

Rains County Leader

Your Hometown Newspaper Since 1887

Web Site: www.rainscountyleader.com

e-mail: news@rainscountyleader.com

Vol. 139, Issue 34 - 1 Section, 10 pages

EMORY, TEXAS - THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2026

PRICE 75¢

POINT

Rains County Judge orders special election for vacant Point City Council seats

By CHUCK FITTS

Rains County Leader staff

A special election to fill the vacant seats on the Point City Council was ordered for May 2 by Rains County Judge Brent Hilliard on Tuesday, February 3.

"I recently became aware that the City of Point did not have enough people on its Council to reach a quorum due to the resignation of three Council members," Hilliard said.

Three council members, Donna Jones, Ray Lacy and Kim Edwards, submitted their resignations on December 10, 2025 and those became effective on December 19. With seats for Place 1, 2 and 4 vacant, the council could no longer establish a quorum to conduct city business.

Mayor Angela Nelson, Councilwoman for Place 3 Tammy Hooten and Councilwoman for Place 5 Becky Decker remain on the city council.

Government officials for the city drafted a petition to be signed by city residents to ask the Rains County Commissioners to call a special election to fill the vacated seats on the council.

Hilliard stated that after seeking the county's general council on statutory obligations, he was advised "that I, as the County Judge, had a statutory obligation to call a special election because the City could not legally do so on its own."

"It is my understanding, based on advice of counsel, that the County Judge has an obligation to call that election whether or not a petition has been circulated," Hilliard said.

With the order signed, the special election for Places 1, 2 and 4 on the Point City Council will be held on May 2 from 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.

The election will only be for residents

see POINT on page 2

Shooting for a Win!



Leader photo by CHUCK FITTS

In front of a packed gym, senior Wildcat Gunner Cook puts up a three-point shot allowing the Wildcats to retake the lead in the 38-31 district victory over the Winnsboro Raiders on Friday night, January 30, in Talkington Gym.

Lady Cats top Winnsboro, Wildcats start second half strong

By CHUCK FITTS

Rains County Leader staff

The Rains Lady Cat varsity basketball team continued their win streak in the second half of District 12-3A play, while the Wildcats started their own streak with two straight wins.

The Rains basketball teams traveled

to Lone Oak for district games on January 22 to beat the expected winter weather.

The Lady Cats held the Lady Buffaloes to one point in the first quarter before rolling to a 66-35 victory.

The Wildcats started slow, but battled the Buffaloes all night before suffering the district loss, 46-43.

After a bye during the winter weather, the rested Lady Cats built a seven point buffer in the second quarter between them and the #9 Lady Raiders on Friday, January 30. They held off the

late rally by Winnsboro to secure the victory, 64-61.

The Wildcats and Raiders went back and forth in a defensive struggle later that night with Rains pulling out the 38-31 victory over Winnsboro.

In Commerce on Tuesday, February 3, the Lady Cats improved their win-streak to seven with a 68-60 win over the Lady Tigers.

The Wildcats kept their winning momentum alive with a win over the

see BASKETBALL on page 2

RAINS ISD ATHLETICS

UIL releases biennial realignment

By CHUCK FITTS

Rains County Leader staff

The Rains ISD sports teams will see old and new faces as district realignment was announced by the University Interscholastic League on Monday, February 2.

The Rains Wildcat football team district will remain the same as they will play in District 7-3A-D1 with Commerce, Eustace, Malakoff, Mineola, Mount Vernon and Winnsboro.

Along with the announcement, the 2026 schedule for the football team was released.

The Wildcats will open the season at home against the Life Oak Cliff Lions on August 28. They will host the Rice Raiders on September 4 before hitting the road to travel to Grand Saline to take on the Indians on September 11. The final non-district game will have the Wildcats traveling to Howe for a game against the Bulldogs.

District play for the Wildcats begins with a home game against the Eustace Bulldogs on September 25 followed by an away game against the Malakoff Tigers on October 2. They take on the Mount Vernon Tigers on October 9 before heading to Mineola to take on the Yellowjackets on October 16.

The final home game of 2026 will see the Wildcats taking on the Commerce Tigers at Wildcat Stadium on October 30 followed by a road game against the Winnsboro Raiders on November 6.

The Rains Lady Cat volleyball team will see the addition of the Quitman Lady Bulldogs to its list of district competitors. The UIL has renumbered the district, changing it from District 12 to District 15. The new district will include Commerce, Lone Oak, Mount Vernon, Paris, Chisum, Prairiland, Quitman, and Rains.

The Rains ISD basketball teams will

see UIL on page 2

SPOTLIGHT

Ronnie Morgan is Superintendent, Rains County Road and Bridge

By JUDY KRAMER

Rains County Leader contributor

Ronnie Morgan has been a superintendent of personnel since 1984 and joined the Rains County Road and Bridge Department in 2012 as a Commercial Driver License (CDL) professional driver. He stepped up to the position of superintendent of the department in 2016 and is certified through Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration and able to do entry level training. He oversees one other person in the office, three equipment operators, one mechanic and 10 road hands with CDLs.

"Summer is our busiest time when we do a lot of road work," said Morgan. "A lot of product (asphalt) on the roads requires heat and the optimum overnight temperature for that is 80 degrees. This type of work is done between April 15 and

October 15. We do new roads and overlay roads that have bad patching. We do one-and-a-half miles of patching at a time fixing drainage, backing trees (cutting back branches to reduce height and width which can help improve visibility and safety on the road), and adding more of base to support the road topping."

Morgan said reclaiming two miles of a road (pulverizing the existing asphalt into small, manageable pieces that are spread out and compacted to serve as a sturdy base for new asphalt) costs \$302,000 out of a total yearly budget of \$750,000. His budget will only allow one and a half miles of total reclamation of county roads. He said that they use type D cold mix and oil sand to patch and overlay the roads. Reclaiming spot base repairs helps support the type D cold mix or oil sand surface material.

"When there is snow, we have to put

the backhoe and excavator inside, so they are ready to be used outside when needed," said Morgan. "We also take care of salting public areas like the courthouse parking lot. During 'Snowmageddon' that happened some years ago, there was a lot of snow and ice and we went out to help get trees off the road."

He said the department's insurance policy requires that there not be more than .75 percent loss control. Their loss control is .40 percent so insurance will not increase during the current five-year hold period.

"We have only had two car accidents," said Morgan. "One dump truck turned over on a curb due to another vehicle approaching in the wrong direction. It was the only serious accident. There was a tornado in 2017 and our staff and other

see SPOTLIGHT on page 2



Ronnie Morgan and wife Cathy

City Girl:
Real Life

Page 3

Jody Dyer:
Terrific
Tomatoes...
page 3

Sheriff's
Report

page 4

Rain Report

Wed., Jan. 21 0.09 in.
Total for Jan. 1.32 in.
Total for Feb. 0.00 in.
Year to date 1.32 in.



Community outreach & organizations

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

Emory - Tues. & Thurs. 7:00-8:00 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

Mon., 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 Winnboro Gun Club, Winnboro TX. Sue Parrish 903-473-9819

LAKE FORK SPORTSMAN'S ASSOC.

2nd Tues., 6:30 p.m. Jamie's Restaurant, Lake Fork Marina

MARS HILL MASONIC LODGE

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

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 GARDEN CLUB

1st Mon., 11:00 a.m., Rains County Library, 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

- July 31 & Oct. 30, 6:30 p.m., Roma Restaurant, 2450 FM 47

STITCH AND LEARN QUILTING CLUB

Thurs., 9:00 a.m.-noon, 903-598-3021

Miracle Faith Baptist Church

WOMEN'S SERVICE CLUB

2nd Mon., 6:00 p.m., Rose Community Center

WOMEN IN NEED, INC.

A Battered Women's Shelter. Call 903-455-4612 or 903-454-HELP

GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES

EAST TAWAKONI CITY COUNCIL

3rd Tues., 7:00 p.m., East Tawakoni City Hall

EMORY CITY COUNCIL

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

POINT CITY COUNCIL

2nd 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

MEMBER 2026

TEXAS PRESS ASSOCIATION

THE OLDEST BUSINESS IN RAINS COUNTY

Rains County Leader

Established June 10, 1887

(Publication Number USPS 454-560)

Postmaster: Send Form 3579 to:

RAINS COUNTY LEADER

P.O. Box 127, Emory, TX 75440

Telephone: 903-473-2653

www.RainsCountyLeader.com • Email: news@rainscountyleader.com

EDITOR/PUBLISHER
Earl Hill III

ADVERTISING
Chuck Fitts

CLASSIFIED SALES
Lea Reed

Published every Thursday except the last Thursday in December

Entered at the Post Office in Emory, Texas, as a Periodical

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: Inside Rains County, 1 year, \$28.00;

Out of County, 1 year, \$35.00; E-Leader (online only edition), 1 year, \$25.00.

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

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.

American Legion Breakfast Sat., Feb. 14

Rabb Brothers Memorial American Legion Post #156 will hold a breakfast buffet on Saturday, February 14, from 7:00-10:00 a.m. at the Post home at 215 N. Duffy St. in Emory. Takeouts are offered. Payment is by donation, which goes towards the upkeep of the home and for veterans' projects.

ALBA PUBLIC LIBRARY

Alba-Golden Students Research the "Good Old Days"

Library Celebrates Fifteen Years

In addition to the students' products, refreshments will be served. The students will bring the snack from long ago; the library will offer cake and punch. Founded in 2008, the library and museum began as a dream in the hearts of Saundra Burge, Ginger Patrick, and Cheryl Gill. Now the dream is that the community will continue to preserve the museum with its historical preservation as well make use of the extensive library.

Led by the museum's curator Saundra Burge, the students toured artifacts in the museum for a look at Alba's history. Following the tour, members of the class chose the object that most impressed them. With research materials provided by the library, the students learned more about their relic—how it was made, its purpose, and the time period in which it was used. Based on their new knowledge, students wrote essays and created artistic visuals.

Then, home economics joined the project as the students discovered "old

timely" recipes. This research, the essays, recipes, and artistic creations provided a better understanding of what living in Alba and elsewhere was like. These products will be on display at the Alba Public Library & Museum as part of the library's fifteenth celebration to be held on March 28, 2026. The community and parents are invited to come and see what the students have created.

On March 28, 2026 from 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., the Alba Public Library & Museum will celebrate its fifteenth year in operation.

If the 5K run/walk is not one's cup of tea, a donation box sits in the library for donations from Alba citizens. The community will be kept informed about the 5K.

One more activity...On March 7, 2026, the library will celebrate Dr. Suess's birthday with reading, sharing, and activities for children of all ages. More information to come on this item!

The library's phone number is 903-765-2665. The hours are 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., on Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

Local business owners: Don't overlook retirement plans

If you're a local business owner, you're likely juggling growth, expenses and your

te a m 's needs, all while planning for your own future. A workplace retirement plan may be able to help with all of that, directly and indirectly.

