylsalicylic acid is very similar to salicylic acid, the hormone which triggers this SAR immune response in tomato plants. By spraying your plants with aspirin water, you are essentially tricking them into beefing up their defenses ahead of time



and kicking their immune systems into high gear before diseases and pest attack. This method does not kill or repel pests or diseases. Instead, it acts more like a vaccine. It makes your plants stronger and more able to stay healthy and thrive.

To make aspirin water for your tomato plants, simply add two to four aspirin tablets to one gallon of water (the recipe seems to vary depending upon who you talk to). Be sure to use uncoated aspirin, which is often found as the cheapest store-brand option. Uncoated aspirin dissolves well in water and won't clog your sprayer. If you have only a few plants, a small hand sprayer works fine. If you have many tomato plants, you will probably want to use a larger pump sprayer. Spray plants, covering all leaves and stems, every 10-14 days. You can also drench plants, soaking the soil with aspirin water. Some even bury aspirin tablets with tomatoes at planting.

After using aspirin water on your tomatoes, the leaves may look thicker, almost leathery, and they often turn a darker green. Along with fortified disease and pest resistance, many gardeners claim they get more and better tasting tomatoes, with increased nutrient content. Aspirin water will also benefit other crops in the nightshade family, including peppers, eggplant, and pota-

If you are growing tomatoes this year, try some aspirin water today. Your plants will love it!

IODY 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

> typewriterweekly.com © 2025 Jody Dyer

CITY GIRL

Saying Goodbye to a Friend

By Linda Brendle

David and I met James and his wife Peggy sometime in the fall of 2000, shortly after we moved into the house next

door to them in northwest Carrollton. We were working in the front yard when she walked over, introduced LINDA BRENDLE herself, and Leader correspondent invited us to attend

church with them at Prestonwood Baptist. We explained that we already had a church home, but we knew that we had a lot in common. A few minutes later, James joined us wearing a Harley shirt - and the bond was cemented.

From that day on, even though we attended different churches, we spent a lot of time together. We grilled in the back yard, splashed around in our tiny pool or sat in the hot tub, but mostly, we rode our motorcycles. They joined Bikers for Christ with us and went on many Saturday rides to places as far away as Oklahoma for breakfast or lunch, and we hung out at the local Sonic on Thursday nights which was Bike Night. We made the Mushy Tushy Ride with the local Harley group and attended the Republic of Texas Motorcycle Rally in Austin several times. Under their influence, David switched from a Yamaha to a Harley, and I came off the passenger's seat onto a Harley of my own.

The more we rode, the more we wanted to ride. In 2003, along with three other friends, we made the long trek to Sturgis, SD for the BIG bike rally. We followed the pattern we had developed on our shorter rides – David in the lead as the Road Captain – because he had the best sense of direction – followed by me, then any other riders, Peggy, and James as the Tail Gunner. For any non-riders who might be reading this, the Tail Gunner – or Sweep – is the last rider in the group. He has a number of responsibilities including making sure no one gets left behind at a stoplight,

helping anyone who is having trouble with their bike or otherwise, and managing the group's position during lane changes and other traffic-related issues.

During the week at Sturgis, we visited Mount Rushmore, the Badlands, and Devil's Tower among other sites, and then we headed southwest to Estes Park, CO. We camped there for a couple of nights, but every day brought another day-trip adventure. One of my favorites was crossing the Great Divide. The scenery was spectacular, but it had its drawbacks. Bikers like to stop at scenic pullouts and other photo ops, but mostly, they like to see the scenery on the move. As we rode up and over the mountains, the drastic change in altitude in a short period of time had an unexpected effect - we all got extremely sleepy, almost to the point of not being able to keep our bikes on the road. David saw a beautiful lodge with a huge wrap-around porch furnished with rocking chairs - lots of them. In spite of our groggy state, we parked our bikes in a neat row, then staggered to the porch and fell into empty chairs.

Another of James' functions, both in the group and life in general, was to add humor to any situation. We were quite a sight, dressed in leather jackets and/or vests covered with patches, chaps, and do rags. We were blearyeyed from what probably looked more like a drug-induced state than a mild case of altitude sickness. Some of the regular patrons of the lodge gave us a wide berth while others stared openly. James made eye contact with one curious couple and said, "Hi! We're all really tired from crossing the Divide and wondered if we could come to your room and take a nap?" I wasn't surprised when they hurried away without a reply.

Not all of our time together was spent on the bikes. In the fall of 2002, news came that Billy Graham would be coming to Texas Stadium for a 'Metroplex Mission" in October. A call went out to area churches for volunteers to sing in the crusade choir. No

experience or even musical ability was required - just a willingness to attend several rehearsals and to be available on the night of the service. That description fit the four of us to a tee, so we signed up, rehearsed, and made a joyful noise.

David and I moved away from the Chaneys in 2005 due to a job transfer to Florida, but we never lost touch. We continued to share our lives through phone, text, and email messages. We visited in each other's homes, and we had a lot of fun, in spite of the fact that none of us was riding any more. We also had serious conversations about the future. One of our plans involved living in a nursing home together, painting flames on our wheelchairs, and racing up and down the hallways with David as Road Captain and James as Tail Gunner. But that wasn't in the Master's plan.

James Randel Chaney was born on June 25, 1941, and he passed away peacefully at home on June 9, 2025. The Chaneys are still members at Prestonwood, but earlier in their lives, they lived in Chandler, Texas where they purchased cemetery plots and a funeral plan. A Celebration of Life is planned sometime next month at their home church, but on June 14, visitation and an informal graveside service were held in Chandler. David and I arrived at the funeral home just as Peggy walked into the foyer looking for an extra memory folder for a family member. We were able to share hugs, a few tears, and some treasured memories.

When the time came for the procession, we returned to our car and followed the other vehicles out of the parking lot. "Looks like we're at the back of the line," David remarked, and then he grew unusually quiet. When we arrived at the cemetery, he walked purposefully toward the pavilion where James waited for the last goodbyes. David found Peggy and, with tears in his eyes, he said, "On the way over here, I realized that we were bringing up the rear. It was my honor to be James' Tail Gunner on his last ride.'

SPOTLIGHT

Continued from page 1

Tawakoni volunteer, asked Willis if she would volunteer for a food drive in November 2022, and she agreed.

food when we first began our and left at age 20 to live in Thanksgiving dinners, but Sacramento Valley, soon after friends and a church Susanville, California

to serve 86 families last year. We predict that we will serve 100 meals this year."

Willis grew up in the small "We didn't do perishable town of Glen Avon, California Valley, in She

grown son and daughter, and when her daughter and three grandchildren moved to Texas because of her son-in-law's job, Willis moved to the local area to be near them.

