

Rains County Leader

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EMORY, TEXAS - THURSDAY, JANUARY 29, 2026

PRICE 75¢

Fire and Ice



Leader photo by CHUCK FITTS

Cody Beaver uses a propane torch to melt ice covering the sidewalk at the entrance of Commercial Bank of Texas in Emory on Tuesday morning, January 27. The area began thawing Tuesday; however, Rains ISD and some businesses remained closed.

Weekend of freezing temperatures, precipitation causes local closures

By CHUCK FITTS

Rains County Leader staff

Wintery weather in Rains County over the weekend resulted in closures of schools and businesses, warnings from state officials and a disaster declaration for the county.

Temperatures in the county dropped to 24 degrees on Friday night, January 23, and did not move above freezing until Tuesday, January 27. Recorded lows over the weekend were 24, 14, 11, 15 and 22 degrees while highs reached 27, 21 and 30 for Saturday, Sunday and Monday, respectively.

In conjunction with the colder temperatures, county residents saw rain on Saturday, January 24, that transitioned to sleet, freezing rain and some snow

through Sunday, January 25. Unofficial totals show that the county received about two inches of snow and sleet from the event.

In preparation for the winter weather event, Rains County Judge Brent Hilliard signed a local disaster declaration for the county on Friday, January 23, for up to seven days to open resources to county officials to protect the county's residents.

The hazardous conditions that developed on Saturday night led to most churches in the county to cancel services for the safety of their members.

These same conditions had local officials cancel classes for Rains ISD on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, January 26 through January 28. The county and city offices had closures and delayed openings for the safety of

employees and residents.

No major utility failures were reported in the county, but one water service experienced a pump issue that was quickly corrected. A few residents did experience loss of power, but service was restored promptly.

Several businesses in the county closed for the weekend out of an abundance of caution and some opened later in the day, but closed early to avoid dangerous roads.

No tragedies have been reported in the county due to the weather, but some local residents were affected by tragedies in surrounding areas.

The forecast for the county predicts highs staying above freezing while lows will continue to move below freezing through next week.

RAINS COUNTY

Commissioners consider abortion ban, library oversight

By CHUCK FITTS

Rains County Leader staff

The Rains County Commissioners Court considered an ordinance concerning abortion and recommendations for the Rains County Library during the regular meeting on Thursday, January 22.

The court heard a presentation from Mark Leed Dickson of Sanctuary City for the Unborn on an ordinance being considered by the court to prevent Rains County from becoming a staging area for abortions performed in other states. The founder of the organization gave a history of the organization and the legality of the ordinance.

Dickson stated that similar ordinances had been adopted by 15 counties and 76 cities in Texas. He noted that the ordinance would not have traditional law enforcement, but would empower private citizens to sue anyone who performs abortions or assists someone in obtaining one.

When the item was to be considered

see **COMMISSIONERS** on page 2

EAST TAWAKONI

Council creates planning committee, donates vehicle

By CHUCK FITTS

Rains County Leader staff

The East Tawakoni City Council held a regular meeting on Tuesday, January 20, to consider plans for a police department building and vehicle.

During the meeting, the council was presented with a quote to draw up specs for a new police department building. The department has resided in a rented building next to the city library for several years after their building was deemed uninhabitable. The current facility costs the city around \$2,000 a month.

The company would design the building specs so the city could move forward with construction on the city property on Hwy. 276. A motion was made by Councilwoman Terry Rose to approve the quote and seconded by Councilman Chuck Moore.

During discussion before the final vote, Councilman John Disch stated that an overall plan for the property should be determined as there are plans

see **ET** on page 2

RAINS COUNTY

Last day to register to vote in primaries is Monday

By CHUCK FITTS

Rains County Leader staff

The last day for Rains County residents to register to vote in the March 3 primaries is Monday, February 2.

Local races in the upcoming primary include Brent Hilliard and Jay Ford seeking election to be Rains County Judge.

The election for Commissioner of Precinct 2 has five candidates including Bill McBride, John Hill, Pat O'Donnell,

Eric Christian and Jim Jones.

Incumbent Lori Northcutt, Dustin Briggs and Dennis Wagner are seeking to be elected as Commissioner for Precinct 4.