For the business, employer contributions are tax-deductible, and as a participant in your company plan, your pretax salary deferrals are excluded from income taxes.

Many plans even offer Roth options for tax-free withdrawals later. Your local business may also qualify for

federal tax credits to offset startup and administrative costs, along with other expenses.

A retirement plan also can reduce risk. If you have your own net worth tied up in the business, your retirement may depend on a future sale. Building personal assets now adds flexibility and security.

In today's competitive labor market, strong benefits help attract and keep great employees.

Not sure where to start? A qualified financial advisor can guide you through options and help align your plan with your goals.

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

Applications for a place on the ballot for the election to fill the vacant seats on the Point City Council shall be filed at the Rains County Election office at the Rains County Courthouse Annex during regular business hours. Those hours will be 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Applications for ballot by mail must be received at the Rains County Election office no later than the close of business on April 20. The

mailing address for the election office is 220 W. Quitman St., Ste. E, Emory, Texas 75440.

Applications for a place on the ballot for the election to fill the vacant seats on the Point City Council shall be filed at the Rains County Election office at the Rains County Courthouse Annex during regular business hours. Those hours will be 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

For more information on the special election, contact the Rains County Election office at 903-473-5009, lisa.kneifl@rains.co.tx.us or www.co.rains.tx.us/pages/rains.Elections.

For more information on the special election, contact the Rains County Election office at 903-473-5009, lisa.kneifl@rains.co.tx.us or www.co.rains.tx.us/pages/rains.Elections.

For more information on the special election, contact the Rains County Election office at 903-473-5009, lisa.kneifl@rains.co.tx.us or www.co.rains.tx.us/pages/rains.Elections.

For more information on the special election, contact the Rains County Election office at 903-473-5009, lisa.kneifl@rains.co.tx.us or www.co.rains.tx.us/pages/rains.Elections.

For more information on the special election, contact the Rains County Election office at 903-473-5009, lisa.kneifl@rains.co.tx.us or www.co.rains.tx.us/pages/rains.Elections.

For more information on the special election, contact the Rains County Election office at 903-473-5009, lisa.kneifl@rains.co.tx.us or www.co.rains.tx.us/pages/rains.Elections.

For more information on the special election, contact the Rains County Election office at 903-473-5009, lisa.kneifl@rains.co.tx.us or www.co.rains.tx.us/pages/rains.Elections.

For more information on the special election, contact the Rains County Election office at 903-473-5009, lisa.kneifl@rains.co.tx.us or www.co.rains.tx.us/pages/rains.Elections.

For more information on the special election, contact the Rains County Election office at 903-473-5009, lisa.kneifl@rains.co.tx.us or www.co.rains.tx.us/pages/rains.Elections.

For more

Terrific Tomatoes - Starting Seeds in Winter

"If you have a garden and a library you have everything you need."

Marcus Tullius Cicero

Just days ago, I sat at our kitchen table and planted tomato seeds, tucking their pale little bodies into potting-soil-filled red Solo cups. It is winter and so begins my gardening year.

For those of us "green thumbs" who enjoy dipping our hands into the good earth and coaxing produce from the ground, winter is a special time. In years past, before we were all compelled to become "computer-head Freds" and do everything online, gardeners would pour over old-fashioned paper seed catalogs on winter nights, dreaming of spring and what they might grow. We still dream, but now most often simply plop down at our computers and shop for seed the modern way. And these days, with my gardening glory behind me (maybe), I find myself only wanting a small bounty of home-grown tomatoes.

It has been some time since I started my tomatoes at home. Normally, as spring arrived, I would prowl the garden section of our local Home Depot looking for my tomatoes. But this year I decided to go back to starting my own plants.

Thinking there might be a few intrepid gardeners within the ranks of my readers, a column on starting tomatoes seemed appropriate now. What follows is simply my elementary process and guidelines. If starting your own tomato plants, change things up any way you like...

First, decide what you want to grow - choose your varieties. If you've had success in the past, you might want to stick to your favorites. If your tomato crop was less than you hoped, maybe try something new. Note - tomatoes can be divided into two categories, *determinate* and *indeterminate*. Determinate plants bear all their fruit at once (good for canning) and tend to be more compact in size (good for containers). Indeterminate tomatoes bear fruit continuously throughout the season, typically until they are killed by frost, and plants keep growing so they need to be staked or supported.

I am trying some new varieties this year. Last year's tomato crop was less than expected. My large beefsteak tomatoes were not setting fruit before our blistering summer heat kicked in. So this year I am cultivating smaller and earlier varieties in hopes of getting more fruit before our boiling August arrives.

Tomato growing success starts when you first plant your seeds (start seeds 6-8 weeks indoors before your last frost date). I use 18-ounce red Solo cups (the kind you might use for beer pong in college - I never did that). With a sharp knife cut two triangles at the bottom of each cup (on opposing sides). Use indoor potting mix or seed starter (this is usually sterilized so lacking the heebie-jeebie microscopic critters that might hurt your young plants).

Fill each cup half full with potting soil. Poke two holes into the soil and tuck your seeds in place, two seeds per cup. Cover seed with inch of soil and gently tamp down. Water soil for the first time from the top. I use a medicine dropper and gently water, so soil is not disturbed.

Next, place each red Solo cup in another plastic cup - use clear cups for this purpose. Using two cups allows you to water your tomatoes from the bottom (and clear cups let you see water level - bottom watering will promote root growth and is easier than carefully sprinkling every time you water). To allow space for water at bottom add a marble or small rock. Water level should be kept halfway up on your triangle. Water will wick up through the soil and keep your plants moist (be careful not to overfill).

After planting, place a small sandwich bag over each cup to help keep moisture inside as seeds germinate. Remove bags as soon as plants emerge. Seeds will germinate best at about 75 degrees Fahrenheit, so find a warm spot in your house for them (or use a heat mat).

As soon as plants peak through the soil, they will need 6-8 hours minimum of sunlight daily. If you have a very sunny window, this may work. But it is usually better to use a shop light or grow light. LED lights work well for this, but numbers have to be right for this to work on your tomatoes. Look for lights rated at 1500-3000 LUMENS (this is how bright light is) and 4500-6500 KELVIN (this is color temp

which mimics daylight). You will have to find a way to hang lights above your tomato cups (lights need to stay on approx. 16 hours and off 8 hours each day).

Once plants emerge and true leaves appear thin by choosing strongest specimen, clipping the weaker seedling at its base. You can water with liquid organic fertilizer every week to give your plants a good start. It also helps if you talk to them.

Once plant grows over the top of your cup, fill remainder of cup with potting soil. Tomatoes will grow roots where the stem touches soil, so doing this will give your plants a larger root ball before planting.

Plant your tomatoes outside in the garden after your last frost date. Plant them deep and cover stem again for extra root growth. Be sure to stake plants or use tomato cages as needed. And get ready to enjoy your tomatoes! Happy gardening...

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

typewriterweekly.com

© 2026 Jody Dyer

SHSU announces Fall Dean's List

Samantha Houchins of Emory earned the honor of being named to the deans list for the fall 2025 semester at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville.

Students listed on the Dean's List of Academic Honors at Sam Houston State University are undergraduates who have achieved a grade point average of at least 3.5 out of a perfect 4.0 in all work attempted while enrolled in not less than 12 semester hours.

ADVERTISE
and watch your business bloom!

CITY GIRL

By Linda Brendle

It's hard to believe that this time last week we were fresh off a seven-day cruise and waiting for the roads to clear so we could make our way home.

Once plants emerge and true leaves appear thin by choosing strongest specimen, clipping the weaker seedling at its base. You can water with liquid organic fertilizer every week to give your plants a good start. It also helps if you talk to them.

Once plant grows over the top of your cup, fill remainder of cup with potting soil. Tomatoes will grow roots where the stem touches soil, so doing this will give your plants a larger root ball before planting.

Plant your tomatoes outside in the garden after your last frost date. Plant them deep and cover stem again for extra root growth. Be sure to stake plants or use tomato cages as needed. And get ready to enjoy your tomatoes! Happy gardening...

Plant your tomatoes outside in the garden after your last frost date. Plant them deep and cover stem again for extra root growth. Be sure to stake plants or use tomato cages as needed. And get ready to enjoy your tomatoes! Happy gardening...

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

typewriterweekly.com

© 2026 Jody Dyer

Real Life

before I left.

"Leftover chili!" said David when he sat down at the table. "If I had known there was leftover chili, I would have eaten it."

"No, you wouldn't," I laughed, knowing his cooking habits take the path of least resistance. "Besides, there were five cans of chili in the pantry, and you didn't use any of them."

He grinned in agreement, letting me know by his actions that he was glad to no longer be in charge of his own meal planning and preparation.

Through the next few days, I spent a lot of time sharing my travel stories and catching up on all the local happenings and just doing life with my husband. I petted Kitty and Sunshine, sorted laundry - some of which is still lying on the floor of the laundry room - and read and/or deleted lots of emails and Facebook posts. I found some leftover spaghetti sauce in the freezer as well as a frozen pizza, and I made a grocery list. By Friday I had to begin thinking about cleaning house since our monthly home group was coming up on Sunday night.

Thankfully, David hadn't thrown any abandoned husband parties while I was gone, so cleaning was pretty routine. And I have to admit that, rather than a deep-dive cleaning, it was more of a clean-the-parts-that-show-the-most job. I made sausage and kale soup Saturday night and a three-layer chocolate dessert Sunday afternoon, and by 5:00 p.m., I was ready for company. Quite a few were sick, so we only had nine of our regulars plus two party crashers from another group that had postponed their get-together until next Sunday. We had a great time with enough leftovers to share with Connie and Charles across the street. I

actually had enough energy to clean the kitchen before I sat down to watch TV with David. I have to admit that I did more napping than watching, but it had been a long week.

Real life can be tiring, especially when you have lots of responsibilities to meet and lots of friends and family to keep up with. But getting to share all our adventures made the trip even more fun, and all the welcome-home hugs were worth the home-sickness while we were away. And sharing Sunday school, morning worship, and especially the Lord's Supper with our church family was all the sweeter for having been away for two Sundays.

Still, it was nice being waited on for a week. My bed was made each day and turned down each night, my bathroom was cleaned and fresh linens were supplied each day. My meals were cooked for me with multiple options to choose from, and I didn't even have to clear the table much less wash the dishes. I was entertained, educated and generally spoiled without having to lift a finger unless I chose to. I commented to one of my shipmates that I didn't usually use nail polish because it just didn't last. But I had polished my nails before we left home, and by the last day, my manicure still looked fresh without so much as a chip. Now, after less than a week of real life, my nails need to be redone or returned to their natural state. But less than perfect nails are a small price to pay for a real life full of home, meaningful responsibilities, and those we love.

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.

Advertising Works 903-473-2653

ELECT REPUBLICAN
JAY FORD
FOR
RAINS COUNTY JUDGE

My promise to voters is to listen, lead with integrity, and always put the people of Rains County first.