Willis said that if anyone ould like to volunteer at the



group let us store turkeys and later lived in Reno, Nevada hams in their freezers. Our first complete Thanksgiving meals were given out to 18 families in doors and jogging, before 2022, and now that we have a moving to Sky Forest in donated freezer, we were able southern California. She has a

where she competed in 5Ks and loved being in the out-

library, they are invited to stop by from 4:30 to 7:30 on Tuesday or Thursday at 201 Oak Leaf Trail. In the near future it will be possible to make money donations too.



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS Abbott calls latest session his 'best'

got everything he pushed for hospitals, and drug developduring the Legislature's 89th ers to conduct clinical trials session, which ended on on ibogaine, extracted from June 2.

The Dal-

that passed

will rejuve-



GARY BORDERS

nate the state's education system.

"More important for Texans, this has been the most transformative session for the future of Texas, and the positive effects of the session are going to be felt for decades," Abbott said.

Besides the voucher bill, which allows students to use public money for private school, he noted changes to bail policy, a large infusion of funding for the state's water needs, and passage of property tax relief, which will total \$51 billion.

Abbott is up for reelection in 2026 and would become the state's longest-serving governor if he wins. At this point, he faces no major opposition either in the primary or the general election. With more than \$70 million stashed away in campaign funds, he says he's unworried about potential opponents.

"There's only one goal, and that's to win, and so I will run very aggressively," Abbott said.

Governor still undecided on THC ban

Abbott said last week he has still not decided if he will sign or veto legislation banning THC products in Texas, the Houston Chronicle reported.

"I'm going to give it the thoughtful consideration from every angle that it deserves," Abbott said of Senate Bill 3, which would outlaw all hemp-derived products containing THC, effective in September. He has until June 22 to decide

The proposed ban has sparked opposition from people who run THC businesses, veterans groups, and others. The state now has more than 8,500 retailers selling THC products, which can have a high similar to that of marijuana, which is illegal except for medical reasons. The ban was a priority of Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick, who

presides over the Senate.

Gov. Greg Abbott says he consortium of universities, new inpatient psychiatric an ancient African shrub, which has been used in las Morning Mexican clinics to treat

addiction and brain trauma. Key to the bill's passage in Texas were the cheerleading efforts of former Gov. Rick Perry. Since ending his tenure as U.S. Energy Secretary in 2021, he has become one of the highest-profile advocates of researching the beneficial medical effects of some psychedelics.

According to The Tribune, "Stanford Medicine conducted a study in 2024 that found ibogaine, when combined with magnesium to protect the heart, safely and effectively reduces PTSD, anxiety and depression and improves functioning" in veterans with traumatic brain injury.

Ibogaine is unlikely to be used recreationally because it does not provide an enjoyable high and leaves the user in a state of temporary paralysis.

Even with the \$50 million in funding, Texas is likely at least six years from seeing any possibility of FDA approval for clinical trials.

State's Rainy Day Fund reaches cap

The Texas Economic Stabilization Fund, popularly called the Rainy Day Fund, has reached its statutory cap for the first time with more than \$24 billion in the state's piggy bank, the state comptroller's office reported.

The 1988 constitutional amendment passed by voters that established the fund limits the fund to no more than 10 percent of the amount of revenue deposited into the General Revenue Fund during the previous biennium.

That means the excess will be returned to the state's General Fund. Much of the marked increase in funds placed in the Rainy Day Fund comes from a 116percent increase in oil and gas collections from 2021 to 2022.

Legislators can use the funding to either plug a budget deficit during the two-year cycle or address a project revenue shortfall in an upcoming biennium, with a three-fifths majority legislative approval.

It can be used for other purposes if two-thirds of legislators approve. Since the fund's inception in 1988, about \$17.7 billion has been appropriated for other purposes.

hospital, expected to be completed in 2027.

"Texans are better served when they have access to healthcare closer to home, and that is why state leaders and HHSC have invested in facilities like the Panhandle State Hospital," said HHS Executive Commissioner Cecile Erwin Young. "When completed, this hospital will offer hope and healing to some of the most vulnerable people in the Panhandle."

It will be the first stateoperated hospital in the 26-county area around Amarillo. HHSC owns and operates nine state hospitals and one residential youth treatment center for people experiencing mental illness.

Local health departments brace for more federal cuts

Local public health departments across Texas have been notified of another \$119 million in federal cuts coming at the end of June, The Tribune reported. Those cuts come on the heels of \$700 million in unspent COVID pandemic funding that was clawed back by the feds earlier this year.

The latest cuts involve Centers for Disease Control and Prevention grants aimed at increasing vaccine coverage, preparing local communities for infectious diseases and natural disasters, and helping hospitals prepare for emergency disasters and HIV prevention.

More cuts are possible by the end of the year. Texas already ranks among the worst in the country for public-health funding.

Measles outbreak sees slight increase

After a week of no measles outbreaks in Texas, two new cases were reported last week, according to the Texas Department of State Health Services, bringing the total to 744 with 96 total hospitalizations and two fatalities, both school-aged children.

Fewer than 10 of the confirmed cases are considered actively infectious.

Dawson, Gaines, Lamar and Lubbock counties still have ongoing measles transmission, according to DSHS. A majority of the total cases were located in Gaines County, on the border with New Mexico.

Gary Borders is a veteran awardexas iournalist lished a number of community newspapers in Texas during a 30year span, including in Longview, Fort Stockton, Nacogdoches and Cedar Park. Email: gborders@texaspress.com.

BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU Tips for Purchasing a New Vehicle

new car this year, you're not alone. Global vehicle sales are projected to exceed 15 million units in 2025, according to a JD Power report. While the process can feel daunting, it doesn't have to be. By preparing in advance, you can walk into the dealership with confidence and drive away knowing you made a well-informed decision.

"Buying a vehicle is one of the biggest purchases most consumers make outside of a home," said Mechele Agbayani Mills, President and CEO of BBB Central East Texas. "Doing your homework ahead of time can save you money and help you avoid buyer's remorse.'

BBB provides the following tips to Help You start the carbuying process

Evaluate your payment strategy. First, decide whether you'll pay in full, finance the vehicle, or lease it. If you're considering a loan or lease, carefully review the terms. Be sure to understand the annual percentage rate (APR), total cost over time, and any early termination or mileage penalties if you decide to lease.

Create a realistic budget. Go beyond the sticker price. Factor in registration fees, insurance, taxes, fuel, and maintenance. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, transportation is a top household expense, so a comprehensive budget is essential.

