

Rains County Leader

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EMORY, TEXAS - THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2026

PRICE 75¢

RAINS ISD

Board affirms right to religious expression

By **CHUCK FITTS**
Rains County Leader staff

The Rains ISD Board of Trustees held a regular meeting on Monday, February 9, to vote on Texas Senate Bill 11, affirm the district's position on rights to religious expression and authorize the superintendent to hire a new chief financial officer for the district.

During the meeting, the board was presented with a resolution affirming the Rights to Religious Expression for the district.

The resolution affirms "the rights of students and employees to prayer and religious expression under existing law and declaring the district's intent to continue current practices regarding voluntary prayer and bible reading."

The resolution was unanimously approved by the school board.

The school board was required to record a vote on the adoption of policies stated in Texas Senate Bill 11. The bill required every district in the state to record the vote before a March 1 deadline.

With several legal risks identified in

the bill and the previous resolution approved, the board unanimously voted against adoption of the policies of SB 11.

The board entered into closed session near the end of the meeting for personnel issues. After nearly an hour, they returned to open session and unanimously authorized Superintendent Joe Nicks to hire a new Chief Financial Officer for the district.

Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Operations Mike Hall is stepping

see **RISD** on page 2

ELECTION 2026

Early voting for March Primaries begins Monday

By **CHUCK FITTS**
Rains County Leader staff

Early voting in the March 3 primary election will begin on Tuesday, February 17, at the Rains County Election office in the Rains County Courthouse Annex at 220 W Quitman St.

Beginning Tuesday, polls will be open for early voting from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. each weekday through Friday, February 20.

Residents will be able to vote early over the weekend with the election office open on Saturday, February 21, from 7:00 a.m. through 7:00 p.m. and on Sunday, February 22, from 9:00 a.m. through 3:00 p.m.

Early voting for Monday, February 23, through Friday, February 27, will be conducted at the Rains County Election office from 7:00 a.m. through 7:00 p.m.

Applications for ballots by mail must be received no later than the close of business on Thursday, February 26.

Rains County will see contested

see **EARLY** on page 2

EMORY

Council appoints Drown administrator, Demps chief

By **STAFF REPORTS**
Rains County Leader

The Emory City Council met in regular session Tuesday evening, February 10, in the council chamber at Emory City Hall. Among the actions taken were naming Leah Drown the city administrator and Cameron Demps the city's police chief.

The meeting began with public comments. Marley Barker reported ongoing dog attacks on his chickens, raising concerns about loose dog regulations.

In financial updates, insurance costs have surged nearly 20 percent. The council approved a \$12,527.55 payment for the city's water model and accepted \$4,100 in unclaimed property to support the police department budget. Ongoing discussions included a potential up-front payment of \$15,000 for the contracted services with All American Dog.

see **EMORY** on page 2

Built on a strong foundation



Leader photo by CHUCK FITTS

It's all about family as the Rains Lady Cat seniors celebrate their final home game in Talkingington Gym on Tuesday night, February 10. Seniors Taytum Osornio, Shaylee Stracener, Presley "PK" Kilgore, Kamara Ragsdale, Isabella Marrone, Izzy Aldaco, Kenzy Thompson and Caroline Piles pose with family before the 73-28 district win over the Prairiland Lady Patriots.

RAINS COUNTY

Meet with Republican, Democratic candidates this week

By **CHUCK FITTS**
Rains County Leader staff

Rains County residents have several more opportunities to talk with candidates ahead of the March 3 primaries.

A Rains County Candidate forum will be held on Thursday, February 12, at 6:00 p.m. in the McClanahan Family Life Center on the House of Prayer Campus at 1382 FM 515.

The event is expected to have Republican candidates that would repre-

sent Rains County in the Federal, State and local levels attend.

Attendees are asked to bring questions for candidates to get to know them and better understand their positions.

On Saturday, February 14, the Democratic Party of Rains County will hold a meeting at the Rains County Public Library with guest speaker, Dan Barrios. The local meeting begins at 12:30 p.m. followed by a meet-and-greet by Barrios.

Barrios is seeking the Democratic nomination for Texas' 32nd Congressional District. Anthony Bridges is the other candidate for the nomination in the March 3 Primary.

Everyone is welcome to attend, hear from the candidate and join in the discussion.

Early voting in the March 3 Primaries will begin on Tuesday, February 17, and continue through Friday, February 27.