My initial top three priorities are:

- Honest, Transparent Government. Ensure honesty, integrity, and transparency are at the forefront of county operations by improving two-way communication and creating meaningful opportunities for residents to be heard and their concerns addressed.

- Responsible Growth and Change Management. Establish effective and thoughtful approaches to managing growth and change in a way that protects the values, property, and quality of life that Rains County residents cherish.

- Efficient, High-Quality County Service. Focus on the quality and efficiency of all county services while maintaining strong fiscal discipline, adherence to approved budgets, and responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars.

Please reach out and let's talk.
JayFord4Judge@gmail.com

Paid for by the Jay Ford Campaign

"Hometown Banking With Your Neighbors & Friends"

Now There's Vishing

First, there was phishing, and now there's vishing. This is when thieves use the telephone to gather information as opposed to fake emails. Never assume these calls are legitimate without contacting the institution directly. If you didn't initiate the call, don't share information.

Be sure to let us know at 903-473-2611 if you receive any calls that appear to be from us. Together, we can do our part to eliminate identity theft.

CBTx
Commercial Bank of Texas

ACROSS

1 TX Billy Sol con 5 holder of Texas Blue Bell scoops 6 Texas-born Burnett starred with this Alan in 1981 film "The Four Seasons" 7 TXism: "a hand" (assist) 8 Tex-Mex mafia: "La" 9 state nurses' org. 12 first president of Rice: Edgar Lovett 17 Edwards Aquifer protector: "Springs" 19 big track meet: "Texas" 21 Del Wilber's manager career with Rangers (2 wds.) 22 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 23 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad) 28 Texas-based 1961 film "Two ___ Together" 29 TXism: "camps out in the ___ corner" (religious) 30 Oak Ridge Boys 1981 hit 31 star-shooting wand that you see on July 4th: ___ candle 35 TXism: "will miss ___ you blink" (small town) 36 one of many in book "On Texas Backroads" (2 wds.)

42 by TX Jim Reeves: "Am I ___" 44 TXism: "___ barn burner" (exciting) 46 egg burglary? (2 wds.) 48 TXism: "let's see ___ out of here" 49 Texas ___ tree 50 Texas-based "Frito" ___

51 TX Ty of the "Mighty Ducks" films 52 clairvoyant (abbr.) 53 pre-cable device: rabbit 54 TXism: "happy as a dog with two ___" 56 cheering org. in Dallas (abbr.) 57 TXism: "just a ___" (a little) 58 Texas "Family Stone" frontman

59 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

60 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 61 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

62 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 63 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

64 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 65 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

66 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 67 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

68 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 69 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

70 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 71 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

72 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 73 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

74 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 75 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

76 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 77 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

78 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 79 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

80 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 81 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

82 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 83 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

84 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 85 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

86 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 87 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

88 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 89 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

90 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 91 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

92 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 93 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

94 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 95 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

96 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 97 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

98 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 99 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

100 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 101 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

102 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 103 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

104 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 105 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

106 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 107 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

108 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 109 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

110 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 111 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

112 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 113 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

114 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 115 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

116 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 117 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

118 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 119 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

120 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 121 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

122 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 123 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

124 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 125 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

126 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 127 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

128 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 129 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

130 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 131 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

132 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 133 TXism: "she's got ___ her bonnet" (mad)

134 TXism: "restless ___ in church" 135 TXism: "she

Sheriff's Report

The Rains County Sheriff's Office took the following reports of activity during the weeks of January 19-February 1:

Arrests

1-19: Christopher Coleman. Criminal trespass (Rains Co. Warrant), \$6,500 bond.

1-22: Roger Stewart Hurst. Publish threat to publish intimate visual matter, \$15,000 bond.

1-28: Lauren Gayle Forcia. Assault causing bodily injury to family member, \$45,000 bond.

1-29: Shawn Penn Stevens. Obstruct highway passageway, \$5,000 bond.

1-31: Joshua Leray Taylor. Driving while license invalid (driving while license suspended) with prior convictions, \$2,500 bond.

Calls

1-19: Upshur Co. Sheriff's Office (SO) Prisoner transport; FM 515 Request

TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION SERVICE

Free garden planning workshop set for Feb. 9 in Texarkana



The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Bowie County Master Gardeners and Texas A&M-Texarkana's School of Professional Education and Community Engagement will host "Getting Started with Garden Planning" on Feb. 9 in Texarkana. (Michael Miller/Texas A&M AgriLife)

Program will cover garden planning basics

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Bowie County Master Gardeners and Texas A&M-Texarkana's School of Professional Education and Community Engagement will host "Getting Started with Garden Planning" on Feb. 9 in Texarkana.

The free program will start at 6:00 p.m. in room 326 of the University Build-

ing at Texas A&M University-Texarkana, 7101 University Ave.

No preregistration is required.

About the program

Brian Triplett, Ph.D., AgriLife Extension agriculture and natural resources agent for Bowie County will present the class.

Participants will learn practical tips for starting a garden, whether you want to grow vegetables, herbs or flowers in the ground, in raised beds or in containers.

The discussion will also cover successfully starting seeds indoors to grow your own transplants. Growing your own transplants opens a wider variety of plants than typically available at local garden centers. A question-and-answer session will follow the presentation.

For more information, call the AgriLife Extension office for Bowie County at 903-628-6702 or email Jennifer Davis with Texas A&M-Texarkana at jdavis@tamu.edu.

VOTE WILLIAM DOUGLAS FOR JUSTICE OF THE PEACE RAINS COUNTY

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

NEW FACE OLD VALUES

My name is William Douglas, I'm running for Justice of The Peace because I believe our community is strongest when fairness, compassion, and unity guides the path. This role is more than a title, it's a promise to serve, to listen, and to protect the values we hold dear.

I'm here for the people of Rains County. I've walked the same roads, faced the same challenges, and celebrated the same victories as most of you.

My mission is to bring clarity, compassion, and courage to the table. So that every person who enters our court leaves knowing they were heard, respected, and valued in a fair and just way.

A few years ago, I witnessed someone close to me face the court system, and I saw how one person's compassion could turn fear into hope. That experience taught me that justice is not just about laws, it's about people, and that everyone deserves to be treated with dignity, fairness, and equality.

I believe we need a strong focus on the juveniles of Rains County. As this is a sensitive time in life, and wrong decisions even at a young age can make a lifelong impact. My approach will be to listen carefully, evaluate facts, and make decisions that are both legally sound and respectful of all involved, and to help guide that person down the right path. I know firsthand life can get messy. Neighbors argue, contracts get confusing, and sometimes people just need a calm, reasonable person to help sort things out.

I believe justice should be more than a process; it should be a light that guides our community forward. I want to encourage our younger generation to get out and make positive changes, I personally believe it's time for a change. I don't have law enforcement experience, but I do believe that is a benefit so that I can go into office clear minded. What I do know is that I will work to resolve conflicts quickly, treat everyone with dignity, and ensure that justice is accessible to all. Let's make that promise a reality.

POLITICAL AD PAID FOR BY WILLIAM DOUGLAS

supervisor; PR 6330 Civil issue; FM 515 Civil issue; S 1st St. at Rabe Rd. Agency assist; Tarrant Co. Prisoner transport; N Texas St. Medical assist; S Texas St. Agency assist; Hwy. 195 Public assist; CR 1330 Public assist; FM 515 Civil issue; FM 514 Livestock on roadway; FM 2795 Welfare concern; SO lobby Meet complainant; FM 2946 Grass fire; CR 1532 Medical assist; SO lobby Meet complainant; E Lennon Dr. Investigation; FM 515 Suspicious vehicle; FM 515 Suspicious activity.

1-20: CR 3202 Medical assist; E Lennon Dr. Drug activity; Egret Cir. Aggressive animal; Kansas St. Meet complainant; SO lobby Meet complainant; SO lobby Meet complainant; Ave. B Medical assist; CR 1495 Controlled burn; SO lobby Meet complainant; Hwy. 69 Assist motorist; Northcutt Addn. City ordinance violation; N 1st St. Paper service; FM 47 Medical assist; PR 7708 Warrant service; E Lennon Dr. Medical assist; W North St. Open door; CR 3480 Grass fire; Pelican Dr. Disturbance; 1-21: Ave. C Suspicious

vehicle; FM 275 Medical assist; CR 1605 Medical assist; SO lobby Meet complainant; CR 1610 Medical assist; CR 1301 Livestock on roadway; Enterprise Blvd. Gas leak; FM 515 Meet complainant; Hwy. 69 Accident; FM 515 Welfare concern; Vintage Shores Dr. Civil matter; CR 3430 Medical assist; FM 514 Medical assist; Hwy. 19 Reckless driving.

1-22: Smith Cir. Suspicious activity; FM 515 Public assist; SO lobby Meet complainant; W Hwy. 69 Medical assist; FM 514 Assist motorist; CR 1640 Disturbance; CR 1621 Meet complainant; Egret Cir. Open door; Hwy. 19 Medical assist; SO lobby Meet complainant; E Lennon Dr. Accident; SO lobby Meet complainant; FM 515 Suspicious vehicle; FM 514 Suspicious vehicle; Hwy. 69 Reckless driving; Littlefield Dr. Disturbance; Hwy. 275 Assist motorist.

1-23: Hwy. 276 Assist motorist; FM 2324 Controlled burn; CR 1490 Medical assist; FM 515 Assist motorist; E Lennon Dr. Business alarm; Hwy. 276

Laresa St. Suspicious person.

1-25: Hwy. 69 Suspicious vehicle; Hwy. 69 Assist

vehicle; CR 1691 Medical assist; Egret Cir. Medical assist; CR 3425 Animal welfare concern; W Hwy. 69 Reckless driving; FM 514 Reckless driving; FM 514 Welfare concern; S Hwy. 19 Investigation; E Lennon Dr. Suspicious vehicle; CR 3319 Neighbor dispute; W Lennon Dr. Burglary in progress; Hwy. 276 Welfare concern; CR 3391 Medical assist; CR 1301 Medical assist; CR 1621 Civil matter; Tawakoni Tr. Medical assist; PR 7330 Medical assist; Lyon Ln. Brush fire; CR 1220 Child custody; Industrial Blvd. Structure fire; CR 4254 Medical assist; Hwy. 69 Abandoned vehicle; S FM 779 Medical assist.

1-26: Hwy. 69 N Reckless driving; N Center Dr. Medical assist; E Hwy. 69 Accident; SO lobby Meet complainant; Hwy. 19 Animal bite; Meadowview Ln. City ordinance violation; N Hwy. 69 Reckless driving; FM 2324 Disturbance; E Lennon Dr. Fraud; SO lobby Meet complainant; E Lennon Dr. Runaway; CR 3030 Welfare concern; CR 4254 Medical assist; Planter St. Welfare concern; W Lennon Dr. Criminal trespass resulted in arrest; PR 7321 Medical assist; Northcutt Addn. Public assist; SO lobby Warrant service resulted in arrest; Clark Dr. Welfare concern; CR 2520 Medical assist; CR 3391 Medical assist; CR 1308 Welfare concern; Oak Leaf Tr. Brush fire; Hwy. 19 Medical assist; SO lobby Meet complainant; E Lennon Dr. Meet complainant; CR 3391 Medical assist; CR 3202 Medical assist; Hwy. 69 Suspicious vehicle.