The office of Rains County Justice of the Peace will have two candidates, Tony Ingram and William Douglas.

State and federal level races for representation of Rains County include the redrawn 32nd Congressional District, U.S. Senator for Texas, Governor and Texas House District 5.

Early voting in the party primaries will begin on February 17 and end on February 27. An application for a ballot by mail must be received at the local election office by February 20.

The Party Primary election will be held on March 3 with the general election to be held on November 3.

For more information on local elections, contact the Rains County Election office at 903-473-5009 or email lisa.kneifl@co.rains.tx.us.

SPOTLIGHT

Rachel Hooten is a Missouri native who is falling in love with Point

By JUDY KRAMER

Rains County Leader contributor

Rachel Hooten was born and raised in Warrington, Missouri, and met husband, Todd, when she was working in a hotel and he was working for Coca Cola in the area. They fell in love, got married and ended up in Point to be near Todd's family. She said they have lived here for 15 years and that she worked as a secretary for Todd the first 12 of those years helping with taxing and insurance. She and her husband are now big on gardening and hanging out, taking care of their parents and doing what they can for the community.

The couple's biggest love is growing vegetables and donating them to Good Samaritans in the summer. Their flower and vegetable gardens are large and include sunflowers and vegetables such as

purple hull peas, black-eyed peas, pinto beans, cucumbers, squash, tomatoes, celery, corn, zucchini and okra. In cooler weather treasures of beautiful, outdoor, seasonal wood-workings they have made decorate the front yard. They include scary, but funny, Halloween designs, a colorful turkey, a tall Christmas tree that lights up, and Father Time with his curved, single-handed sickle. Hooten also finds time to serve as a member of the Point Ladies Civic Club.

"I work with the Point Ladies Civic Club and love all the women in the organization," said Hooten. "They like what I do when I add a little creativity at our meetings including providing worksheets to do together, bringing flower seeds and giving them information about them. I also share my baking. My mother-in-law tried to get me to take part in the club early on, but I was shy, had boys to raise

and then grandkids. I joined about two-and-a-half years ago and take care of entertainment."

Hooten said a lot is changing at the civic club. Members are temporarily meeting at First Baptist Church of Point, and since they don't have to spend money on their old building, they can fund more scholarships for kids. They are thinking of new ways to raise funds.

Hooten said that her husband is a Steel engineer that installs pharmaceutical and food and beverage assembly systems. He prefers to describe his work as "sanitary stainless" because he makes those processes and systems sanitary. (Imagine the systems that bottle milk or Dr. Pepper.)

Hooten says that one of her hobbies is a big passion for taking pictures of nature and exploring facts about insects, ani-

see **SPOTLIGHT** on page 2



Rachel Hooten

**City Girl:
Stranded!**

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**Jody Dyer:
Four Thieves
Vinegar...**

page 4

**Luke Clayton:
Processing
game meat...**

page 6

Rain Report

Wed., Jan. 21 0.09 in.
Fri., Jan. 23 0.75 in.
Sat., Jan. 24 0.03 in.
Sun., Jan. 25 3.00 in. (snow)
Total for Jan. 1.23 in.
Year to date 1.23 in.

RAINS COUNTY

State commission lifts suspension of JP Franklin

By CHUCK FITTS

Rains County Leader staff

The State Commission on Judicial Conduct has lifted the suspension of Rains County Justice of the Peace Robert Jenkins Franklin with an order released on Tuesday, January 27.

The commission's decision follows the dismissal of all felony charges in the 8th District Court against Franklin on November 21, 2025.

Tax-saving moves you can still make for 2025

Tax season is here, but you still have time to make smart moves that may



BRANDON ROBERTS

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Financial Advisor

lighten your 2025 tax burden.

Contributing to an IRA is one of the most popular strategies. For 2025, you can contribute up to \$7,000, or \$8,000 if you're 50 or older. Traditional IRA

contributions may be tax-deductible, while Roth IRAs offer tax-free growth.

If you have a high-deductible health plan, consider a Health Savings Account. These provide triple tax benefits: first, contributions reduce taxable income, second, growth is tax-free and finally withdrawals for qualified medical expenses aren't taxed. Limits for 2025 are \$4,300 for individuals and \$8,550 for families, plus an additional

Franklin had been suspended by the commission without pay since June 5, 2025 after a grand jury indicted him on two charges of tampering with a witness and two charges of official oppression.