SPOTLIGHT

Dewayne Noble is Rains County Game Warden for TPWD

By **JUDY KRAMER**
Rains County Leader contributor

Game Warden Dewayne Noble has served as a Texas Game Warden since his graduation from Game Warden Academy in May 2008. He began his career in Grey County in 2008 and was re-assigned to Rains County on May 1, 2021 where his jurisdiction includes parts of Lake Fork and Lake Tawakoni. He stands tall in his crisp, clean uniform and ten-gallon hat projecting an image of authority and professionalism.

Noble said that he was inspired to go into law enforcement by his father who was in the military and later was a Department of Public Safety (DPS) trooper. In fact, Noble applied to the DPS academy at the same time he applied to the Game Warden Academy and when he had interviews with both departments

on the same day he chose to show up at the Parks and Wildlife Department.

"Our duties as game wardens are informally known as law enforcement off the pavement," said Noble. "My duties change with seasons. In September I change from a majority of boating responsibilities to hunting. Dove season begins at the beginning of September, and teal duck season usually starts around the middle of the month, with some variety in times. Archery begins in October and general hunting season with rifles begins in November, and runs through part of January. Late in the season is youth hunting for two weeks during which time adults can hunt with muzzleloaders. Fishing season starts in March beginning with crappie or blue catfish. This is when boating increases and enforcement of its regulations occur a lot more on weekends and holidays."

Noble had to earn his bachelor's degree before applying to become a game warden. The application process included going through an interview, having a background investigation, writing an essay, and having a physical and psychological assessment. He was in the Game Warden Academy for eight months learning boating and fishing regulations, plus he had to learn regulations that other types of law enforcement officers study.

"There is a different expectation in the amount of regulations we are required to know," said Noble. "Game wardens have to live in the county they are assigned to and become part of the community so they can help out by being an extra hand."

Noble said that his favorite enforce-

see **SPOTLIGHT** on page 3



Dewayne Noble



City Girl:
Grass Roots Politics
Page 3

Jody Dyer:
Chivalry is Not Dead...
page 3

Wildcat Sports
page 10

Rain Report

No rain recorded last week.
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 Winnsboro Gun Club, Winnsboro TX. Sue Parrish 903-473-9819

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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.

Democrat Party To Meet With Barrios Sat., Feb. 14

The Democratic Party of Rains County will hold a meeting on Saturday, February 14, at 12:30 p.m., at the Rains County Library located at 150 Doris Briggs Pkwy. At 1:00 p.m., the guest speaker will be Democrat candidate for Texas' 32nd Congressional District, Dan Barrios. The meeting is open to the public.

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 Celebration Apr. 11

The Alba Public Library & Museum has changed the date of the celebration of their fifteenth year in operation. The new date of the celebration will be April 11, from 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Refreshments will be served. Local student's research, essays, recipes, and artistic creations that provide a better understanding of what living in Alba and elsewhere was like will be on display. Community members will be able to participate in a 5K run/walk. More information will be available at a later date.

Love languages can help you enjoy Valentine's Day on a budget

Valentine's Day doesn't have to break the bank. The key is understanding your partner's love language. When you know what makes them feel valued, you can create meaningful moments without overspending.

If words of affirmation are your partner's love language, write a heartfelt letter, which carries immense emotional value and costs nothing.

For those who treasure acts of service, cook their favorite meal or build a simple budgeting worksheet that they've been struggling to create.

For gift lovers, think thoughtful but not costly, like one-of-a-kind thrift-store treasures or fractional stock shares of a company they admire.

Those who value quality time may appreciate a scenic hike, stargazing or a "future-fund" jar for a vacation you'll take together — with an initial contribution from you.

Finally, if physical touch is their love language, creating an at-home spa night or cuddling under a budget-friendly blanket is a good choice.

All told, the best Valentine's gifts come from the heart, and smart budgeting makes them even sweeter.