1-30: Hwy. 69 N Reckless driving; N Center Dr. Medical assist; E Hwy. 69 Accident; SO lobby Meet complainant; Hwy. 19 Animal bite; Meadowview Ln. City ordinance violation; N Hwy. 69 Reckless driving; FM 2324 Disturbance; E Lennon Dr. Fraud; SO lobby Meet complainant; E Lennon Dr. Runaway; CR 3030 Welfare concern; CR 4254 Medical assist; Planter St. Welfare concern; W Lennon Dr. Criminal trespass resulted in arrest; PR 7321 Medical assist; Northcutt Addn. Public assist; SO lobby Warrant service resulted in arrest; Clark Dr. Welfare concern; CR 2520 Medical assist; CR 3391 Medical assist; CR 1308 Welfare concern; Oak Leaf Tr. Brush fire; Hwy. 19 Medical assist; SO lobby Meet complainant; E Lennon Dr. Meet complainant; CR 3391 Medical assist; CR 3202 Medical assist; Hwy. 69 Suspicious vehicle.

1-31: PR 7715 Suspicious person; CR 1235 Power

outage; SO lobby Power

outage; S Texas St. Suicidal

subject; S Hwy. 19 Medical

assist; CR 4254 Medical

assist; CR 1412 Animal at

large; S Hwy. 19 Disturbance; CR 3325 Damaged

property; W Quitman St. Business alarm; Hwy. 276 Welfare concern; CR 2370

Medical assist; FM 515

Aggressive animal; Hwy. 69

Disorderly conduct; Hwy. 69

Agency assist; PR 7309

Medical assist; FM 513

Welfare concern; Fish Point

Rd. Welfare concern; SO

lobby Meet complainant; FM

275 Medical assist; SO lobby

1-27: FM 275 Medical

assist; CR 1540 Medical

assist; Hwy. 275 Animal

welfare concern; CR 4480

Special assignment; CR 3446

Medical assist; FM 2946

Medical assist; Hwy. 69

Disorderly conduct; Hwy. 69

Agency assist; PR 7309

Medical assist; FM 513

Welfare concern; Fish Point

Rd. Welfare concern; SO

lobby Meet complainant; FM

275 Medical assist; SO lobby

1-28: FM 514 Meet

complainant; CR 3150

Overdose; FM 514 Assault;

SO lobby Public assist; FM

2737 Livestock on roadway;

E Quitman Downed power

lines; PR 5450 Public assist;

FM 514 Grass fire; CR 1301

Medical assist; FM 515

Medical assist; FM 515 Traf-

fic stop resulted in arrest;

Missouri St. Noise com-

plaint; Hwy. 69 Suspicious person; Hwy. 69 Accident; Hwy. 69 Accident; N Texas St. Medical assist; Hwy. 276 Medical assist; FM 515 Traffic stop resulted in arrest; Missouri St. Noise complaint.

1-29: Hwy. 69 Suspicious vehicle resulted in arrest; FM 2946 Animal welfare concern; Hwy. 276 911 hang up call; N Hwy. 19 Vehicle in roadway; W Lennon Dr. Controlled burn; SO lobby Meet complainant; S Hwy. 19 Extra patrol.

The Sheriff's Department reported 511 calls for the period. Among the calls were: 2 paper service, 1 debris in roadway, 6 disturbances, 2 domestic disturbances, 1 drug activity, 30 extra patrols, 17 follow-up investigations, 1 found property, 2 investigations, 1 gas leak, 3 livestock on roadway, 24 meet complainant, 2 neighbor disputes, 2 open doors, 4 grass fires, 4 brush fires, 1 structure fire, 26 public service calls, 8 reckless driving reports, 1 request supervisor, 4 suspicious activities, 3 suspicious persons, 3 power outages, 12 suspicious vehicles, 2 transport prisoners, 2 warrant services, 19 welfare concerns, 9 accidents, 4 controlled burns, 2 aggressive animals, 8 public assists, 3 agency assists, 6 business alarms, 8 animal welfare concerns, 10 assist motorist calls, 1 burglary in progress, 2 city ordinance violations, 2 civil matters, 1 criminal trespass, 1 down power line, 1 fraud, 1 noise complaint, 1 overdose, 1 runaway, 3 smoke investigations, 1 special assignment, 2 suicidal subjects, 1 terroristic threat, 1 vehicle in roadway, 1 911 hang-up, 1 abandoned vehicle, 1 animal at large, 2 animal bites, 2 assaults, 1 child custody case, and 1 courtesy transport.

There were 186 traffic stops, 13 citations, 163 warnings, 61 medical calls, and 35 transports.

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

ADVERTISE
and watch your business bloom!

SHOP LOCAL
WHEN MONEY STAYS IN OUR COMMUNITY
YOUR LOCAL TAX DOLLARS SUPPORT:
POLICE & FIRE DEPARTMENTS
STREETS & PARKS
& other city services
AND KEEPS US ALL WORKING.
SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESSES
LET'S KEEP OUR ECONOMY GROWING.

Rains County Tire Recycling Event

**Rains County Precinct 4 Yard
260 Locust St., Point, TX 75472**

**February 16th - February 21st
Monday - Saturday from 8 AM - 2:30 PM**

**Rains County Residents,
Bring your tires to be recycled.**

Maximum of 20 tires per resident.

Prohibited items: rims/wheels, split or chopped tires, larger than 54" high or 16" wide tires, tires inside another tire, excess dirt or mud, and oil/other hazardous material.

Questions? Call Joe Parker 903-473-5025

MICHAEL HOPKINS
Rains County Sheriff



MICHAEL HOPKINS
Rains County Sheriff

STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

At least 11 dead in state after winter storm

At least 11 people have died in Texas, nearly half of them children, after Winter Storm Fern swept the state last week, the Texas Standard reported. Among those killed were three young brothers who fell through ice on a private pond near Bonham, about 60 miles northeast of Dallas. In the Dallas suburb of Frisco, two teens died after a sledding accident. They were riding on a sled being pulled by a vehicle.

Several unhoused people died of exposure in Austin, Houston and Fort Worth, according to reports. Nationally, the storm has killed at least 50 people.

Nearly five years after Winter Storm Uri overwhelmed the state's power grid and left millions without electricity, officials with the Electric Reliability Council of Texas noted the grid held, though localized outages were reported, especially in East Texas, where at one point more than 91,000 customers were without power. Those outages were largely due to ice accumulation and downed lines.

The storm forced nearly 2,400 flight cancellations at airports in Dallas, Houston and Austin.

No new H-1b visas for universities, agencies

Gov. Greg Abbott has ordered universities and state agencies to stop asking for new H-1B visas until next year, the Houston Chronicle reported. The visas are used to hire foreign workers who possess skills in a specialized field. The visas typically last for three years.

Abbott said the H-1B program has "too often been used to fill jobs that otherwise could — and should — have been filled by Texans." The order says no state agency or public university or college can petition for new H-1B workers with the

written permission of the Texas Workforce Commission. It does not apply to public schools in Texas, which rely on the visas to fill teacher vacancies.

The order is in effect at least until the Texas Legislature meets next January, when it is expected to consider "guardrails" for the program.

Charles Foster, a Houston immigration attorney, said the visas are used to recruit top talent in competitive technical and medical fields.

"You cut off the H-1B, you cut off the line by which the best and the brightest can immigrate," he said. "We're just hurting ourselves."

State's population grows at slower rate

Census data released last week shows the state's population growth slowed significantly, though Texas still led the country in adding new residents, The Texas Tribune reported. The state added 391,243 residents in 2025, a 1.2-percent growth rate — the slowest clip since 2021.

Much of the slowdown comes from a steep reduction in the number of immigrants moving to Texas, driven in part by the Trump administration's immigration crackdown. The number of newcomers from other countries dropped by 48 percent from the previous year, with 167,475 moving to Texas.

"I think the implication is our economic growth isn't probably going to be as hearty as what we've seen historically," said Lloyd Potter, the state demographer.

Texas ranked fourth in pace of population growth in 2025, trailing South Carolina, Idaho and North Carolina.

HHSC announces \$44 million for rural hospitals

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission has made \$44 million in grant funding available to hospitals that serve rural communities.

The Rural Health Financial Stabilization Grant provides support for rural hospitals determined by HHSC to be at moderate or high risk of financial instability. Each award amount will depend on the hospital's need.

"Rural hospitals are an integral part of the Texas health care infrastructure," HHSC Executive Commissioner Stephanie Muth said. "These grants will strengthen long-term stability while expanding access to care and improving health outcomes in rural communities statewide."

SBOE takes up Bible-infused required reading list

The State Board of Education last week tabled a proposed reading list presented by the Texas Education Agency, deciding instead to seek public input. The Dallas Morning News reported. The TEA list includes passages from the Bible to be taught in public schools. Several teachers at the meeting said the reading list "was overloaded and doesn't include enough contemporary works or a wide enough array of author perspectives."

Board member Will Hickman of Houston proposed a pared-down version of the list, which the board will also consider after receiving public input. Hickman said his shorter list would give teachers and school districts more time to select their own books.

The list would create a single required reading list for every public school in the state. TEA officials have said teachers would be free to add any texts they wish. If it is passed, it would go into effect at the beginning of the 2030-31 school year.

The matter will be taken up again at the board's April meeting.

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@texaspaper.com.

THIS WEEK IN TEXAS HISTORY

Was a cousin love of Austin's life?

by Bartee Haile

Mary Austin Holley landed at Galveston on Feb. 5, 1843 on her fifth and final visit to her dead cousin's former colony.

When Stephen F. Austin was 11 years old, his father Moses sent him back east to stay with relatives the boy barely knew. From 1804 until 1807, the future "Father of Texas" studied at an academy in New Haven, Connecticut and got acquainted with his kinfolks.

One of many cousins was Mary Austin Holley, daughter of Moses' brother. At that point in their lives, Stephen and Mary had very little in common. She was five or nine years older — historians cannot agree on her birthday — and already married to a man of the cloth who would be her husband for the next two decades.

When the time came for higher education, Stephen passed up prestigious Yale for Transylvania University in Lexington, Kentucky. Mary must have thought her cousin a fool for turning his back on the hometown college she would have given her eye teeth to attend. She had the brains but not the gender for Yale, which did not admit women until 1969.

After nine happy years in Boston, where Mary would have gladly spent the rest of her life, husband Horace was elected president of cousin Stephen's alma mater. Mary reluctantly moved to Kentucky, but religious differences with the trustees of the university ultimately culminated in Horace's resignation.

On a ship voyage from New Orleans to New York in 1827, husband and wife both contracted yellow fever. Mary survived the scourge, but Horace succumbed and his body was dumped overboard, a common practice known as burial at sea.