Narrow your options. Think about what you really

TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT **Texas Parks and Wildlife Adds Three** Properties to Public Hunting Offerings

of our newest sites, including

the recent acquisitions at

Enchanted Rock State Natu-

ral Area and Post Oak Ridge

State Park, gives hunters a

special opportunity to help

the department with land

management on these

acreage added to the public

hunting program in Texas

State Parks include 1,650

acres at Dinosaur Valley

State Park, 1,400 acres at

Ray Roberts Lake State

3,100 acres at Post Oak

The newest additions of

unique properties."

AUSTIN — With the addition of three new properties, Texas' 2025-26 hunting season will offer more public hunting opportunities through Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's (TPWD) Public Hunting Program.

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission authorized 2025-26 hunting season dates for public hunting lands and Texas State Parks that will offer 140 different public hunts in 52 State Park Park- Isle du Bois Unit, and State Natural Areas, totaling more than 521,000 acres of publicly accessible land. "We are so excited to be able to continue to grow the public hunting opportunities within state parks and natural areas every year, including on some of the newest park properties," said Greg Creacy, Texas State Parks Natural Resources program director. "The number of hunted parks has increased from 45 to 52 in the past five years. The addition of some

If you're considering a need in a car—passenger new car, then shift the ew car this year, you're not capacity, fuel economy, discussion to your trade-in. safety technology, comfort features, and so on. Use resources like Consumer Reports and IIHS crash test ratings. Don't forget to check the insurance cost for each model; some vehicles cost more to insure due to higher theft rates or repair costs.

Compare models and pricing online. Websites like Kelley Blue Book and Edmunds allow you to compare vehicle prices, trims, and features. They also help estimate your current vehicle's trade-in value. This information gives you the upper hand when negotiat-

ing. Find a trustworthy dealership. Check business profiles and read reviews at BBB.org to ensure the dealership is reputable. The BBB Accredited Business Seal is a sign that a business is committed to ethical practices.

At the Dealership

Take your time. Avoid pressure to buy immediately. Stay in control of the timeline to ensure you make the decision that's right for you.

Test drive thoroughly. Drive in different conditions – city streets, highways, hills - if possible. Evaluate the vehicle's handling, braking, visibility, acceleration, and comfort. Turn off the radio and listen for unusual sounds. Check the ease of use of tech features, dashboard visibility, and seat adjustability. Also inspect the car's exterior and trunk space.

Discuss your trade-in separately. Once you've finalized the price of your

> ing hunting, fishing, camping, hiking and other recreational uses and the Texas Public Hunt Drawing program, which issues permits for drawn hunts on both public and private lands throughout Texas.

Applications will be accepted beginning July 1 and hunters can apply for more than 60 high-quality hunt categories.

For more information about the Public Hunting Program, including an interactive map of all available public hunting lands and a how to video, visit https:// tpwd.texas.gov/huntwild/hunt/ public/. The webpage also has information about daily permit hunts and mentored hunting workshops.

Keeping these negotiations separate can help ensure you receive a fair deal on both transactions. Review warranties and

extras. Make sure you understand the type and duration of any warranty. Review service contracts in detail before signing.

Finalizing the Deal

Once you sign a purchase agreement, you're legally obligated to follow through-unless the contract explicitly includes a cancellation clause. Always read the fine print and ask questions before signing anything. Retain all paperwork related to the purchase in a secure location, including your warranty and financing documents.

Whether it's your first car or your fifth, buying a vehicle should be a thoughtful and empowering experience," Mills added. "BBB is here to help you navigate every step of the journey with confidence."

For more information, go to the BBB Auto Resources page. It's your one stop for all things regarding your vehicle. Go to bbb.org to find new car dealers near you.

About BBB: BBB is a nonprofit, business-supported organization that sets and upholds high standards for fair and honest business behavior. Most BBB services to consumers are free of charge. BBB provides objective advice, free BBB Business Profiles on more than 5.3 million companies, 11,000 charity reviews, dispute resolution services, alerts and educational information on topics affecting marketplace trust. Visit bbb.org for more information. BBB Serving Central East Texas was founded in 1985 and serves 19 counties.

State to become

leader in psychedelic drug research

At the same time Texas is poised to ban THC products, state leaders are investing \$50 million in a psychedelic drug, ibogaine, that purports to have medicinal benefits, according to The Texas Tribune.

Senate Bill 2308 creates a

Construction of new Panhandle state hospital announced

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission broke ground last week on the new Panhandle State Hospital in Amarillo. The Legislature approved \$159 million in funding for the

The Rains County Leader tries to include a little bit of everything in each issue. For those who enjoy finding errors, we included some of those as well.

Jaxie Morgan

Ridge State Park, 3,100 acres at Enchanted Rock State Natural Area and 1,000 Government acres at Canyon State Natural Area.

TPWD's Public Hunting Program includes more than a million acres located throughout Texas. Access to these lands is provided by two types of permits: the \$48 Annual Public Hunting (APH) Permit, available beginning Aug. 15, which allows full privileges includ-





By Linda Brendle

Take care then how you hear, for to the one who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even what he thinks that he has will be taken away.'

Luke 8:18 Pastor Jason Rolen's Sunday morning sermon was called "The Incomparable Christ: Listen Like Your Life Depends on It."

Jesus has the power and authority to command us to listen and do what He says. He invited us to listen when He said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." We are to hear with a view to obey and bear fruit. It is important for us to listen because, in the final judgment, the evidence of our redemption will be based on our obedience. Are you manifesting what you hear, living out what you profess, practicing what you preach? If not, your profession may not be real. Jesus identified those who listen when He said

"My mother and my brothers are those who hear the Word of God and do it. Listen like your life depends on it, because it does.

All adult Sunday School Classes will meet together in the Sanctuary during the month of July for a close look at the BBC Doctrinal Statement.

July 7-11 - Youth Camp is in Wickes, Arkansas. The cost is \$215 and sign-up deadline is June 15.

July 21-23 - Family VBS. To sign up, go to *bbcemory.org*, click the Ministries tab, and click Family VBS 2025.

July 9 – August 27, 6-7:00 p.m. Adult Wednesday Night Bible Study – Judges: A Mirror of Our Lives.

A Prospective Members' Class will be held each Sunday in August at 9:15 a.m. Attendance to the class is not a commitment to membership, but it could be helpful in your decision.

Emory Methodist Church

By Mary White

They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers. Acts 1:14

Rev. David Banks continued his series on the Early Church with a message titled "Prayer" with scripture text taken from Acts.

Do we sometimes allow Bible study or other spiritual exercises to become substitutes for our mission as a Christian? Prayer is that power source for that mission. David spoke on prayer posture and how raising your

hands in worship is opening yourself up. I myself feel so very close to God when I'm on my knees. We need to prepare ourselves for worship and expect to meet the holy, living God every time we're in His presence. We have a busy week with VBS. Our

Bible study on Luke resumes on June 25 at 10:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.