In December, Commission Executive Director Jacqueline Habersham clarified that the suspension of Franklin remained in effect because the misdemeanor charge had occurred within a courthouse office and still

constituted "official misconduct" under the Texas Constitution.

The order issued Tuesday, signed by Commission Chair Gary L. Steel, signals that the 13-member body has completed its review of the final judgment and determined that the suspension is no longer necessary.

Franklin's term as Justice of the Peace for Rains County will end in December 31, 2026, when his term expires.

\$1,000 if you're 55 or older. Are you self-employed? A retirement plan known as a SEP IRA lets you contribute up to 25 percent of compensation, capped at \$70,000.

Consult a tax professional to find the best options for your situation – and act before April 15.

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

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 February 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 will hold their monthly meeting on Thursday, January 29, at 6:30 p.m., at Roma Restaurant, 2450 FM 47, Point.

Candidate Meet & Greet Sat. Jan. 31

A Candidate Meet & Greet will be held on Saturday, January 31, from 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., at the House of Prayer - McClanahan Family Life Center located at 1382 FM 515, Emory. The format will be a relaxed, come-and-go event where citizens can meet and ask questions of the candidates looking to serve the community.

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Joan Huffman for Attorney General

Nobody is tougher on crime than conservative Joan Huffman:

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- ✓ Stopped liberal cities from defunding the police.
- ✓ Increased border security funding and strengthened laws to combat fentanyl trafficking.

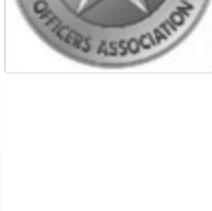
Law Enforcement Backs Joan Huffman for Attorney General

TMPA

The Voice of Texas Law Enforcement

CLEAT

STRENGTH JUSTICE UNITY



Early Voting: February 17 – 27 Election Day: March 3, 2026

Combined Law Enforcement Associations of Texas and Texas Municipal Police Association are the largest police associations in Texas.

www.JoanHuffman.com

Pol. Adv. paid for by Texans for Joan Huffman

COMMISSIONERS

Continued from page 1

by commissioners, several people spoke for and against the ordinance. The court decided to table the ordinance until it could be read by the commissioners and to seek legal council.

Rains County Librarian Bernadette Thompson appeared before the court with a proposal to subscribe to a book rating system for parents. She stated that she planned to create a committee in the Library Advisory Board to read books and make recommendations for the library.

The commissioners court unanimously approved the subscription to Common Sense Media for the library and the recommended appointments to the library's advisory board.

The court considered overtime pay for jailers that occurred for the transport of inmates and supervision of inmates in the hospital. The

overtime was unanimously approved.

The county unanimously accepted a donated patrol vehicle from the City of East Tawakoni for the constable's office and approved the constable's surety bond. They approved a contract with Linda Roberts to manage the county's evidence room.

Commissioners were presented with proposals to vacate CR 1465 and CR 1423 from the county's road system. Neither road has received any maintenance in over 15 years and one has been a gated driveway for over 20 years.

The court tabled action on both roads until they received signed approval for the closure from every property owner affected by the roads.

Commissioners passed resolutions to apply for grants for the county jail, a

county gun range, vehicles for the sheriff's department, neighborhood safety program and a rural ambulance.

The court unanimously approved a motion to send letters to collect taxes from short-term rentals in the county.

The court entered into a closed session for 25 minutes to discuss a personnel matter, and took no action upon returning to open session.

Speakers in the open forum asked for the county to provide oversight over the City of Point, discussed events for the county and praised the candidate forum.

All commissioners were present for the regular meeting.

The next regular meeting of the Rains County Commissioners Court is scheduled for Thursday, February 12, at 10:00 a.m. in the courtroom of the Rains County Courthouse.

ET

Continued from page 1

to construct more city buildings on the site. A general plan would help avoid interference of future plans while constructing the police station.

Councilman Ken Reed shared his experience with the construction of the church he attends and suggested the city form a committee for planning of the property.

Council members wondered if the city would be in trouble for choosing someone to design the police station without soliciting bids for the project.