A middle-aged widow with

a young son to support, Mary went back to Louisiana to look for work. She found it as a governess on a plantation not far from New Orleans.

But, according to Mary's biographers, something else also happened at Henry Austin's place in 1831. Two lonely people overcame the daunting difference in their ages and the uncomfortably close proximity of their branches on the same family tree and fell in love. "They determined," claimed one chronicler, "that they would marry when Austin had settled affairs between his Texas colony and Mexico."

But that was not what fate had in store for the alleged lovebirds. A family crisis delayed Mary's return trip for three and a half years. Following the sudden death of her sister-in-law, brother Henry begged her to take three of his children. She could not say no and generously made a home for them in Lexington.

The star-crossed cousins met for the last time on Mar. 12, 1836, six days after the fall of the Alamo. Stephen stopped for two days in Lexington on his five-month canvass of the United States seeking money and volunteers for the Texas Revolution.

When not drumming up support for the heroic struggle, Mary put the finishing touches on *Texas*, the first English-language history of the soon-to-be sovereign land. Published in November 1836, it flew off the shelves.

Stephen never got a chance to read the best-seller. Exhausted by his travels and a lingering bout with malaria, he caught pneumonia and died on Dec. 27, 1836. Her romantic biographer observed sadly, "Once again Mary lost the man she loved."

Mary Austin Holley visited Texas on three more occasions but never made the Lone Star Republic her permanent home. She was living in New Orleans and working on a biography of cousin Stephen, when yellow fever ended her life in August 1846.

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



Your County, Your Voice: Meet with Judge Brent Hilliard!

Rains County Neighbors: Let's Build a Better Tomorrow!

As part of the Brent D. Hilliard Campaign for County Judge, I'm hosting four informal meetings to listen to you, learn from your ideas, and discuss the direction you want for our county. Discuss fixing roads, enhancing public safety, and keeping taxes low—without the bureaucracy. Plus, get free yard signs, campaign materials, and a chance to share feedback directly.



MEETING SCHEDULE

- February 9, 2026: 6-7:30 PM at East Tawakoni City Hall, 288 Briggs Blvd, East Tawakoni, TX
- * New Daytime Meeting *
- February 16, 2026: 1:30-3 PM at Rose Community Center, 239 E Quitman St, Emory, TX

RSVP Today: Scan the QR code below to confirm attendance. This ensures we have enough food, drinks, and space for everyone!



Coffee and Cookies On Us – Your Ideas Are Priceless!

For details or questions, contact the campaign at 903-913-6003,

brent.hilliard@ElectBrentHilliard.com

★★★★★ REPUBLICAN ★★★★★
BRENT
HILLIARD
FOR RAINS COUNTY JUDGE

KEEP THE FRESH START GOING

Disclaimer: These meetings are hosted by the Brent D. Hilliard Campaign for County Judge and are not official functions of Rains County or conducted in my capacity as the current County Judge. They are paid for by the campaign to listen to taxpayers, learn from your feedback, and meet the folks we work for. Political advertising paid for by Brent D. Hilliard Campaign, Elisa Allen, Treasurer.

MY TAKE ON TECH

Electronic Shelf Labels

Technology is getting to the place where retail stores may start using electronic shelf labels (ESLs) instead of the current way of pricing shelf items. Today, virtually all shelf items in a retail store are priced using paper-based shelf tags. That could change soon.

Under the new systems, paper pricing labels on the shelves would be replaced by small liquid crystal displays (like many inexpensive calculators use) that can be changed by a central computer communicating in the store to the individual tags. This would likely be via radio signaling; think of it as Wi-Fi for ESLs. Each electronic shelf label would have a unique electronic ID and could be changed when prompted by a central system in the store.

Most of the information you see today on paper shelf tags might also be included on the electronic labels including the price, the UPC product code, the size and description of the product. It could also include cost per unit as many paper shelf labels do today for comparison purposes.

The advantage for the stores is that this would

allow them to electronically change pricing for items quickly and somewhat effortlessly. Today, changing shelf price labels manually for price changes or sales events requires labor and coordination. Electronic shelf labels might help a store cut back on labor costs. Theoretically, pricing errors could be reduced if the shelf labels always reflected the price to be charged at the checkout lines which they should under the ESL system.

Several concerns have arisen regarding electronic shelf tags. For example, in 2024, U.S. Senators Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) and Bob Casey (D-Pa.) sent a letter to The Kroger Company raising concerns about Kroger's use of Electronic Shelf Labels (ESLs) to surge

Other groups may also get involved in the ESL debate, either pro or con. Some states are pondering what to do about ESLs and fear that abuse might happen if prices change so often that consumers get frustrated or confused about the speed that prices may fluctuate. It may even be that a state or two decides to ban ESL or severely restrict it. Some states may also generate legislation as to how retailers set up and use ESL systems such as some type of "truth in shelf labeling" legislation.

If you combine the power of Artificial Intelligence (AI) with the ability to change prices anytime, that could also be very problematic for many people who may fear that AI would make shelf prices as volatile and frustrating as airline seat prices.

There are many areas of the country that must deal with events that might cause shortages. Hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, ice storms, snowstorms and forest fires may send prices much higher in stores where prices on some or even all items could be increased simultaneously at the push of a button.

It might be that some stores may substantially increase prices of all items after a hurricane, tornado, flood, fire, or other disaster. That is the fear of many lawmakers, both state and federal. They might claim it is price gouging on a supersized scale.

The rules on ESL are not set in stone, so if you have input on the topic, letting your state and federal elected officials know might help everyone come up with a system that is workable for both retailers and consumers. There likely is a "sweet spot" where ESL can exist comfortably in our world; we just need to find it.

John can be reached at john2645@mytakeontech.net.

Visit us online
RainsCountyLeader.com

TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION SERVICE

When, how to plant fruit trees for 'fruitful' results

AgriLife Extension
expert shares what
Texans should
know before
planting fruit trees

damage or signs of stress.

Find the best
planting site

Once you've chosen the right tree, find a location with plenty of sunshine and good drainage.

Low spots or poor draining soil can cause problems for fruit trees. In lower areas, use mounded soil to elevate tree roots above the threat of standing water.

"You want well-drained soil and a spot that doesn't stay soggy," Hartmann said. "That can drown the tree."

Sunshine is also vital for good fruit production and quality. Most fruit trees perform best in full sun, though some varieties benefit from afternoon shade.

Hartmann provided a few simple tips to help you choose the right trees and set them up for long-term success.

Plant most fruit
trees in winter

December through February is the best time to plant most fruit trees in Texas. Plant in early winter to help trees grow a solid root system before they break dormancy in the spring.

"The idea is to plant fruit trees as early as possible to give their roots time to grow during those mild winter days," Hartmann said. "That strong root establishment sets the foundation, and it pays off when the heat and drought of summer conditions set in."

An exception is subtropical fruit trees. Wait until the threat of frost has passed before planting subtropical species like citrus, olives and pineapple guava.

Choose the right tree
for your location

Choosing the right tree for your area is the first important step.

The Aggie horticulture fruit and nut resources page has region-specific information about climate requirements and best-performing fruit varieties for where you live.

Once the right variety is identified, visit a reputable tree nursery to find a medium-sized tree, between 3-5 feet tall. Trees at this size tend to establish better and are easier to train than larger trees.

Planting bare-root trees is preferable, but container trees also work well. In either case, choose a tree that looks healthy, with no

Advertising
Works
903-473-2653

LEGAL NOTICE

LEGAL NOTICE:

This Texas Lottery scratch ticket game will close on February 28, 2026. You have until August 27, 2026, to redeem any tickets for this game: #2586 Million Dollar Loteria (\$20) overall odds are 1 in 3.29. These Texas Lottery scratch ticket games will close on March 25, 2026.

You have until September 21, 2026, to redeem any tickets for these games: #2617 \$5,000 Blitz (\$1) overall odds are 1 in 4.75, #2614 Break the Bank (\$2) overall odds are 1 in 4.80, #2651 Lady Luck Multiplier (\$5) overall odds are 1 in 4.34, #2657 JAWS (\$5) overall odds are 1 in 4.19, #2474 \$250 Grand (\$10) overall odds are 1 in 3.86, #2494 Dazzling Winnings (\$10) overall odds are 1 in 3.82, #2620 \$500,000 Blitz (\$10) overall odds are 1 in 3.83, #2630 Colossal Cash (\$20) overall odds are 1 in 3.41.

Texaslottery.com is the official source for all pertinent game information. Game closing procedures may be initiated for documented business reasons. These games may have prizes unclaimed, including top prizes. In addition, game closing procedures will be initiated when all top prizes have been claimed. During closing, games may be sold even after all top prizes have been claimed. Must be 18 or older to purchase a ticket. PLAY RESPONSIBLY. For help with a gambling problem, ncpgambling.org. © 2026 Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Rains County Appraisal Review Board has one vacancy to fill for the coming 2026-2027 term.

Local Administrative District Judge Eddie Northcutt, administrative Judge for the state district court in Rains County, is accepting applications for Rains County citizens interested in serving on the Rains County Appraisal Review Board (ARB) for 2026-2027. Judge Northcutt will appoint members to two-year terms.

The ARB is a citizen board that sits in panels of three to four, hearing property owner protests that cannot be resolved informally with RCAD.

Service on the ARB will begin in January 2026. Applications must be submitted to the Local Administrative Judge through the Rains County Appraisal District (RCAD) ARB chairman as soon as possible before March 1.

ARB service is generally a full-time commitment during the summer and requires members to be available to serve all day weekdays and some Saturdays if needed from May through July. ARB members are not always scheduled every day but must be available to serve if needed. ARB members are not considered employees of RCAD but are reimbursed for their time as contract labor. Members are paid per diem of \$150.00 per day and \$75.00 for half day.

Candidates for the ARB must be current residents of Rains County, having resided over two years, and must be up to date on property tax payments in Texas or show the tax is being paid under installment agreement.

Interested candidates can call the RCAD office at 903-473-2391 to have an application mailed or stop by our office at 145 Doris Briggs Pkwy., Emory, Texas 75440. Applications may also be obtained online at www.rainscad.org.

Upon receipt, the ARB chairman will forward applications to the Local Administrative Judge for consideration and selection of appointees.

Right Products,
Right People,
Right Reasons.

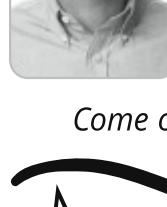
Commercial Bank of Texas offers full-service business and personal banking backed by the latest tools and technology, and friendly, old-fashioned customer service from neighbors who care. Our community is at the heart of everything we do. That's Banking Texas Style!

FULL-SERVICE
COMMUNITY
BANKING★ PERSONAL
★ BUSINESS
★ LOANS
★ DIGITAL

Come on by or give us a call today. You'll be glad you did!