Birthday wishes go to Nancy Steed, Richard Kraft, Thomas White and anniversary wishes go to Cay and Nolan House.

Wishing you a very happy and peace-filled week. As always be kind.

FISHING REPORT

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department released the following information for Lake Fork and Lake Tawakoni taken on June 11:

Fork: Good. Water Stained; 82 degrees; 0.38 feet above pool. Morning bass bite is good on main lake points with topwaters. There is a good bite with frogs and buzzbaits around grass or flooded weeds. Target points and flats midmorning with square bill crankbaits in 3-5 feet of water. Midday the offshore bite has been good with fish on road beds, points, high spots and hard bottoms. Carolina rigs are best in 15-25 feet. Report by Marc Mitchell, Lake Fork Guide Service.

Lily fields are filling in, hydrilla and milfoil are reaching for the surface. Fish this type of cover at midday when bass are seeking cover. Frog patterns are working in the shallow vegetation early and late. Drop a clouser on an isolated cover for black bass. Large bream have moved shallow, wooly bug-

Channel catfish are cruising 2-4 feet, clousers are a good choice. Report by Guide Alex Guthrie, Fly Fish Fork Guide Service.

Crappie fishing on Lake Fork is heating up just like the temperatures. The fish are really ganging up on the structure in 14-32 feet. White crappie are in timber and brush piles. Black crappie are loaded up on rock piles, tire reefs, brush piles, lavdowns, underwater bridges, road beds, docks and regular bridges. Not every structure has fish on it, but the ones that do tend to have a lot. Still seeing tons of fish just under 10 inches but the larger fish are joining the smaller fish more and more each week. Crappie are still biting minnows, hand tied jigs and soft plastics. Reports of some crappie biting larger bass baits when anglers are fishing in areas with a large concentration of bigger crappie. It is a great time to get out and load the cooler with some tasty slabs. Report by Jacky Wiggins, Jacky Wiggins Guide Service.

0.89 feet above pool. Lake Tawakoni is fishing good and is in its full summer pattern. The hybrid striper and white bass bite is good. Fish are feeding on thread-fin shad suspended over deeper water. Slabs, swimbaits and live bait are working best. The eating sized catfish bite is red hot. Baited holes in 20 feet are working best. Prepared baits such as punch bait and dip baits are catching more fish. Crappie are decent on bridge pilings and shallower brush in 8-14 feet. Docks are also holding fish. Jigs are out-fishing minnows currently. Look for that to chance as water warms into the 80s. Largemouth bite is good. Shallow crankbaits, flukes and frogs are catching best. First hour and last hour for the frog, and the cranks mid morning into the mid day around shallow dock pilings, rip-rap and isolated underwater irrigation pumps. Use your side-imaging to locate these. Report by Captain Michael Littlejohn, Lake Tawakoni Guide Ser-

lightly stained; 77 degrees;

SAVVY SENIORS **Does Medicare Cover Annual Physical Exams?**

Dear Savvy Senior,

Does Medicare cover annual physical exams? I've gotten a physical every year since I turned 50 and would

like to find out what Medicovers care when I sign up in a few months. Almost 65 Dear

JIM MILLER Almost, No, Medi-

care does not pay for annual physical exams, but it does cover a one-time "Welcome to Medicare" checkup dur-ing your first year after enrolling in Part B. And after that, it covers annual wellness visits to keep track of your health. Here's what you should know.

Physical vs Wellness Exam

In an annual physical, a doctor examines you, may do bloodwork and other tests and looks for problems even though you don't have a specific complaint or risk.

The Welcome to Medicare checkup and annual wellness visits are different. They focus primarily on preventive care.

Your doctor will review your risk factors, develop a personalized health plan for vou, check that you're up to date with preventive tests such as cancer screenings and flu shots and may refer you for other tests. Here's a breakdown of what these exams may include.

Welcome to Medicare Checkup

This is an introduction to health advice. Medicare and focuses on health promotion, disease prevention and detection to help you stay well. It's an opportunity for your doctor to assess your health and provide a plan for care. During this visit your doctor will:

• Take your height, weight, and blood pressure measurements, and calculate your body mass index (BMI). • Ask about your personal and family health

history. Give you referrals for other care as needed.

• Assess your potential

for depression. Provide a simple vision

test. • Recommend vaccines, tests, screenings and other preventive services you need to stay healthy.

• Offer to talk with you about creating advance directives.

Annual Wellness Visit

This visit includes some of the same elements as the Welcome to Medicare checkup. For example, your doctor will review your medical history, record your vital information and give you an opportunity to talk about advance directives. Your doctor may also provide the following services: Create a screening checklist for recommended preventive services for the

upcoming year. • Look at health risks and treatment options.

• Perform a cognitive assessment to look for signs

of dementia. Provide personalized • Review your current

prescriptions. • Study risk factors for

opioid problems if you have a prescription for opioids, and screen for potential substance use disorders.

Medicare Coverage

The Welcome to Medicare and annual wellness visits are fully covered by Medicare Part B without any out-of-pocket costs. You don't need the Welcome to Medicare visit to qualify for later annual wellness visits, but know that Medicare won't pay for a wellness visit during the first 12 months you have Part B.

During these visits, the provider may order additional tests or procedures that may be subject to Medicare's deductibles, copayments or coinsurance.

Make sure that when you book your appointment, you specifically ask for the Welcome to Medicare checkup or annual wellness visit to ensure Medicare covers it. Otherwise, you may have to pay for the visit.

If you're enrolled in Medicare Advantage, you'll probably need to use an innetwork provider for the wellness visits to be covered. Some Medicare Advantage plans also cover annual physicals in addition to the wellness visit. Check your plan for details.

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.

Sing to God, sing praises to his name; lift up a song to him who rides through the deserts; his name is the LORD; exult before him! Father of the fatherless and protector of widows is God in his holy habitation. God settles the solitary in a home; he leads out the prisoners to prosperity, but the rebellious dwell in a parched land. Acts 20:24 (ESV)







Legal Notice

NOTICE OF SALE

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BY VIRTUE OF AN ORDER OF SALE

RAINS COUNTY

and issued pursuant to judgment decree(s) of the District Court of Rains County, Texas, by the Clerk of said Court on said date, in the hereinafter numbered and styled suit(s) and to me directed and delivered as Sheriff or Constable of said County, I have on June 10, 2025, seized, levied upon, and will offer for sale the following properties, on the first Tuesday in July, 2025, the same being the 1th day of said month, at the west side of the Courthouse of the said County, in the City of Emory, Texas, between the hours of 10 o'clock a.m. and 4 o'clock p.m. on said day, beginning at 10:30 AM, and will proceed to sell for cash to the highest bidder all the right, title, and interest of the defendants in such suit(s) in and to the following described real estate levied upon as the property of said defendants, the same lying and being situated in the County of Rains and the State of Texas, to-wit:

Sale #	Cause # Judgment Date	Acct # Order Issue Date	Style of Case	Legal Description	Adjudged Value
1	3101TX 04/11/25	0188-0470-0050-43 JUNE 05, 2025	RAINS COUNTY, ET AL VS. MISTY NEWSOME, ET AL	A0188 F D ROJAS SURVEY, 1.283 ACRES GREENTREE ESTATES UNPLATED.	\$293,298.0
2	3123TX 04/11/25	2258-0040-0120B-43 JUNE 05, 2025	RAINS COUNTY, ET AL VS. HOWARD JUDGE, ET AL	FEATHERS ADDITION, BLOCK 4, LOT PART 12, ACRES 1.022, MH LABEL# TEX0398731	\$33,840.0
3	3129TX 12/20/24	0148-0045-0000-10 JUNE 05, 2025	RAINS COUNTY, ET AL VS. BARBARA DENISE THOMAS GOFF	A0148 F MCMAHAN SURVEY, 2.04 ACRES SALE NOTES: (SUBJECT TO POST JUDGMENT TAXES)	\$39,051.0
4	3139TX 12/20/24	2900-0000-3790-41 JUNE 05, 2025	RAINS COUNTY, ET AL VS. ANDREA KRUGER	A0229 TOLLETT MARGARET SURVEY; (LL) WHISPERING OAKS LOT 379 SALE NOTES: (SUBJECT TO POST JUDGMENT TAXES)	\$114,238.0
5	3164TX 04/11/25	2900-0000-2000-41 JUNE 05, 2025	RAINS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT, ET AL VS. LYNN RAY WALLACE, JR	TRACT 1 A0229 TOLLETT MARGARET SURVEY; (LL) WHISPERING OAKS LOT 200	\$142,431.0
6	3164TX 04/11/25	2900-0000-1880-41 JUNE 05, 2025	RAINS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT, ET AL VS. LYNN RAY WALLACE, JR	TRACT 2 A0229 TOLLETT MARGARET SURVEY; (LL) WHISPERING OAKS LOT 188, SOUTH 1/2 LOT 189	\$18,223.0
7	3193TX 12/20/24	2755-0000-3760-43 JUNE 05, 2025	RAINS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT, ET AL VS. BILLIE J. FINCHER, AKA BILLIE JEAN FINCHER, ET AL	TRACT 1 AB 186 JOSIAH POMEROY SURVEY STEAMBOAT SHORES #1 LOT 376 LL SALE NOTES: (SELLING TRACTS 1,2,3 FOR ONE COMBINED BID) (SUBJECT TO POST JUDGMENT TAXES)	\$27,400.0
8	3193TX 12/20/24	2755-0000-3770-43 JUNE 05, 2025	RAINS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT, ET AL VS. BILLIE J. FINCHER, AKA BILLIE JEAN FINCHER, ET AL	TRACT 2 AB 186 JOSIAH POMEROY SURVEY STEAMBOAT SHORES #1 LOT 377 LL SALE NOTES: (SELLING TRACTS 1,2,3 FOR ONE COMBINED BID) (SUBJECT TO POST JUDGMENT TAXES)	\$3,160.0
9	3193TX 12/20/24	2755-0000-3750-43 JUNE 05, 2025	RAINS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT, ET AL VS. BILLIE J. FINCHER, AKA BILLIE JEAN FINCHER, ET AL	TRACT 3 AB 186 JOSIAH POMEROY SRUVEY STEAMBOAT SHORES #1 LOT 375 LL SALE NOTES: (SELLING TRACTS 1,2,3 FOR ONE COMBINED BID) (SUBJECT TO POST JUDGMENT TAXES)	\$3,160.0
10	3211TX 12/20/24	0206-1410-0A40-42 JUNE 05, 2025	RAINS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT, ET AL VS. C.B AINSWORTH, AKA COTHURN BEARMAN AINSWORTH	A0206 RAYMOND SUNIGAS, MOBILE HOME ONLY ON MELVIN HAYES LAND - PFS0419275 SALE NOTES: (SUBJECT TO POST JUDGMENT TAXES)	\$17,745.0
11	3238TX 12/20/24	0229-0005-0020-41 JUNE 05, 2025	RAINS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT, ET AL VS. CAC III INVESTMENTS, INC.	A0229 MARGARET TOLLETT SURVEY, 3 ACRES SALE NOTES: (SUBJECT TO POST JUDGMENT TAXES)	\$66,578.0
12	3248TX 04/11/25	2860-010W-0000-43 JUNE 05, 2025	RAINS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT, ET AL VS. RICKEY LEE PATRICK, ET AL	TIMBERCREEK ESTATES #1 (UNRECORDED), LOT 010W, ACRES 6.0	\$91,605.0
13	3250TX	0105-0660-0000-43	RAINS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL	A0105 HEWITT WASHINGTON J ACRES 1.0	\$45,072.0

STATE OF TEXAS

	15	12/20/24	JUNE 05, 2025	DISTRICT, ET AL VS. RONNIE DEAN CLAYTON	AUTOS HEWITT WASHINGTON JACKES 1.0	\$45,072.00					
(any volume and page references, unless otherwise indicated, being to the Deed Records, Rains County, Texas, to which instruments reference may be made for a more complete description of each respective tract.) or, upon the written request of said defendants or their attorney, a sufficient portion of the property described above shall be sold to satisfy said judgment(s), interest, penalties, and cost; and any property sold shall be subject to the right of redemption of the defendants or any person having an interest therein, to redeem the said property, or their interest therein, within the time and in the manner provided by law, and shall be subject to any other and further rights to which the defendants or anyone interested therein may be entitled, under the provisions of law. Said sale to be made by me to satisfy the judgment(s) rendered in the above styled and numbered cause(s), together with interest, penalties, and costs of suit, and the proceeds of said sales to be applied to the satisfaction thereof, and the remainder, if any, to be applied as the law directs.											
	RECENT CHANGES IN THE PROPERTY TAX CODE NOW REQUIRE PURCHASERS OF TAX SALE PROPERTY TO HAVE A STATEMENT FROM THE RAINS COUNTY TAX ASSESSOR-COLLECTOR CERTIFYING THAT THE PERSON/FIRM/COMPANY PURCHASING PROPERTY AT A TAX SALE OWES NO DELINQUENT PROPERTY TAXES TO ANY TAXING ENTITY WITHIN THE COUNTY. YOU WILL NOT RECEIVE A TAX SALE DEED TO ANY PROPERTY YOU PURCHASE WITHOUT THIS CERTIFICATE.										
TO OBTAIN A CERTIFICATE, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR RAINS COUNTY TAX ASSESSOR-COLLECTOR AT LEAST TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO THE SALE.											
Dated at Emory, Texas, June 10, 2025											
	Sheriff Michael Hopkins Rains County, Texas										
			Ву	Deputy							
	Notes:										
The Minimum Bid is the lesser of the amount awarded in the judgment plus interest and costs or the adjudged value. However, the Minimum Bid for a person owning an interest in the property or for a person who is a party to the suit (other than a taxing unit), is the aggregate amount of the judgments against the property plus all costs of suit and sale. ALL SALES SUBJECT TO CANCELLATION WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. THERE MAY BE ADDITIONAL TAXES DUE ON THE PROPERTY WHICH HAVE BEEN ASSESSED SINCE											