Mayor Harold Chandler asked if the previous motion would be amended to table the quote and form a building committee. No amendment was offered.

A new motion was made to form a building committee of citizens and city officials to create a comprehensive plan for the city property and that motion was seconded.

With two motions on the table, Chandler asked for council to vote on which

motion should get the vote and the second option was selected on a 3-2 vote.

The motion to form the committee and bring a plan to the next meeting passed on a 4-1 vote with Moore voting against the motion.

East Tawakoni Chief of Police Rick South brought a proposal to the city to donate a 2016 Ford police car to the Rains County Constables office. The vehicle had been taken out of service by the department and it could be used by the constable's office for its deputy.

South noted that the constable's office does plenty of work within the city as well as the county. The proposal was unanimously approved by the council.

South presented two annual reports to the council on asset forfeiture and racial profiling. Both reports were reviewed by the council and no action was taken.

Council members reviewed a proposal to divide a lot in the city into two

separate lots. The separation was unanimously granted with Reed abstaining as it was his property.

The council approved the recommendation of the city's planning and zoning committee to rezone the residential property at 2175 Hwy. 276 to commercial. They approved an agreement with the Texas Department of Transportation for the temporary closure of a lane on the Two-Mile Bridge for the annual race in May.

Council members approved a motion to not tax personal vehicles and to close two certified deposits at the bank and place the money in the account for the yearly payment of the city's bonds.

All council members were present for the regular meeting.

The City of East Tawakoni has scheduled the next meeting of the city council for Tuesday, February 17, at 7:00 p.m. in the council chambers of East Tawakoni City Hall.

SPOTLIGHT

Continued from page 1

mals, plants, the sky, etc. She and Todd love exploring the outdoors and learning how living things thrive. The couple travels at least once a year to Missouri to see her mother. While there she loves to go to the creek and to be with her mother. Hooten likes crafting - especially sewing.

The next meeting of the Point Ladies Civic Club will take place on Thursday, February 5, at First Baptist Church of Point. This is the 82nd year of service by the club. Meetings begin at 6:00 p.m.



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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!

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



MEMBER 2026

THE OLDEST BUSINESS IN RAINS COUNTY

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Sam Fitzgerald - Before 1900 Earl Hill, Sr. - 1937-1960

W.O. Heibsen - Before 1900 Kathleen Hill Becknell - 1962-1995

A.S. Hornbeck - Before 1900 Earl Hill, Jr. - 1995-2019

J.H. Bradford - 1901-1904

CITY GIRL

Stranded!

By Linda Brendle

The cruise was a dream I didn't know I had until I was asked at church one morning if I was going on the upcoming "girl cruise." My answer was "probably not," but after a little bit of thought, I asked my long-time friend Mary if she wanted to go on an adventure - and the rest, as they say, is history.

The ship, with its 19 decks and countless eateries, drinkeries, shops, and entertainment venues was a bit overwhelming. We had an app on our phones that tracked our location and gave us visual and verbal directions to wherever we wanted to go. But directions were given in nautical terms, and port and starboard can vary, depending on whether the elevator you're riding is facing fore or aft. But the crew, of which there were many, were ready and willing to give directions when asked.

We took three land excursions, one at each port of call. We saw Aztec and Mexican dancing, heard mariachi music, had an authentic Mexican lunch, and learned about many types of tequila. We went on a very cold, wet, wildlife river boat ride, where we saw several dolphin fins, a couple of Manatee noses, lots of birds and iguanas, and one lonely monkey. This one would've been a lot more fun

if the sun had been out. We took a bus tour that stopped at a butterfly and small animal garden, an arboretum, and a couple of shopping areas.

The dining alone was worth the trip. The choices ranged from an amazing buffet, which was open around 18 hours a day and offered food for every taste, to fine dining where they placed your napkin in your lap for you. There were cafés, bistros, a sandwich shop, a gelato bar, and much more.

And there was entertainment! The Piazza featured musicians of all kinds and a dance floor for exercising, dance contest and lessons, and making special memories with your sweetheart.

The Princess Theatre offered shows that included magic, music, and Broadway-style singing and dancing. Smaller venues featured comedians, combos, lounge singers, and educational classes and lectures.