Cody Beaver
Community President
903-473-2611
cbeaver@cbtx.com
NMLS #849768



CBTx
Commercial Bank of Texas, N.A.
800-723-7601 ★ www.cbt.com
Emory Banking Center ★ 170 Quitman St. ★ 903-473-2611

LEGAL NOTICE

This Texas Lottery scratch ticket game will close on February 28, 2026. You have until August 27, 2026, to redeem any tickets for this game: #2586 Million Dollar Loteria (\$20) overall odds are 1 in 3.29. These Texas Lottery scratch ticket games will close on March 25, 2026.

You have until September 21, 2026, to redeem any tickets for these games: #2617 \$5,000 Blitz (\$1) overall odds are 1 in 4.75, #2614 Break the Bank (\$2) overall odds are 1 in 4.80, #2651 Lady Luck Multiplier (\$5) overall odds are 1 in 4.34, #2657 JAWS (\$5) overall odds are 1 in 4.19, #2474 \$250 Grand (\$10) overall odds are 1 in 3.86, #2494 Dazzling Winnings (\$10) overall odds are 1 in 3.82, #2620 \$500,000 Blitz (\$10) overall odds are 1 in 3.83, #2630 Colossal Cash (\$20) overall odds are 1 in 3.41.

Texaslottery.com is the official source for all pertinent game information. Game closing procedures may be initiated for documented business reasons. These games may have prizes unclaimed, including top prizes. In addition, game closing procedures will be initiated when all top prizes have been claimed. During closing, games may be sold even after all top prizes have been claimed. Must be 18 or older to purchase a ticket. PLAY RESPONSIBLY. For help with a gambling problem, ncpgambling.org. © 2026 Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Rains County Appraisal Review Board has one vacancy to fill for the coming 2026-2027 term.

Local Administrative District Judge Eddie Northcutt, administrative Judge for the state district court in Rains County, is accepting applications for Rains County citizens interested in serving on the Rains County Appraisal Review Board (ARB) for 2026-2027. Judge Northcutt will appoint members to two-year terms.

The ARB is a citizen board that sits in panels of three to four, hearing property owner protests that cannot be resolved informally with RCAD.

Service on the ARB will begin in January 2026. Applications must be submitted to the Local Administrative Judge through the Rains County Appraisal District (RCAD) ARB chairman as soon as possible before March 1.

ARB service is generally a full-time commitment during the summer and requires members to be available to serve all day weekdays and some Saturdays if needed from May through July. ARB members are not always scheduled every day but must be available to serve if needed. ARB members are not considered employees of RCAD but are reimbursed for their time as contract labor. Members are paid per diem of \$150.00 per day and \$75.00 for half day.

Candidates for the ARB must be current residents of Rains County, having resided over two years, and must be up to date on property tax payments in Texas or show the tax is being paid under installment agreement.

Interested candidates can call the RCAD office at 903-473-2391 to have an application mailed or stop by our office at 145 Doris Briggs Pkwy., Emory, Texas 75440. Applications may also be obtained online at www.rainscad.org.

Upon receipt, the ARB chairman will forward applications to the Local Administrative Judge for consideration and selection of appointees.

Believers' Baptist Church

By Linda Brendle

And he said to his disciples, "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat, nor about your body, what you will put on."

Luke 12:22

After a week to focus on Sanctity of Life Sunday and a week out due to weather, Pastor Jason Rolen returned to The Incomparable Christ series from Luke with a sermon titled "Be Anxious for Nothing." Jesus commanded His disciples not to worry about anything, and He gave them four reasons why. We do this by seeking His

kingdom rather than worrying about worldly things.

Coming Events:

Feb. 8, 4:00 p.m., Easter Choir rehearsal begins
Feb. 8, 6:00 p.m., The Church Praying
Feb. 10, noon, 55+ Meet & Eat Fellowship
Feb. 14, 6:00 p.m., Student Ministry Valentine Dinner Fundraiser
Feb. 21, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., Deep Dive into Baptism Seminar
Feb. 22, The Great Commission Offering

Emory Methodist Church

By Mary White

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

Matthew 5:8

Rev. David Banks' message was titled "The Word Goes Forth: The Word Teaches" with scripture text taken from Matthew. The Beatitudes teaches us to become poor in spirit, meek, merciful, pure in heart and be peacemakers. Do you believe if we surrendered to Jesus' way we would be more willing to live the Beatitudes? Would we learn that truth that transforms each of

us? This is our prayer Lord, your servants are listening.

We will be going out to the Health & Rehab Center to visit our friends on February 5 to fellowship and sing with them. Our youth will be going on a mission trip Friday, February 13. Prayers requested.

Birthday wishes go to Dorothy Riddle and Anniversary wishes go to Dennis & Dee Fleming.

Pray for Debbie Gilbreath, George Giltner, Betty Mendoza.

Have a great week.

SAVVY SENIORS

Do I Need to File a Tax Return This Year?

Dear Savvy Senior, What are the IRS income tax filing requirements for

retirees this tax season? I didn't file a tax return last year because my income was below the filing threshold, but I got a part-time job in 2025, so I'm wondering if I need to file this year.

Semi-retired Joe

Dear Joe,

Whether you need to file a federal income tax return this year depends on several factors: how much you earned in 2025, the source of your income, your age, and your filing status.

Here's a quick guide to this year's IRS filing thresholds. For most people, it's straightforward: if your gross income (all taxable income, excluding Social Security benefits unless you're married and filing separately) is below the threshold for your filing status and age, you generally do not need to file. But if it's over, you will.

2025 IRS Federal Filing

Thresholds:

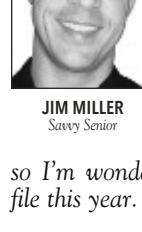
Single: \$15,750 (\$17,750 if you're 65 or older by Jan. 1, 2026).

Married filing jointly: \$31,500 (\$33,100 if one spouse is 65 or older; or \$34,700 if you're both over 65).

Married filing separately: \$5 at any age.

Head of household: \$23,625 (\$25,625 if 65 or older).

Qualifying surviving



JIM MILLER

Savvy Senior

spouse: \$31,500 (\$33,100 if 65 or older).

For a detailed breakdown, including taxable vs. nontaxable income, you can request a free copy of the IRS "1040 and 1040-SR Instructions for Tax Year 2025" by calling 800-829-3676, or view it online at IRS.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f1040gi.pdf.

Check Here Too

Be aware that there are other financial situations that can require you to file a tax return, even if your gross income falls below the IRS filing requirements. For example, if you earned more than \$400 from self-employment in 2025, owe any taxes on an IRA, Health Savings Account or an alternative minimum tax, or get premium tax credits because you, your spouse or a dependent is enrolled in a Health Insurance Marketplace plan, you'll need to file.

You may also need to file if you're receiving Social Security benefits, and one-half of your benefits plus your other gross income and any tax-exempt interest exceeds \$25,000, or \$32,000 if you're married and filing jointly.

To figure all this out, the IRS offers an online tax tool that asks a series of questions that will help you determine if you're required to file, or if you should file because you're due a refund. It takes less than 15 minutes to complete.

You can access this tool at IRS.gov/help/ita – click on "Filing Requirements – Do I need to file a tax return?" Or you can get assistance over

the phone by calling the IRS helpline at 800-829-1040.

Check Your State

Even if you're not required to file a federal tax return this year, don't assume that you're also excused from filing state income taxes. The rules for your state might be very different. Check with your state tax agency before assuming you're off the hook. A complete list of state tax agencies is available at Taxadmin.org/fta-members.

Tax Prep Help

If you find that you do need to file a tax return this year, you can Free File at IRS.gov/freefile, which is a partnership program between the IRS and tax software companies. Your 2025 adjusted gross income must be below \$89,000 to qualify.

If you need some help with your tax returns, the IRS sponsored Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) program provides free tax preparation and counseling to middle and low-income taxpayers, age 60 and older. Call 800-906-9887 or visit IRS.treasury.gov/freetaxprep to locate services near you.

You can also get help through the AARP Foundation Tax-Aide service at AARP.org/findtaxhelp or call 888-227-7669. You don't have to be an AARP member to use this service.

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.

the phone by calling the IRS helpline at 800-829-1040.

For a detailed breakdown, including taxable vs. nontaxable income, you can request a free copy of the IRS "1040 and 1040-SR Instructions for Tax Year 2025" by calling 800-829-3676, or view it online at IRS.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f1040gi.pdf.

Even if you're not required to file a federal tax return this year, don't assume that you're also excused from filing state income taxes. The rules for your state might be very different. Check with your state tax agency before assuming you're off the hook. A complete list of state tax agencies is available at Taxadmin.org/fta-members.

If you find that you do need to file a tax return this year, you can Free File at IRS.gov/freefile, which is a partnership program between the IRS and tax software companies. Your 2025 adjusted gross income must be below \$89,000 to qualify.

If you need some help with your tax returns, the IRS sponsored Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) program provides free tax preparation and counseling to middle and low-income taxpayers, age 60 and older. Call 800-906-9887 or visit IRS.treasury.gov/freetaxprep to locate services near you.

You can also get help through the AARP Foundation Tax-Aide service at AARP.org/findtaxhelp or call 888-227-7669. You don't have to be an AARP member to use this service.

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.

the phone by calling the IRS helpline at 800-829-1040.

For a detailed breakdown, including taxable vs. nontaxable income, you can request a free copy of the IRS "1040 and 1040-SR Instructions for Tax Year 2025" by calling 800-829-3676, or view it online at IRS.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f1040gi.pdf.

Even if you're not required to file a federal tax return this year, don't assume that you're also excused from filing state income taxes. The rules for your state might be very different. Check with your state tax agency before assuming you're off the hook. A complete list of state tax agencies is available at Taxadmin.org/fta-members.

If you find that you do need to file a tax return this year, you can Free File at IRS.gov/freefile, which is a partnership program between the IRS and tax software companies. Your 2025 adjusted gross income must be below \$89,000 to qualify.

If you need some help with your tax returns, the IRS sponsored Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) program provides free tax preparation and counseling to middle and low-income taxpayers, age 60 and older. Call 800-906-9887 or visit IRS.treasury.gov/freetaxprep to locate services near you.

You can also get help through the AARP Foundation Tax-Aide service at AARP.org/findtaxhelp or call 888-227-7669. You don't have to be an AARP member to use this service.

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.

the phone by calling the IRS helpline at 800-829-1040.

For a detailed breakdown, including taxable vs. nontaxable income, you can request a free copy of the IRS "1040 and 1040-SR Instructions for Tax Year 2025" by calling 800-829-3676, or view it online at IRS.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f1040gi.pdf.

Even if you're not required to file a federal tax return this year, don't assume that you're also excused from filing state income taxes. The rules for your state might be very different. Check with your state tax agency before assuming you're off the hook. A complete list of state tax agencies is available at Taxadmin.org/fta-members.

If you find that you do need to file a tax return this year, you can Free File at IRS.gov/freefile, which is a partnership program between the IRS and tax software companies. Your 2025 adjusted gross income must be below \$89,000 to qualify.