For the latest in local sports news subscribe to

THE DATE OF THE JUDGMENT. For more information, contact your attorney or LINEBARGER GOGGAN BLAIR & SAMPSON, LLP, attorney for plaintiffs, at (903) 597-2897

Rains County Leader Call 903-473-2653

Rains County Leader



FOR SALE

SALES

County The Rains Good Samaritan Thrift/Clothes store will be open Saturdays in June from 8am -noon. Clothes sale is open Mon.-Wed., 8 am-12 pm, and 1 pm-4 pm. Open 8 am - noon on Thurs.

HOOTEN'S HARDWARE, LLC

Browse our wide selection of RV Parts and Accessories. Hwy. 69N in Emory. 903-473-8788.

RENT/LEASE

ALL BILLS PAID EAGLE INN APART-MENTS

2-BR \$933/mth. No deposit! Apply at *eaglein-napartments.com*.

3BR/2BA Rent For Trailer, \$1,000/dep. \$1,000/rent. No pets. References required. 903-473-1404, 8am-4pm.

STORAGE UNITS

EMORY SELF STOR-AGE, Hwy. 69S, 410 E. Lennon. Now offering climate-controlled units. 903-474-9150, 903-348-5459.

HELP WANTED

Jamie's Restaurant is looking for a morning cook and an evening cook. Experience is preferred. Give Jamie a call at 903-268-3044.

RAINS ISD NEEDS: Custodian/Custodian Substitutes, Bus Drivers/Substitutes, Food Service Employee/Substitutes, Child Development Center Employee/Substitutes. Salary based on experience. \$320/month of full-time employee health coverage paid. Apply on-line at https:/ /www.rainsisd.org Employment Equal Opportunity.

SERVICES

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MCKENZIE LAKE WORKS. Building boathouses and docks since 2001. Steel/ metal bldgs., & home . www.mremodeling.

HOOTEN'S HARD-WARE, LLC Has all your welding,

CONSTRUCTION

welding repair and lum-

ber needs available on

Hwy.

site.

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Emory. 903-473-8788. DODSON AND SONS NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN TO Painting, drywall, carpentry and more. 903-259-8541. For plumbing needs call Scott Trieb 903-474-4129

69N

in

DIRT & TRACTOR WORK Jerry Don's Backhoe

and Bobcat services. Clean fence rows, take down unwanted trees, refurbish driveways, install culverts, and all types of dirt work. Free estimates. 903-268-7552.

G&G GRAVEL - All types of gravel, chipped asphalt, available for spreading, free estimates. Miller estimates. Miller Grove. Bret Garrett 903-268-6910.

LAWN/LANDSCAPE/MOWING SMITH'S LAWN CARE fencing. landscaping, hedge trimming, weekly/ biweekly rates. 903biweekly rates. 903-521-8506, free esti-

mates.

TREE SERVICES HOOTEN'S LAWN & TREE SERVICE, LLC. trimming/re-Tree moval. Credit cards, insured. LI0019094.

VICE. www.TheWilcredit cards, appointments. We specialize in high risk removals. Trimming, Removals, Stumps.

HOOTEN'S LAWN & TREE SERVICE, LLC Tim Hooten

Lawn maintenance, sodding, landscaping, tree trimming & removal, retaining walls, irrigation sys-tems. LI 0019094. 903-473-8706, 903-474-4402.

APPLIANCE REPAIR

AVS APPLIANCE SER-VICE - Servicing most household appliances. All work guaranteed. 903-473-3664, 903-473-8862.

PEST CONTROL ALL PRO PEST CON-TROL. Termites, roaches, spiders, ants, scorpions. Call Robert 903-268-7263.

ALL INTERESTED PERSONS IN THE CITY OF EMORY, TEXAS THAT A PUBLIC HEARING WILL BE HELD BY THE CITY OF EMORY PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION ON TUESDAY, THE 1st DAY OF JULY 2025, AT 5:30 PM, AT THE EMORY CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS, LOCATED AT 399 N. TEXAS STREET (State Hwy. 19), EMORY, TEXAS FOR THE PURPOSE OF MAKING A REC-

OMMENDATION ΤO THE EMORY CITY COUNCIL ON THE FOLLOWING: RECOMMENDATION FROM

LEON CLARK FOR A LAND USE CHANGE FROM (R1)-SIN-GLE FAMILY TO (C-1) COM-MERCIAL FOR TWO SEPA-RATE PROPERTIES LOCATED AT 300 TEXAS ST. EMORY, TEXAS, (AIRPORT ROAD/ HWY. 19) (PROPERTY ID NO. 395 and 408).

A SECOND PUBLIC HEARING WILL BE HELD BY THE EMORY CITY COUNCIL ON TUESDAY, JULY 8, AT 6:45 P.M. THE PUB-LIC HEARING WILL BE HELD AT EMORY CITY HALL, LO-CATED AT 399 N TEXAS STREET, EMORY, TEXAS, 75440

News? Advertising? Questions?

Contact us at: 903-473-2653 or news@rainscountyleader.com ads@rainscountyleader.com sports@rainscountyleader.com subscription@rainscountyleader.com chuck.fitts@rainscountyleader.com

UNKNOWN HEIRS AND KNOWN HEIRS WHOSE ADDRESSES CANNOT BE ASCERTAINED **CITATION BY** PUBLICATION TO THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF KELLEY, MARTHA ANN, **DECEASED** – GREETINGS: YOU ARE HEREBY COM-MANDED TO APPEAR BEFORE THE COUNTY COURT OF RAINS COUNTY, TEXAS AT THE RAINS COUNTY COURT-HOUSE ANNEX LOCATED AT 220 W. QUITMAN ST., EMORY, TEXAS 75440. BY FILING A WRITTEN CONTEST OR ANSWER TO THE APPLICA-TION FOR LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION AND FOR **DETERMINATION OF HEIR-**SHIP FILED BY SMITH, BILLY, ON 6/11/2025 IN CAUSE 3361 IN THE COUNTY COURT OF RAINS COUNTY, TEXAS AND STYLED: BEING IN THE ESTATE OF MARTHA ANN KELLEY, DECEASED ON OR BEFORE THE MONDAY NEXT FOLLOWING THE EXPIRATION OF 10 DAYS FROM THE DATE THIS CITATION WAS PUB-LISHED. BY THE APPLICA-TION FOR LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION AND FOR DETERMINATION OF HEIR-SHIP, APPLICANT SEEKS THE COURT TO DETERMINE AND DECLARE THE HEIRS OF ANN MARTHA KELLEY, DECEASED AND THEIR INTERESTS IN SAID ESTATE. ISSUED AND GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL OF SAID COURT AT OFFICE IN EMORY, TEXAS, THIS June 11, 2025. Mandy Sawyer, County Clerk **Rains County, Texas** By: Molly Lennon

PUBLIC/LEGAL NOTICE

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

HELP WANTED

Rains County is accepting applications and resumes until 6/24/25 for the appointment of County Judge.