There were also MANY places where you could spend your money. Whether you were in the market for fine art, expensive jewelry, or a souvenir T-shirt, you could find what you wanted. All you needed to do was give them your room number. Easy! Until the bill appeared on your cruise account at the end of the trip.

The cruise seemed at times like it could go on forever. But early Sunday morning it came to an end. Our "girl group" assembled on the Piazza where, instead of music and dancing, there were groups like ours, rolling small carry-ons or shoulder- ing backpacks, and waiting

to be called to go down to the deck where our larger bags had been gathered the night before. We breezed through customs. Because of facial recognition, we didn't even have to pull out our passports. We walked out into the weather I had seen from our balcony to wait for our ride.

I didn't get to see Ronnie on our return trip, but it was so wet and windy and cold that I didn't care. All I wanted was to climb inside a vehicle where the wind and rain couldn't get to me. I was beginning to thaw by the time we arrived at the parking garage where we had left our cars. We quickly transferred our luggage and were on the road - but not homeward bound.

The news had reached us while we were still at sea that Emory was iced in and basically shut down. Some of our group made reservations for the night in hotels south of Houston, but Jackie arranged for the three of us to stay with her son in Laporte. We only planned to stay one day, but after Monday morning consultations with husbands and others, we decided to wait until Tuesday. So here we are - stranded - reading, writing, playing games and doing laundry. We had a wonderful adventure, but now we're ready to get back home to our real lives with the ones we love and our own pillows!

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.



LINDA BRENDLE

Leader

correspondent

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STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

Power grid holds up during wintry blast

The electricity grid that covers most of Texas was holding up as of Sunday during the latest winter storm, although localized power outages were reported in Deep East Texas and far West Texas.

The Electric Reliability Council of Texas dashboard indicated demand was running comfortably below available capacity. As of Sunday, more than 128,000 customers were without power, according to poweroutage.us, with the most being reported in Nacogdoches, Cherokee, and Rusk counties.

"Based on expected weather conditions, ERCOT anticipates there will be sufficient generation to meet demand," a spokesperson for the Electric Reliability Council of Texas said. "ERCOT will continue to deploy all available resources to manage the grid reliably and coordinate closely with the Public Utility Commission, generation providers, and transmission utilities."

Gov. Greg Abbott issued a disaster declaration just prior

to the storm for 134 Texas counties to ensure adequate resources were available to Texans.

Crockett, Talarico hold first debate

U.S. Rep. Jasmine Crockett and state Rep. James Talarico both presented themselves as fighters during their first debate in the Democratic primary for the U.S. Senate, held in Georgetown last Saturday. The two are competing to face the GOP primary winner. Incumbent U.S. Sen. John Cornyn faces challengers Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton and U.S. Rep. Wesley Hunt.

The two Democrats debated for an hour, The Texas Tribune reported. Crockett pitched herself as a political brawler who could expand the electorate, while Talarico emphasized his Christian faith and record fighting "tooth and nail" in the Texas House.

The data center surge presents a unique challenge that requires immediate attention," said HARC President John Hall. An estimated 575 data centers are already in place, concentrated in Dallas-Fort Worth, Austin, Houston and San Antonio.

Texas lawmakers last year passed a law setting up a \$20 billion water fund, with \$1 billion disbursed annually starting in 2027 for infrastructure, after an initial allocation of \$2.5 billion.

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

GARY BORDERS

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ACROSS

1 "Bonanza" brother of Texas' "Hoss"

5 San ___ TX

6 "love" in Mexico

7 T-shirt size

8 phone company acquired by Verizon in 2006

9 Texans are not quick to ___ lie

15 This Malouf wrote "Cattle Kings of Texas" in 1991

16 endlessly

19 junk to a redneck? (2 wds.)