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SUDOKU
The aim of Sudoku is to complete the entire grid using the numbers 1-9. Each number can only be used once in each row, once in each column, and once in each of the 3x3 boxes. Visit www.sudokuoftheday.com for further tips and help about how to play - and good luck!
9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

RISD

Continued from page 1

down to take another job, but will remain to help with the transition to the new financial officer. During the meeting, board members unanimously approved a motion to submit a Missed School Day waiver to the Texas Education Agency for the days that the school was closed for the water issues and the bad weather days. They unanimously adopted a resolution to pay employees during the days that the school was unexpectedly closed. Trustee Robert Burns abstained from voting on the resolution as his wife works for the district as a teacher. The school board was presented with an audit of the district's finances for the 2024-2025 school year. The auditor stated that the dis-

trict received an "unmodified opinion" and had no problems with TEA compliance. The board unanimously accepted an audit into the meeting records. They unanimously approved an updated library resource for the school libraries and the submission of a teacher certification requirement waiver to the TEA. The Wildcat Roar focused on the Rains Junior High School. Trustee Heath Sisk was not present for the regular meeting. The next meeting of the Rains ISD Board of Trustees is scheduled for Monday, March 2, at 6:30 p.m. in the Alexander Boardroom in the Rains ISD Administration building.

EMORY

Continued from page 1

Infrastructure updates included a projected \$7,000 for sewer line repairs behind Y'all Come Back, with plans to jet the lines next Tuesday. Frontier agreed to cover costs associated with water loss and damage after one of their vendors recently damaged city water lines. The city received a \$30,000 grant from SRA and was encouraged to seek further funding to address needs at the city's water plant. Future tasks include meetings for water model adjustments, equipment purchases, and generator testing.

Drown announced the city will begin preparations for Founders Day, which will be Saturday, May 2. Drown said that Casey Donahue and Don Lewis have been booked for the event.

The council authorized the chief of police to oversee a reserve officer program, with the chief overseeing future decisions regarding police department vacancies.

Brandon Wall from Wall Engineering presented a

contract for general engineering services, resulting in the approval of an agreement.

The council then passed an ordinance related to library and archives to bring the city in compliance with state law, and established bylaws for the Emory City Cemetery and Forbis Cemetery, including a fee schedule for both.

After a 45-minute executive session to discuss leadership positions, the council appointed Drown as City Administrator and Cameron Demps as Chief of Police. Both had been serving as interims and both unanimously approved.

The meeting adjourned at 9:13 p.m. Council members present were Travis Potts, Blake Cooper, Lori Honeycutt and Jacob Roan, and Mayor Earl Hill III presiding.

The next regular meeting of the Emory City Council is scheduled for Tuesday, March 10, at 7:00 p.m. in the council chamber at Emory City Hall.

EARLY

Continued from page 1

racers for Rains County Judge, Justice of the Peace and seats on the Rains County Commissioners Court in the primary elections.

Candidates for Rains County Judge are Brent Hilliard and Jay Ford. Hilliard is the current Rains County Judge and was appointed by the commissioners court in July of 2025.

The race for Commissioner of Precinct 2 has five candidates including Bill McBride, Jim Jones, Eric Christian, John Michael Hill and Pat O'Donnell. Current Commissioner for Precinct 2, Mike Willis, chose not to run for re-election.

Lori Northcutt is running for re-election as Commissioner for Precinct 4 and will face two challengers for the position, Dustin Briggs and Dennis Wagner.

The election for Rains County Justice of the Peace has Tony Ingram and William Douglas seeking election to the seat.

Candidates that will be running unopposed for positions include incumbent Laura Pate for District Clerk of Rains County, incumbent Mandy Sawyer for Rains County Clerk, Maria Cook for Rains County Treasurer, Nicole York for Rains County Tax Accessor/Collector, Angela Breitreutz for Rains County Republican Chair and Johnnie Abernathy-Hobbs for Rains County Democratic Chair.

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

The Republican primary for the 32nd U.S. Congress-

sional District has Ryan Binkley, Paul Bondar, Aimee Carrasco, Darrell Day, Gordon Heslop, Monty Montanez, Abteen Vaziri and Jace Yarbrough vying for the seat. Democratic candidates are Anthony Bridges and Dan Barrios.

Republican candidates for U.S. Senator of Texas are incumbent John Cornyn, Anna Bender, Gulrez Khan, John O. Adefope, Ken Paxton, Sara Canady, Virgil Bierschwale and Wesley Hunt.

Ahmad Hassan, James Talarico and Jasmine Crockett are the candidates running in the Democratic Primary for U.S. Senate.

Incumbent Cole Hefner will seek re-election to Texas House District 5 with challengers in the Republican Primary from Dewey Collier. Hector Garza will run unopposed for the Democratic nomination to the seat.