If you need some help with your tax returns, the IRS sponsored Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) program provides free tax preparation and counseling to middle and low-income taxpayers, age 60 and older. Call 800-906-9887 or visit IRS.treasury.gov/freetaxprep to locate services near you.

You can also get help through the AARP Foundation Tax-Aide service at AARP.org/findtaxhelp or call 888-227-7669. You don't have to be an AARP member to use this service.

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.

the phone by calling the IRS helpline at 800-829-1040.

For a detailed breakdown, including taxable vs. nontaxable income, you can request a free copy of the IRS "1040 and 1040-SR Instructions for Tax Year 2025" by calling 800-829-3676, or view it online at IRS.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f1040gi.pdf.

Even if you're not required to file a federal tax return this year, don't assume that you're also excused from filing state income taxes. The rules for your state might be very different. Check with your state tax agency before assuming you're off the hook. A complete list of state tax agencies is available at Taxadmin.org/fta-members.

If you find that you do need to file a tax return this year, you can Free File at IRS.gov/freefile, which is a partnership program between the IRS and tax software companies. Your 2025 adjusted gross income must be below \$89,000 to qualify.

If you need some help with your tax returns, the IRS sponsored Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) program provides free tax preparation and counseling to middle and low-income taxpayers, age 60 and older. Call 800-906-9887 or visit IRS.treasury.gov/freetaxprep to locate services near you.

You can also get help through the AARP Foundation Tax-Aide service at AARP.org/findtaxhelp or call 888-227-7669. You don't have to be an AARP member to use this service.

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.

the phone by calling the IRS helpline at 800-829-1040.

For a detailed breakdown, including taxable vs. nontaxable income, you can request a free copy of the IRS "1040 and 1040-SR Instructions for Tax Year 2025" by calling 800-829-3676, or view it online at IRS.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f1040gi.pdf.

Even if you're not required to file a federal tax return this year, don't assume that you're also excused from filing state income taxes. The rules for your state might be very different. Check with your state tax agency before assuming you're off the hook. A complete list of state tax agencies is available at Taxadmin.org/fta-members.

If you find that you do need to file a tax return this year, you can Free File at IRS.gov/freefile, which is a partnership program between the IRS and tax software companies. Your 2025 adjusted gross income must be below \$89,000 to qualify.

If you need some help with your tax returns, the IRS sponsored Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) program provides free tax preparation and counseling to middle and low-income taxpayers, age 60 and older. Call 800-906-9887 or visit IRS.treasury.gov/freetaxprep to locate services near you.

You can also get help through the AARP Foundation Tax-Aide service at AARP.org/findtaxhelp or call 888-227-7669. You don't have to be an AARP member to use this service.

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.

the phone by calling the IRS helpline at 800-829-1040.

For a detailed breakdown, including taxable vs. nontaxable income, you can request a free copy of the IRS "1040 and 1040-SR Instructions for Tax Year 2025" by calling 800-829-3676, or view it online at IRS.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f1040gi.pdf.

Even if you're not required to file a federal tax return this year, don't assume that you're also excused from filing state income taxes. The rules for your state might be very different. Check with your state tax agency before assuming you're off the hook. A complete list of state tax agencies is available at Taxadmin.org/fta-members.

If you find that you do need to file a tax return this year, you can Free File at IRS.gov/freefile, which is a partnership program between the IRS and tax software companies. Your 2025 adjusted gross income must be below \$89,000 to qualify.

If you need some help with your tax returns, the IRS sponsored Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) program provides free tax preparation and counseling to middle and low-income taxpayers, age 60 and older. Call 800-906-9887 or visit IRS.treasury.gov/freetaxprep to locate services near you.

You can also get help through the AARP Foundation Tax-Aide service at AARP.org/findtaxhelp or call 888-227-7669. You don't have to be an AARP member to use this service.

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.

the phone by calling the IRS helpline at 800-829-1040.

For a detailed breakdown, including taxable vs. nontaxable income, you can request a free copy of the IRS "1040 and 1040-SR Instructions for Tax Year 2025" by calling 800-829-3676, or view it online at IRS.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f1040gi.pdf.

Even if you're not required to file a federal tax return this year, don't assume that you're also excused from filing state income taxes. The rules for your state might be very different. Check with your state tax agency before assuming you're off the hook. A complete list of state tax agencies is available at Taxadmin.org/fta-members.

If you find that you do need to file a tax return this year, you can Free File at IRS.gov/freefile, which is a partnership program between the IRS and tax software companies. Your 2025 adjusted gross income must be below \$89,000 to qualify.

If you need some help with your tax returns, the IRS sponsored Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) program provides free tax preparation and counseling to middle and low-income taxpayers, age 60 and older. Call 800-906-9887 or visit IRS.treasury.gov/freetaxprep to locate services near you.

You can also get help through the AARP Foundation Tax-Aide service at AARP.org/findtaxhelp or call 888-227-7669. You don't have to be an AARP member to use this service.

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.

the phone by calling the IRS helpline at 800-829-1040.

PUBLIC/LEGAL NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE NOTICE TO ALL PERSONS BUYING PROPERTY IN THE VICINITY OF THE MILLER GROVE WATER SUPPLY CORP.

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

PUBLIC NOTICE NOTICE TO ALL PERSONS BUYING PROPERTY IN THE VICINITY OF THE CITY OF POINT WATER SYSTEM

City of Point Water urges all prospective land buyers to verify with the water operator or city secretary at City of Point at our office located at 320 N Locust Street Point, TX 75472 or by calling 903-598-3296 ext. 220 whether or not water service is available to the property in question.

PUBLIC NOTICE NOTICE TO ALL PERSONS BUYING PROPERTY IN THE VICINITY OF THE SOUTH RAINS SUD WATER SYSTEM

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

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

TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY



NOTICE OF RECEIPT OF APPLICATION AND INTENT TO OBTAIN WATER QUALITY PERMIT RENEWAL

PERMIT NO. WQ0014705001

APPLICATION. Sabine River Authority of Texas, P.O. Box 579, Orange, Texas 77631, has applied to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to renew Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) Permit No. WQ0014705001 (EPA I.D. No. TX0123722) to authorize the discharge of treated wastewater at a volume not to exceed a daily average flow of 29,500 gallons per day. The domestic wastewater treatment facility is located approximately 1.2 miles south of the intersection of Farm-to-Market Road 514 and Farm-to-Market Road 2946, in Rains County, Texas 75440. The discharge route is from the plant site to a six-acre pond, thence to Lake Fork Reservoir. TCEQ received this application on December 15, 2025. The permit application will be available for viewing and copying at Emory City Hall, Public Notice Bulletin Board, 399 North Texas Street, Emory, in Rains County, Texas prior to the date this notice is published in the newspaper. The application and associated notices are available electronically at the following webpage: <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/wastewater/pending-permits/tpdes-applications>. This link to an electronic map of the site or facility's general location is provided as a public courtesy and not part of the application or notice. For the exact location, refer to the application. <https://gisweb.tceq.texas.gov/LocationMapper/?marker=-95.660278.32.913056&level=18>

ADDITIONAL NOTICE. TCEQ's Executive Director has determined the application is administratively complete and will conduct a technical review of the application. After technical review of the application is complete, the Executive Director may prepare a draft permit and will issue a preliminary decision on the application. **Notice of the Application and Preliminary Decision will be published and mailed to those who are on the county-wide mailing list and to those who are on the mailing list for this application. That notice will contain the deadline for submitting public comments.**

PUBLIC COMMENT / PUBLIC MEETING. You may submit public comments or request a public meeting on this application. The purpose of a public meeting is to provide the opportunity to submit comments or to ask questions about the application. TCEQ will hold a public meeting if the Executive Director determines that there is a significant degree of public interest in the application or if requested by a local legislator. A public meeting is not a contested case hearing.

OPPORTUNITY FOR A CONTESTED CASE HEARING. After the deadline for submitting public comments, the Executive Director will consider all timely comments and prepare a response to all relevant and material, or significant public comments. **Unless the application is directly referred for a contested case hearing, the response to comments, and the Executive Director's decision on the application, will be mailed to everyone who submitted public comments and to those persons who are on the mailing list for this application. If comments are received, the mailing will also provide instructions for requesting reconsideration of the Executive Director's decision and for requesting a contested case hearing.** A contested case hearing is a legal proceeding similar to a civil trial in state district court.

TO REQUEST A CONTESTED CASE HEARING, YOU MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING ITEMS IN YOUR REQUEST: your name, address, phone number; applicant's name and proposed permit number; the location and distance of your property/activities relative to the proposed facility; a specific description of how you would be adversely affected by the facility in a way not common to the general public; a list of all disputed issues of fact that you submit during the comment period and, the statement "[I/we] request a contested case hearing." If the request for contested case hearing is filed on behalf of a group or association, the request must designate the group's representative for receiving future correspondence; identify by name and physical address an individual member of the group who would be adversely affected by the proposed facility or activity; provide the information discussed above regarding the affected member's location and distance from the facility or activity; explain how and why the member would be affected; and explain how the interests the group seeks to protect are relevant to the group's purpose.

Following the close of all applicable comment and request periods, the Executive Director will forward the application and any requests for reconsideration or for a contested case hearing to the TCEQ Commissioners for their consideration at a scheduled Commission meeting.

The Commission may only grant a request for a contested case hearing on issues the requestor submitted in their timely comments that were not subsequently withdrawn. **If a hearing is granted, the subject of a hearing will be limited to disputed issues of fact or mixed questions of fact and law relating to relevant and material water quality concerns submitted during the comment period.**

TCEQ may act on an application to renew a permit for discharge of wastewater without providing an opportunity for a contested case hearing if certain criteria are met.

MAILING LIST. If you submit public comments, a request for a contested case hearing or a reconsideration of the Executive Director's decision, you will be added to the mailing list for this specific application to receive future public notices mailed by the Office of the Chief Clerk. In addition, you may request to be placed on: (1) the permanent mailing list for a specific applicant name and permit number; and/or (2) the mailing list for a specific county. If you wish to be placed on the permanent and/or the county mailing list, clearly specify which list(s) and send your request to TCEQ Office of the Chief Clerk at the address below.

INFORMATION AVAILABLE ONLINE. For details about the status of the application, visit the Commissioners' Integrated Database at www.tceq.texas.gov/goto/cid. Search the database using the permit number for this application, which is provided at the top of this notice.

AGENCY CONTACTS AND INFORMATION. All public comments and requests must be submitted either electronically at <https://www14.tceq.texas.gov/epic/eComment/>, or in writing to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Office of the Chief Clerk, MC-105, P.O. Box 13087, Austin, Texas 78711-3087. Please be aware that any contact information you provide, including your name, phone number, email address and physical address will become part of the agency's public record. For more information about this permit application or the permitting process, please call the TCEQ Public Education Program, Toll Free, at 1-800-687-4040 or visit their website at www.tceq.texas.gov/goto/pep. Si desea información en Español, puede llamar al 1-800-687-4040.

Further information may also be obtained from Sabine River Authority of Texas at the address stated above or by calling Mr. Conrad King, Division Manager, at 903-878-2262.