21 this TX Gray sang "The In Crowd"

22 TX Burnett 1981 film: "The Four"

27 Muslim ruler

28 mezzal worm

29 San Angelo was named for this Mexican nun

30 Skip Schumaker ___ the Texas Rangers

32 TXism: "scared the Dickens out of ___"

33 De Leon's August event: "Peach ___ Festival"

36 TX Meredith MacRae was on sitcom "Petti ___ Junction"

37 TXism: "cold ___ banker's heart"

38 historic Texas & Railway"

39 aquatic turtle

41 El Paso originally: "pass ___ to the north"

44 TXism: "the end of my rope!"

45 female sheep

46 TXism: "hot as ___ of mesquite coals"

47 early internet provider

48 TX gunfighter Ben Thompson wore a ___ hat

51 TXism: "it's good for what ___ you"

52 lake glider

53 Waco's area: ___ tex

54 White ___ TX

12 TWU was first CIA: College of Arts

13 NM ski town

14 in Wood County on U.S. 69

15 film: "The Great Texas Chase" (1976)

16 one pen name of romance novelist TX Sandra Brown: ___ St. Claire

17 before hitting a putt, a golfer ___ "up"

18 this Bill was a successful UH football coach (1962-86)

20 Neil Armstrong took a small step for " ___ "

21 hometown of TX "Hoss": ___ Kallb

22 Texas congressman Rayburn: " ___ Sam"

TEXAS CROSSWORD

by Charley & Guy Orbison

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1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100

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Four Thieves' Vinegar - Fire Cider for Health

"Health is not valued till sickness comes."

Thomas Fuller

With the peak pestilence of the cold and flu season upon us, it might behoove us to prepare. It is no fun to be sick. Recently I stumbled upon an ancient preventative, said to boost the immune system and give your body a superhuman protective shield. And the story behind it is too compelling not to share. Here it is...

During the mid-14th century, Europe experienced perhaps the worst pandemic in human history. Over 50 million people perished from the bubonic plague, or the Black Death as it is often called. The plague was one of the most significant events in human history.

During this time, in the French port city of Marseilles, four friends who worked the shipyards there had an idea. They launched a diabolical, yet profitable criminal enterprise after noticing something strange.

During the day these friends labored within the bowels of a seaside warehouse that processed herbs and spices from abroad. Every evening, they stumbled home from work covered in spice dust. And, as the plague-ridden dead bodies of their fellow townspeople were stacked like firewood, with many more sick and dying all around them, they remained healthy. They didn't get sick. The dreaded Black Death didn't seem to affect them at all.

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The Whole Armor of God

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace.

Ephesians 6:10-15



SAVVY SENIORS

What Medicare Won't Pay For in 2026

Dear Savvy Senior,
To avoid any future health care surprises, can you tell me what Medicare doesn't cover in 2026?

New Beneficiary

Dear Beneficiary,

It's a great question. While original Medicare (Part A and B) covers a wide array of health care services after you turn 65, it doesn't cover everything.

If you need or want certain services that aren't covered, you'll have to pay for them yourself unless you have other insurance, or you enroll in a Medicare Advantage health plan, which may provide some additional benefits.

Here's a look at some commonly needed medical services that original Medicare doesn't pick up the tab for.

Most dental care: Routine dental care including checkups, cleanings, x-rays, fillings, root canals, tooth extractions and dentures are not covered by original Medicare.

Routine vision care: Medicare does not cover routine eye exams, eyeglasses and contact lenses (except following cataract surgery), but tests, treatments and surgeries for medical eye diseases like cataracts, glaucoma and macular degeneration are covered.

Hearing aids: Original Medicare will not pay for hearing exams or hearing aids but may cover a hearing

and balance exam if your doctor determines it's necessary.

Prescription drugs: Medicare (Part A and B) doesn't provide coverage for outpatient prescription drugs, but you can buy a separate Part D prescription-drug policy that does.

Alternative medicine: Acupuncture (except to treat low back pain), chiropractic services (except to correct a vertebral subluxation of the spine), and other types of alternative or complementary care are not covered by Medicare.

Cosmetic surgery: Most cosmetic procedures are not covered, however, if the surgery is due to an injury or deformity, it might pay. For example, Medicare will cover a breast prosthesis for breast cancer survivors.

Foot care: Medicare does not cover most routine foot care, like the cutting or removing of corns, calluses and toenails. But they do cover medically necessary podiatrist services for foot problems like hammertoes, bunion and heel spurs, along with exams, treatments and therapeutic shoes or inserts if you have diabetic foot problems.

Long-term care: Nursing home care and assisted living facilities are not covered by Medicare. But Medicare will help pay up to 100 days of skilled nursing or rehabilitation care immediately following a hospital stay of three or more days.