Applicants must be a resident of Rains County for at least six months and registered to vote in Rains County.

Application and full job description can be found on our website at www.co.rains.tx.us

Please drop off applications and resumes to the Human Resources office at 140 W. Quitman St., Ste. 102, Emory, TX 75440.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Rains County Commissioners Court will be accepting SEALED BIDS for the period of July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026. The bids are due by 4:30 p.m. June 20, 2025 in the Rains County Judge's Office of Linda Wallace, 167 E. Quitman St. Suite 102, Emory Tx, 75440. The bids will be opened by the Commissioners Court meeting

903-473-8706, 903-474-4402. LEGACY TREE SERsonLegacy.com 903-455-1587. Insured.

скеп com. 903-269-6173.



UNKNOWN HEIRS AND KNOWN HEIRS WHOSE ADDRESSES CANNOT BE ASCERTAINED **CITATION BY** PUBLICATION TO THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF KELLEY, MARTHA ANN, **DECEASED – GREETINGS:**

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Rains County, Texas By: Molly Lennon

at 10:00 a.m. June 26, 2025 for the following:

1. Fuel and Oil

2. Road Oil meeting TxDOT specifications - delivered and FOB at plant.

3. Plastic/ Corrugated Culvert Pipes

4. Plant Mix Oil Sand 100% AC 1.5 equivalent- delivered and FOB at plant

5. Flex Base meeting TxDOT specifications - FOB at plant

6. Hauling to Yards and Roads

7. Crushed Concrete - FOB at plant

8. Emulsion for Chip Seal (CRS 2P)

9. Chip seal Rock Grade 4 or Type "D" 10. Tree and Debris removal

All these bid items for material must meet TxDOT specifications for construction and maintenance of highways, streets and bridges.

Rains County reserves the right to sample and test, by independent laboratory any and all loads delivered.

The vendor or contractor will be required to replace at his expense any product or material which prove defective within (6) month following application.

Rains County reserves the right to reject material delivered not in compliance with specifications at bidder's expense.

Bid specifications available at the Rains County Road and Bridge Department 1293 S. State Highway 19, Emory Tx 75440. Phone (903) 473-5099 M-F 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

THIS WEEK IN TEXAS HISTORY Panhandle Princess partied up a storm

The only daughter of one ents' approval because the of Texas' wealthiest cattle kings married a blueblood from Philadelphia on Jun. 18, 1902 in the family mansion at Decatur.

Starting

of

Wag-

North Texas



BARTEE HAILE

counties into a 750 square-mile cattle empire. At the end of the nineteenth century, the colossal Three D Ranch covered more than a million acres.

Electra Waggoner was born in 1882 on the family property east of Decatur and named after her maternal grandfather Electius. She and younger brothers Paul and Guy were the three surviving children of Tom and his wife Ella.

The girl grew up spoiled rotten in El Castile, the fortress-like mansion her doting dad and equally adoring paternal grandfather built in the Wise County seat so the clan could live in town. Gigantic carved doors, twofoot thick walls, ceilings 18 feet high and other impressive architectural touches gave the dwelling the look of a medieval castle.

Ranch hands called Electra the "Princess of the Panhandle," but her strongwilled mother had other plans for the tomboy. She talked her husband into sending the rough-aroundthe-edges teen to an exclusive finishing school in Nashville in 1897.

vears later a refined young lady, but within a matter of months the Waggoners sent her on a trip around the world to cool a hot romance with a local beau. She returned in November 1901 with a butterfly tattoo and a new fiance, Albert B. Wharton, a Philadelphia socialite she had met in the mountains of Nepal. This choice gold was discovered at -

two were wed the following lune

While Electra was finding true love in the Himalayas, the residents of Beaver tried to change the name of their Wichita County hamlet to "Waggoner." Tom said nothing doing but did consent to "Electra" as a birthday present for his pride-and-joy.

To keep his little girl close to home, Tom Waggoner built Thistle Hill, a cozy 18-room mansion in Fort Worth, for the newlyweds. He soon had a place of his own on the same block, and brother Guy took up residence right next door.

To say that Electra lived high on the hog is an understatement. She was the first customer to run up a \$20,000 tab in a single day at Neiman Marcus in Dallas. Fresh flowers were delivered to her home daily, as were samples of the latest fashions from Paris and New York. She insisted on being the first to try on any garment and never wore anything twice.

Friends insisted that despite her self-indulgence Electra had a kind and generous side. For example, when told a favorite salesgirl was out sick, Electra got her address "and had her chauffeur drive her there. The girl lived alone and had not eaten properly for days. Electra put on an apron, cleaned the room and prepared a good meal for her."

That was nice, but money would have done the poor woman a lot more good. Instead of sharing a tiny fraction of her wealth, Electra bought her a bouquet of flowers.

Dec. 25, 1909 was a Electra came home three Christmas to remember in the Waggoner household. Tom gave each of his three grown children a 100,000acre ranch - Electra traded Paul for the Zacaweista fully stocked with livestock and worth \$6,000,000.

Electra built a new home on her present south of Vernon and sold Thistle Hill in 1911, the same year black evidently met with her par- where else? - Electra. Oil

wells were soon pumping millions into the Waggoner coffers.

Eight years later, Electra and Albert bought Shadow Lawn, a seven-acre estate in Dallas. The purchase price was \$200,000, and the lady of the house spent \$90,000 more remodeling the showplace to suit her expensive tastes.

Electra furnished Shadow Lawn with a half million dollars in European art. She paid \$42,000 for a Persian rug, \$18,000 for an inlaid Venetian cabinet and \$37,000 for an imported marble chest. The drapery bill alone exceeded \$55,000.