Issuance Date: January 27, 2026


Brent Hilliard, Rains County Judge
Brent Hilliard, Rains Juez del Condado

ADVERTISING WORKS

903-473-2653

Classified Ads

We Accept



473-2653
CLASSIFIED DEADLINE
5:00 P.M. TUESDAY

FOR SALE

SALES

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.

HOOTEN'S HARDWARE, LLC

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

FREE

Free Great Pyrenees, 2 years old, current on heart worm medication, spayed. 903-335-4077.

RENT/LEASE

RENTAL HOMES AVAILABLE in Emory. \$1,350/mth & \$1,200/mth. Call 903-474-4007.

2BR/1BA Mobile Home, \$1,200/mth. \$800/dep., Point TX. Ron 903-268-7089.

EAGLE INN APARTMENTS

2-BR \$726/mth. No deposit! Apply at eagleinnapartments.com.

RENT/LEASE

For Rent 3BR/2BA manufactured home on Duffy St., \$1,300/mth. Apply at eagleinnapartments.com.

For Rent 3BR/2BA 2023 house in Emory, \$1,900/mth. 903-368-2028.

STORAGE UNITS

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

SERVICES

CONSTRUCTION

ROHRAL REPAIR

Welding, machining - all metals. Tractor repair & Equipment upgrades, mechanical, electrical, broken bolts, etc. Small jobs are welcome! 903-474-0899, 430-306-4165, Emory, TX.

MCKENZIE LAKE WORKS. Building boat houses and docks since 2001. Steel/metal bldgs., & home remodeling. www.mckenzielakeworks.com. 903-269-6173.

LAWN/LANDSCAPE/MOWING

HOOTEN'S LAWN & TREE SERVICE, LLC Tim Hooten

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

SMITH'S LAWN CARE

Landscaping, fencing, hedge trimming, weekly/biweekly rates. 903-521-8506, free estimates.

RENT/LEASE

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.

HELP WANTED

IT'S TIME TO STOCK YOUR POND!
Friday, February 20 Canton 1:15 PM-2:00 PM NE Texas Farmers Co-op Emory 2:45 PM-3:30 PM Potts Feed Store
Greenville 4:15 PM-5:00 PM NE Texas Farmers Co-op Saturday, February 28 Mineola 7:30 AM-8:15 AM Big Country Farm Center Quitman 8:45 AM-9:30 AM Potts Feed Store Sulphur Springs 10:15 AM-11:00 AM NE Texas Farmers Co-op

SUDOKU SOLUTION

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



OFFICE : 903-473-5150

109 Prosperity Pkwy, Emory

FIRM NO: 10194233

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION



Visit www.cbtex.com for all your banking needs

Toby Boatman GARAGE DOORS

Residential Commercial Sales • Service Installation
903-348-6170
903-438-1970

PARTS PLUS

595 W. Lennon Dr. Emory, Texas 75440
903-473-2950
903-473-3657

J&R DISCOUNT AUTO SUPPLY

595 W. Lennon Dr. Emory, Texas 75440
903-473-2950
903-473-3657

D.E. Plumbing Services

RMP 38867
jonathanchristian76@gmail.com

- New Construction
- Repairs
- Remodel

Jonathan Christian
903-513-0063

*Prices may vary with additional or different techniques used or individual needs of patients

L.L. Spencer Real Estate

"Your Hometown Realtor" Since 1959
Don R. Spencer Owner/Broker

903-473-2225

Judy Moody - 214-536-3214

LLSpencerRealEstate.com

Best Margaritas in Town

DOS CHARROS

Tex Mex Restaurant

www.doscharrostexmex.com

903-473-0007

Call-ins welcome

Credit cards accepted

211 E. Lennon (Hwy. 69) Emory 903-474-9600

Monday-Saturday 6:00AM - 2:00PM

BREAKFAST SERVED ALL DAY

Check out our Summer Sandwich Special

Monday-Saturday 6:00AM - 2:00PM

BREAKFAST SERVED ALL DAY

Check out our Summer Sandwich Special

Monday-Saturday 6:00AM - 2:00PM

BREAKFAST SERVED ALL DAY

Check out our Summer Sandwich Special

Monday-Saturday 6:00AM - 2:00PM

BREAKFAST SERVED ALL DAY

Check out our Summer Sandwich Special

Monday-Saturday 6:00AM - 2:00PM

BREAKFAST SERVED ALL DAY

Check out our Summer Sandwich Special

Monday-Saturday 6:00AM - 2:00PM

BREAKFAST SERVED ALL DAY

Check out our Summer Sandwich Special

Monday-Saturday 6:00AM - 2:00PM

BREAKFAST SERVED ALL DAY

Check out our Summer Sandwich Special

Monday-Saturday 6:00AM - 2:00PM

BREAKFAST SERVED ALL DAY

Check out our Summer Sandwich Special

Monday-Saturday 6:00AM - 2:00PM

BREAKFAST SERVED ALL DAY

Check out our Summer Sandwich Special

Monday-Saturday 6:00AM - 2:00PM

BREAKFAST SERVED ALL DAY

Check out our Summer Sandwich Special

Monday-Saturday 6:00AM - 2:00PM

BREAKFAST SERVED ALL DAY

Check out our Summer Sandwich Special

Monday-Saturday 6:00AM - 2:00PM

BREAKFAST SERVED ALL DAY

Check out our Summer Sandwich Special

Monday-Saturday 6:00AM - 2:00PM

BREAKFAST SERVED ALL DAY

Check out our Summer Sandwich Special

Monday-Saturday 6:00AM - 2:00PM

BREAKFAST SERVED ALL DAY

Check out our Summer Sandwich Special

Monday-Saturday 6:00AM - 2:00PM

BREAKFAST SERVED ALL DAY

Check out our Summer Sandwich Special

Monday-Saturday 6:00AM - 2:00PM

BREAKFAST SERVED ALL DAY

Check out our Summer Sandwich Special

Monday-Saturday 6:00AM - 2:00PM

BREAKFAST SERVED ALL DAY

Check out our Summer Sandwich Special

Monday-Saturday 6:00AM - 2:00PM

BREAKFAST SERVED ALL DAY

Check out our Summer Sandwich Special

Monday-Saturday 6:00AM - 2:00PM

BREAKFAST SERVED ALL DAY

Check out our Summer Sandwich Special

Monday-Saturday 6:00AM - 2:00PM

BREAKFAST SERVED ALL DAY

Check out our Summer Sandwich Special

Monday-Saturday 6:00AM - 2:00PM

BREAKFAST SERVED ALL DAY

Check out our Summer Sandwich Special

Monday-Saturday 6:00AM - 2:00PM

BREAKFAST SERVED ALL DAY

Check out our Summer Sandwich Special

Monday-Saturday 6:00AM - 2:00PM

BREAKFAST SERVED ALL DAY

Check out our Summer Sandwich Special

Monday-Saturday 6:00AM - 2:00PM

BREAKFAST SERVED ALL DAY

Check out our



Vote for Brent Hilliard Rains County Judge

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

A Legacy of Service for Rains County

A Life Rooted in Faith and Family

Stacy and I met in junior high; years later, God answered my prayers and brought us back together. We're blessed with three grown Christian sons, wonderful daughters-in-law, and six grandbabies who light up our lives.

My life's journey has been guided by a commitment to Christ since the age of twelve. Having served as an ordained deacon, my leadership style is rooted in the calling of Micah 6:8: to act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God. Today, Stacy



Brent Hilliard and Family

and I are proud members of Emory Baptist Church, where we continue to grow in our faith alongside our neighbors.

Deep Roots, Proven Results

In 2019, we put down permanent roots at the historic John Little Ranch—Rains County is home. As an entrepreneur in energy and IT, I employ 15 neighbors right here in Emory. From delivering Midland's 62-mile water pipeline to running my businesses, I've always focused on results, respect, and fiscal responsibility.

Your County Judge: Progress You Can See

Serving as your appointed County Judge is the honor of my life. I've applied decades of experience to prioritize better roads, stronger public safety, and a taxpayers-first approach.

In just six months, we've made real progress—but we're just getting started. I'm asking for your vote to keep that momentum going and ensure Rains County remains safe, rural, and affordable for our children and grandchildren.

Let's Keep the Fresh Start Going!

Highlights From Just Six Months

Roads

- Improved coordination between the Judge's office, Road and Bridge Department, and Commissioner's Court to improve quality and effective implementation of services
- Reconstructed 11.96 miles of paved road and growing
- Shifted to patching larger areas with better, longer-lasting materials
- Added two new positions in Road & Bridge to boost productivity and delivery
- Improved manpower/equipment utilization and supervision
- Prioritizing drainage and water evacuation
- Cleared rights-of-way of trees and foliage for safer, better-maintained roads
- Close to securing \$2.81 million of grants for culverts, bridges, and roads
- Better planning by utilizing existing and newly obtained data moving forward
- Added two new trucks to reduce maintenance costs

Safety & First Responders

- Improved coordination between the Judge's Office and Sheriff's Office to strengthen public safety and our environment as a whole
- Improved hiring for experienced TCOLE-certified deputies and dispatchers
- Added Records Retention position to meet state requirements
- Purchased and equipped a transport van and two new trucks for the Sheriff's Department
- Brought jail into full compliance with Texas Jail Standards
- Implemented weekly mental health support (Navigator Program with Andrews Center)
- Hired experienced Jail Compliance Officer, dispatchers, and deputies
- Modernized jail software and systems for better compliance
- Cleaned out years of expired evidence (in accordance with CCP 59 Penal Code) and hired consultant to maintain evidence processing long term
- Secured the assignment of a qualified retired visiting judge from the 12th Court of Appeals when needed for county cases
- Secured \$892,102.21 in grants for the Sheriff's department

Taxpayers First

- Increased transparency with an open-door policy and direct communication with taxpayers
- Pursuing TXDOT, federal, and other grants—including nearly \$4.746 million (and counting) for Library, Safety, and roads/bridges—to fund priorities
- Added cybersecurity software to protect county systems from ransomware, malware, phishing, and denial-of-service attacks
- Hired General Counsel to provide legal advice on county business and civil matters
- Implemented a new communication program to improve efficiency across county operations
- Fostered a positive and productive work environment for county employees
- Focused every dollar on essentials—getting more done with existing resources
- Improved efficiency and compliance to protect taxpayer money and avoid costly fines

Better Roads, Stronger Safety, Taxpayers First

Looking Ahead: My Commitments To You

Managing Growth Wisely



"Managing growth so Rains County stays safe, rural, and affordable."

Honesty & Responsible Taxation

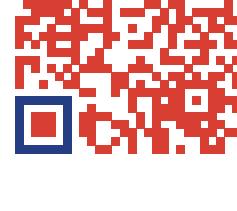


"As values rise, I will work to protect taxpayers and make every dollar count."

Integrity & Access



"Open door, open records, and open books—so you always know what your county government is doing."



903-913-6003 | ElectBrentHilliard.com