Personal home care: If you need to hire help for bathing, dressing or getting out of bed, Medicare typically won't cover these costs

either, unless you are home-bound and are also receiving skilled nursing care. House-keeping services, such as shopping, meal preparation and cleaning are not covered either unless you are receiving hospice care.

Adult diapers: Medicare does not cover the cost of adult diapers or other incontinence supplies. These items are considered to be for personal hygiene rather than medical treatment.

Overseas coverage: In most cases, health care outside of the United States is not covered by Medicare except for very limited circumstances – such as on a cruise ship within six hours of a U.S. port.

The best way to find out what original Medicare covers is to talk to your health care provider, visit Medicare.gov/coverage and type in your test, item or service, or download the Medicare "What's covered" app on the App Store or Google Play.

Also keep in mind that even if Medicare covers a service or item, they don't pay 100 percent of the cost. You will have to pay a monthly Part B premium (which is \$202.90 for most beneficiaries in 2026) and unless you have supplemental insurance, you'll have to pay your annual deductibles and copayments too. However, most preventive services are covered 100 percent by Medicare with no copays or deductibles.

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.

FISHING REPORT

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department released the following information for Lake Fork and Lake Tawakoni taken on January 21:

Fork: Good. Normal stain; 51 degrees; 3.16 feet below pool. The morning bass bite is still slow, but picks up midday to evening. Boat houses with brush are fair with Texas rigs or Viper XP Jigs in 4-12 feet. Square bills and lipless crankbaits on around and flats with a ditch or channel running through it in 4-7 feet. Viper XP Jigs or Texas rigs also fair on big wood next to these channels 4-8 feet.

Black bass are moving up and down as the weather permits. Warm days can be very productive in shallows in the backs of creeks and coves. Try streamers in red and white fished 1 to 6 feet deep. Crappie are being caught in as shallow as 1 feet

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creeks with a small clear clouser.

Lake Fork crappie fishing is in a full winter pattern and fishing is great. Lots of fish stacked up on deep main lake timber in 35-60 feet. You can still find some crappie on brush piles in 18-25 feet. There are some crappie on bridges and tire reefs. Crappie are also on some main lake points and ledges in 18-32 feet relating to the bottom or small stumps. Lots of patterns are working for catching loads of crappie this winter. The bite has also been strong this winter. Minnows, hand tied jigs and soft plastics are all producing very well. You can drop straight down to fish on calm wind days or pitch to fish if the winds and waves have picked up.

Tawakoni: Good. Water lightly stained; 53 degrees; 2.01 feet below pool. Lake Tawakoni has been warmer than normal, so fishing con-

ditions have been atypical for the season. However, this is about to change as this arctic weather hits this weekend. The hybrid, striped and white bass bite is somewhat slow. We are seeing medium sized white bass on main lake points in 30-35 feet on jogging spoons and flukes. The eating sized blue catfish bite is great with easy limits on punch bait in 35-45 feet. The trophy catfish bite is good in 20-30 feet of water on fresh cut bait. We have not seen fish over 60 pounds in a few weeks, but 20-50 pound fish are being caught. The crappie have been slow, but there is a steady bite at the 2 mile bridge on minnows and jigs. Fish are suspended 17-24 feet over 30-35 feet of water. Large-mouth bass bite improved after the big warm up on soft plastics on shallow ledges and ends of docks. Y'all stay warm!

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

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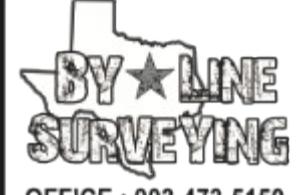
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HELP WANTED

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> Equal Employment Opportunity.