Electra's 18-year union with Albert Wharton hit the rocks in January 1921. The hard-drinking divorcee turned Shadow Lawn into party central and entertained celebrity guests with lavish and sometimes rowdy soirees.

The way Guy, who tied the knot eight times, and Electra were going through marriages had Tom Waggoner worried. So in 1925 he took back the ranches, consolidated the land under the Waggoner Estate and compensated the kids with trust funds.

As if to make her disapproving father's point, Electra left her second husband in January 1925 after less than three years of wedded bliss. The ink was hardly dry on the divorce papers, when she married hubby number three on a yacht off the Florida coast.

All the years of burning the candle at both ends had taken a terrible toll on Electra's health. When Guy learned in October 1925 that doctors did not give her long to live, he chartered a train in St. Louis and raced the thousand miles to New York to be at her bedside.

Electra Waggoner Whar-Bailey Gilmore sucton cumbed to cirrhosis of the liver on Thanksgiving Day at the age of 43. The party was over, and it was time to pay the bill.

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



LUKE CLAYTON Heading way up north to fish

As far back as I can remember, I longed to fish the remote waters of a "fly in" lake in Canada. As a youngster, I thumbed through the pages of outdoor magazines, paying close

attention to the articles pertaining to fishing for pike, walleye and Arctic graying in pristine waters for Luke Clayton fish that had never seen a

lure. There was something about this wild country that has always drawn me like a magnet, way before I was actually able to experience the north country first hand. The cry of the loon on a still evening while casting for pike, walleye or lake trout in some back bay of a lake that is several air miles from the nearest civilization or enjoying a noon meal of very fresh fried walleye or pike cooked over a campfire on an island surrounded by sparkling clean water is something every angler should experience.

I made my first trip to northern Saskatchewan a few years ago and spent five glorious days fishing and soaking in the wilderness country. We hear much about a "bucket list" experience these days, I can tell you one thing from personal experience, once I actually fished up in this wild country, my "once in a lifetime" bucket list experience became a yearly event!

Like any type of outdoor endeavor, there are many options. Fishing up in Saskatchewan at a five star lodge with fancy meals and guides comes with what I consider a pretty hefty price tag but for those with the desire and the means, its money well spent. The past couple of trips, I've enjoyed more of a "do it yourself" type trip, headquartering at Iskwatikan Lake Lodge owned by Bryce Liddell.

Bryce has become a friend and a few years ago, when his part of the world was covered in ice and snow, he and his buddy Gary made their way to Texas where some buddies and I exposed them to everything from giant blue catfish at Lake Tawakoni to hunting wild hogs. They were just as excited about what Texas has to offer in the way of hunting and fishing as we were about



Contributed photo

Luke placed a corn feeder adjacent his heavily loaded pear tree in hopes of giving the wild hogs invading his place something other than his delicious pears to eat.

the summer. As a general rule, the fish move out of the shallower bays into the main body of water as summer progresses. Boats are very safe aluminum V bottom with modern tiller steering outboards. Gas and fish cleaning is included. We used a bottom bouncing rig for walleye and found trolling to be very effective for everything except the lake trout which hold on a couple of the deeper submerged humps on the lake and prefer a vertical jigging

presentation. This last trip, I landed a 42-inch Northern Pike on an oversized spoon, casting into shallow, weedy coves around the islands but smaller pike 24 to 34 inches in length are very common. Before our trip, my group of friends and I vowed to eat fish every day and that's exactly what we did. A method of 'soft blackening' walleye and the smaller pike proved to be everyone's overall favorite but we had fish fried, baked and boiled in crab boil and served cold with sauce. This soft blackening is a very easy way to cook fish and because it's cooked over medium heat, does not create a lot of smoke like the conventional blackening method. Heat the butter to the point it sizzles, dust blackening seasoning liberally on both sides of the fillet and cook till the edges are crispy. This is a recipe I have tried with striper here at home and it is

equally tasty. GETTING THERE: We booked round trip flights to Saskatoon. Once in Saskatoon, we rented a car, purchased the groceries we needed for 5 days, and made the 4.5 hour drive to Otter Lake where we lodged for the night. In Saskatoon, there is a Walmart within a few hundred yards of a Bass Pro Shop that has everything you might need for the fishing trip. The fishing department was well stocked and the sales staff very knowledgeable. The next morning, we loaded our gear in the float plane and about 25 minutes later, touched down on Iskwatikan Lake. There was plenty of room in the float planes for our gear and supplies. We began fishing within minutes of getting our gear stowed in the cabin and soon learned that catching fish was about as easy as getting the right bait in the water.

time fish fries as well. We will purchase spices for blackened fish, baked fish, fried fish and probably grill some pike fillets over the campfire. Pork and beans, fried potatoes with onion and canned veggies will accompany our main course of fish. Breakfast will be simple with meals such as bagels and instant oatmeal or pancakes. We are so anxious to get out on the water to fish each day that we usually wolf down a couple cups of coffee and the easy to prepare breakfast in record time! It's nice to choose your own hours to fish. The lodge is located on a centrally located island and after the tour Bryce gave; it was easy to navigate the waters. The farthest we traveled from the lodge to fish was no further than three or four miles or a fifteen minute boat ride.

It's really nice to have the fish filleted by folks at the lodge, especially the pike. Walleye fillet are much like a bass or crappie but I have yet to master the art of cutting around the "Y" bones of the pike. Although walleye are known for their flavor, I found the smaller pike to be excellent eating also. The big lake trout are usually finished with their spawn in by June and that's when they stack up on a couple of deep humps in close proximity to the cabins.

If you are contemplating making that fishing trip you have dreamed of "up north," I strongly suggest you make it happen. I'm also betting your "bucket list" trip will become an annual event. The call of those loons and fast paced fishing will call you back, year after year. That blackened walleye is

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visiting the wilds of Canada. That's the way it is with we outdoor types that love adventure and wetting a hook or hunting 'new' coun-

try. For most of us, cost is always a factor. The fishing trip we enjoyed last summer now costs roughly \$1,400 US plus airfare. The \$1,400 covers the float plane to and from the lodge, a comfortable cabin, boat motor and fuel and fish cleaning. I think many of us are hesitant to try new experiences because of lack of information.

Most any fisherman with a little experience can "do" this trip. Guides are really not necessary on Iskwatikan Lake. Bryce gives a tour and points out the best areas for catching the various species. Fishing begins in late May

On our next trip, we plan to eat fish every day for the evening meal again and and continues throughout possibly enjoy a few noon

not too shabby, either!

Here is some information that will help you plan your trip.

www.iskwatikanlake.com Contact owner Bryce Liddell Department of Tourism, Saskatchewan. www.tourism-

saskatchewan.com If I can help you make plans for your first trip to

Canada, I'd be happy to. Contact me via email through www.catfishradio.org



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