In the Republican primary for Governor of Texas, Bob Achgill, Mark Goloby, Ronnie Tullos, Nathaniel Welch, Pete Chambers, Arturo Espinosa, Kenneth Hyde, Evelyn Brooks, Charles Andrew Crouch and Stephen Samuelson will look to unseat incumbent Greg Abbott.

The Democratic Primary will have Andrew White, Angela Villescáz, Bobby Cole, Carlton Hart, Chris Bell, Gina Hinojosa, Jose Navarro Balbuena, Patricia Abrego and Zach Vance running for the party's nomination for Governor.

The Republican primary ballot has 10 propositions, while the Democratic primary ballot has 13 propositions for their parties to vote on.

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Sheriff's Report

The Rains County Sheriff's Office took the following reports of activity during the week of February 2-8:

Arrests

2-8: Kedrick Shanard Mackey. Assault causing bodily injury to family member, \$50,000 bond.



MICHAEL HOPKINS
Rains County Sheriff

Calls

2-2: FM 515 Extra patrol; W Lennon Dr. Extra patrol; Hwy. 276 Vehicle in roadway; PR 7719 Suspicious activity; Point 3rd St. Medical assist; W North St. Neighbor dispute; Calhoun Cove City ordinance violation; CR 4254 Meet complainant; CR 1450 Repossession; N 1st St. Medical assist; CR 3319 Medical assist; CR 1324 Animal at large; FM 2324 Suspicious vehicle; Pecan Dr. Open door; CR 4480 Public service; North Texas St. Medical assist; Hwy. 69 Reckless driving; CR 4480 Follow up investigation; CR 3416 Agency assist; E Lennon Dr. Controlled

burn; Hwy. 19 Reckless driving; 2-3: N Texas St. Medical assist; CR 4330 Repossession; CR 3390 Medical assist; E Lennon Dr. Investigation; FM 3299 Fire alarm; PR 7702 Welfare concern; PR 7702 Death; PR 7722 Suspicious vehicle; N 1st Public assist; W North St. Meet complainant; South Dunbar Ln. Medical assist; CR 1324 Follow up investigation; Hwy. 19 Medical assist; Hwy. 276 Controlled burn; S 1st St. Medical assist; S First St. Medical assist; W Hwy. 69 Fire-grass; E Lennon Dr. Follow up investigation; W North St. Follow up investigation; FM 2946 Aggressive animal; Lake Shore Ln. Welfare concern; 2nd/Ave B Livestock on roadway; CR 2181 Animal welfare concern; Hwy. 69 Arrest; Hwy. 515 Reckless driving; Hwy. 19 at CR 1156 Debris in roadway; CR 1320 Medical assist; S Texas St. Criminal trespass; 2-4: CR 4254 Fire - structure; Fletcher St. Medical assist; Hwy. 69/School Assist motorist; W North St. Public service; S Hwy. 69 Abandoned vehicle; Hwy. 276 Livestock on roadway;

E Lennon Dr. Public assist; W Quitman St. Pedestrian stop; CR 1490 Controlled burn; W North St. Follow up investigation; CR 1605 Medical assist; E Lennon Dr. Follow up investigation; E Lennon Dr. Medical assist; Hwy. 276 at FM 2737 Abandoned vehicle; W North St. Meet complainant; W North St. Meet complainant; W FM 2795 Medical assist; E Lennon Dr. Accident; CR 3200 Public service; Clark Dr. Problems with a juvenile; E Lennon Dr. Disturbance; Hwy. 19 Arrest warrant; Briggs Blvd. Problems with a juvenile; S Dunbar Ln. Medical assist; CR 1640 Welfare concern; W Quitman St. Suspicious person; 2-5: Hwy. 69 Livestock on roadway; CR 3390 Medical assist; Ravine St. Livestock on roadway; CR 1495 Controlled burn; Clark Dr. Paper service; CR 1307 Public service; Hwy. 69 Welfare concern; W Quitman St. Follow up investigation; FM 275 Medical assist; FM 275 Livestock on roadway; FM 47 Welfare concern; Wills Point Public assist; Egret Cir Welfare concern; Hwy. 69 Aban-