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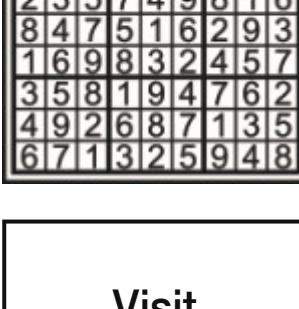
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PUBLIC/LEGAL NOTICE

THE STATE OF TEXAS COUNTY OF RAINS

CITATION BY PUBLICATION

TO: UNKNOWN HEIRS OF C.A. DUCK DECEASED, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF W.P. MCLEAN DECEASED, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF J.E. TURNS DECEASED, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF I.S. COLES DECEASED, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF ROBERT TURNER DECEASED, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF LELA TURNER DECEASED, UNKNOWN OF HEIRS H.R. MONTGOMERY DECEASED AND UNKNOWN OWNERS OR CLAIMANTS OF THE SUBJECT REAL PROPERTY; RESPONDENT, GREETINGS:

NOTICE TO DEFENDANT: YOU HAVE BEEN SUED. YOU MAY EMPLOY AN ATTORNEY. IF YOU OR YOUR ATTORNEY DO (DOES) NOT FILE A WRITTEN ANSWER WITH THE CLERK WHO ISSUED THIS CITATION BY 10:00 AM ON THE MONDAY NEXT FOLLOWING THE EXPIRATION OF FORTY-TWO (42) DAYS FROM AND AFTER THE DATE OF ISSUANCE HEREOF, THE SAME BEING THE 4 CONSECUTIVE WEEKS, (WHICH IS THE RETURN DAY OF SUCH CITATION) A DEFAULT JUDGMENT MAY BE TAKEN AGAINST YOU. IN ADDITION TO FILING A WRITTEN ANSWER WITH THE CLERK, YOU MAY BE REQUIRED TO MAKE INITIAL DISCLOSURES TO THE OTHER PARTIES OF THIS SUIT. THESE DISCLOSURES GENERALLY MUST BE MADE NO LATER THAN THIRTY (30) DAYS AFTER YOU FILE YOUR ANSWER WITH THE CLERK. FIND OUT MORE AT TexasLawHelp.org.

The PLAINTIFF'S ORIGINAL PETITION file by IDA LAVELLE MIDDLETON, was filed in the 354TH DISTRICT COURT of Rains County, Texas on the 14th day of November, 2025, styled,

CAUSE NO. 12019
IDA LAVELLE MIDDLETON

-VS-

UNKNOWN HEIRS OF C.A. DUCK DECEASED, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF W.P. MCLEAN DECEASED, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF J.E. TURNS DECEASED, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF I.S. COLES DECEASED, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF ROBERT TURNER DECEASED, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF LELA TURNER DECEASED, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF H.R. MONTGOMERY DECEASED, AND UNKNOWN OWNERS OR CLAIMANTS OF THE SUBJECT REAL PROPERTY

The real property made the basis of this suit is described as follows: 76 1/2 ACRES; JAMES MCMILLAN SURVEY.

Plaintiff requests "TITLE TO THE SUBJECT REAL PROPERTY IN FEE SIMPLE ABSOLUTE, INCLUDING ALL OIL, GAS, AND OTHER MINERAL INTERESTS IN AND UNDER AND THAT MAY BE PRODUCED FROM THE SUBJECT REAL PROPERTY BY ADVERSE POSSESSION." as is more fully shown by Plaintiff's Petition on file in this suit.

The Court has authority in this suit to enter an order that will be binding on you.

ISSUED AND GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND THE SEAL OF SAID COURT, at office, this 20th day of January, 2026.

LAURA PATE, DISTRICT CLERK

RAINS COUNTY, TEXAS

By: MELISSA BUTLER, DEPUTY CLERK

INVITATION TO BIDDERS

Sealed bids will be received by Bright Star-Salem SUD for the construction of the

TX-182 110k Gallon Ground Storage Tank Rehabilitation at the office of **Velvin & Weeks Consulting Engineers, Inc** who's physical and mailing address is **930 E Corsicana Street, Athens, TX 75752** until **2:00 pm** on February 3, 2025 and then publicly opened and read aloud.

Project will include, but not limited to the following:

- Install new coating systems on the interior and exterior surfaces of the existing ground storage tank and miscellaneous repairs.

Bid Security, Performance and Payment Bonds shall be as set forth in the **INSTRUCTIONS FOR BIDDERS**. Plans, Specifications, and Bidding Documents may be obtained from the office of the Engineer:

Velvin & Weeks Consulting Engineers, Inc.

930 East Corsicana Street

Athens, Texas 75751

903-675-3903

Bright Star-Salem SUD reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any formalities. No Bidder may withdraw his bid within 60 days after the actual bid opening date.

Bright Star-Salem SUD

(OWNER)