doned vehicle; W North St. Meet complainant; Hwy. 69 Reckless driving; W Lennon Dr. Accident; E Lennon Dr. Accident; CR 4455 Animal bite; Hwy. 19 Reckless driving; Hwy. 276 Suspicious person; Hwy. 69/FM 799 Accident hit & run; PR 5450 Medical assist; Clark Dr. Follow up investigation; CR 3380/FM 515 Reckless driving; 2-6: White Rock Rd. Fire alarm; Oak Ln. Medical assist; E Lennon Dr. Found property; CR 4265 Medical assist; W North St. Public service; CR 3160 Controlled burn; CR 3412 Medical assist; CR 3380 Meet complainant; Hwy. 19 Medical assist; N Locust St. Special assignment; CR 1308 Controlled burn; PR 7722 Abandoned vehicle; CR 3425 Accident; CR 1515 Agency assist; S Hwy. 69 Accident; CR 1490 Controlled burn; Hwy. 69 Controlled burn; RS County 3450/FM2946 Public service; W North St. Meet complainant; CR 1130 Fire-grass; E Lennon Dr. Accident; Briggs Blvd. Grass fire; CR 1307 Follow up investigation; PR 6247 Fire - brush; FM 2324 Welfare

concern; CR 2370 Controlled burn; FM 2324 Assist motorist; 2-7: Hwy. 276 Livestock on roadway; Hwy. 276 Deadly conduct; E Lennon Dr. Accident; CR1460 Controlled burn; Hwy. 276 Public assist; S Hwy. 19 Fire-grass; FM 2324 Fire-grass; CR 4020 Reckless driving; E Lennon Dr. Welfare concern; E Lennon Dr. Fire - vehicle; CR 3450 Medical assist; CR 4480 Medical assist; South FM 779 Medical assist; N 1st St. Medical assist. 2-8: FM 47 Accident; FM 47 Noise complaint; Smith Cir. Burglary in progress; PR 7702 Medical assist; Hwy. 19 Medical; FM 2946 Controlled burn; Hwy. 276 Reckless driver; CR 3130 Suspicious activity; CR 1330 Noise complaint; CR 3333 Suspicious activity; W Hwy. 69 Medical assist; Egret Cir. Medical assist; FM 275 Livestock on roadway; CR 1320 Medical assist; W Lennon Dr. Disturbance; CR 1402 Domestic disturbance; CR 1411 Medical assist; Hwy. 69 Reckless driving.

reported 375 calls for the week. Among the calls were: 1 burglary in progress, 1 city ordinance violation, 1 paper service, 1 criminal trespass, 1 deadly conduct, 1 debris in roadway, 2 disturbances, 1 domestic disturbance, 1 fire - brush, 1 fire - vehicle, 2 fire alarms, 10 follow up investigations, 1 found property, 1 fire - structure, 1 investigation, 7 livestock on roadway, 7 meet complainant, 1 neighbor dispute, 2 noise complaints, 1 open door, 6 fire-grass, 2 problems with a juvenile, 15 public service, 11 reckless driving, 2 repossession, 1 special assignment, 3 suspicious activities, 2 suspicious persons, 2 suspicious vehicles, 1 vehicle in roadway, 8 welfare concerns, 8 accidents, 11 controlled burns, 1 death, 1 aggressive animal, 4 public assists, 1 arrest, 2 pedestrian stops, 4 abandoned vehicles, 1 accident hit & run, 3 agency assists, 1 animal at large, 1 animal bite, and 2 animal welfare concerns, 2 assist motorist. There were 33 medical calls and 19 transports; 177 traffic stops, 41 citations and 122 warnings.

The Sheriff's Department

TEXAS A&M FOREST SERVICE

Texas A&M Forest Service increases funding to combat oak wilt spread

Cost-share opportunities offer Texas landowners critical resources to mitigate destructive disease

As Texas enters the most critical window for oak wilt transmission, Texas A&M Forest Service will offer funding to assist private landowners in combating the spread of the devastating fungal disease that attacks trees. The agency is increasing its Texas Oak Wilt Cost Share program to provide more financial and technical assistance for oak wilt suppression, including trenching and removals, just as the

high-risk spring season begins. Oak wilt is one of the most destructive tree diseases in the U.S., killing millions of trees across Central Texas. Springtime represents the period of highest risk, as sap-feeding beetles that spread the fungal spores are most active, and fungal mats full of spores are more likely to occur. Funding helps reduce spread, save trees The allocated cost-share funds are designed to empower landowners to take proactive measures before the disease can further devastate local canopies and diminish property values. "The health of our oak trees is a vital component of the Central Texas landscape

and economy," said Demian Gomez, Texas A&M Forest Service regional forest health coordinator. "With the support of the Texas Oak Wilt Cost Share program, we are able to provide assistance to the private landowners who steward 95% of our state's forests. This funding allows us to move from reactive management to a more proactive stance against the spread of oak wilt." Funding can be used to offset the costs of physical containment of the disease center. This can include the installation of trenches to break root-to-root transmission - up to \$5,000, rogueing or pushing diseased trees within the boundaries of the trench, and/or the removal of infected red oaks to avoid the formation of fungal mats

- up to \$2,000. "For landowners in the Hill Country and across Central Texas, these trees aren't just scenery; they are a multi-generational investment and a significant factor in our property's value," said Gomez. "Access to state funding and expert guidance helps landowners take the necessary steps to significantly slow the destructive spread of oak wilt and save trees." Landowners are reminded that from Feb. 1 through June 30, it is critical to avoid pruning oak trees to prevent attracting the beetles that spread the disease. If pruning is necessary, all wounds should be painted immediately. Accessing funds For more information on oak wilt and how to apply for

cost-share funding, visit the website. To qualify for cost-share assistance, landowners must work with Texas A&M Forest Service personnel to verify the presence of the disease and develop a specialized management plan. Applications for cost-shares must be approved before cost-shareable treatment can begin. Texas A&M Forest Service has regional offices throughout Central Texas with staff available to provide technical assistance to landowners concerned about oak wilt on their property. For more information, use the Find My Forester tool to identify and contact the Texas A&M Forest Service representative serving your county.



Oak wilt fungal mats are spore-producing structures that form under the bark of recently dead oak trees, creating a moist, fruity-smelling environment that attracts sap-feeding beetles, which carry the spores to fresh wounds on healthy oaks and spread the deadly disease. (Texas A&M Forest Service)

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

Advertising Works 903-473-2653

VOTE

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RAINS COUNTY JUSTICE OF THE PEACE

ABOUT TONY INGRAM <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Honesty• Integrity• Retired Law Enforcement (30 years)• Retired US Air Force Reserve• Professionalism• Experience that Matters	MARCH 3 PRIMARY <p>7:00 AM - 7:00 PM</p> EARLY VOTING <p>February 17 - February 27 Rains County Courthouse Annex</p>
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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

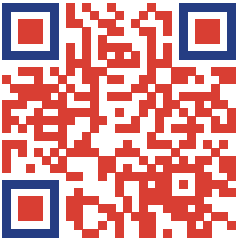
★ ★ ★ ★ ★

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

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ REPUBLICAN ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

FOR RAINS COUNTY JUDGE

KEEP THE FRESH START GOING



903-913-6003 | ElectBrentHilliard.com

SAVVY SENIORS

Tools to Help You Find the Perfect Place to Retire



JIM MILLER
Savvy Senior

Dear Savvy Senior,
What resources can you recommend for researching good places to retire in the U.S.? My husband and I are interested in relocating to a warmer climate when we retire next year.

is the best place for me to live?” quiz, which may suggest some locations you may never have thought of.

There are also news and financial publications like U.S. News & World Report, Forbes, WalletHub, Bankrate and The Motley Fool that publish “best places to retire” ranking lists on their websites each year. These can give you an idea of popular retirement locations based on different sets of criteria.

Once you identify a few good spots, here are some additional resources that can help you dig a little deeper.

Cost of living: Affordability is often the No. 1 factor when deciding where to relocate. To research and compare the cost of living from your current location to where you would like to move, use the previously mentioned *BestPlaces.net*, the Economic Policy Institute Family Budget Calculator at *EPI.org/resources/budget* and/or Bankrate’s cost of living calculator at *Bankrate.com/real-estate/cost-of-living-calculator*. And, because housing is a big expense, you can take a deeper dive into these costs at *Zillow.com* and *Realtor.com*.

Taxes: Some states are more tax friendly than others. To investigate how states treat retirees when it comes to income, sales, property and other taxes, see Kiplinger tax guide at *Kiplinger.com* – search “Taxes on Retirees: A State-by-State Guide.”

Crime rate: To evaluate how safe a community or area is, the FBI Crime Data Explorer (*cde.ucr.cjis.gov*) allows you to explore crime statistics at the national, state, and local levels.

Climate: You can find U.S. climate/weather information at National Centers for Environmental Information at *NCEI.noaa.gov*. And to research climate change factors and the risks of extreme temperatures, wildfires, floods, hurricanes, severe storms, earthquakes and drought in different locations, use *ClimateCheck.com* and FEMA (*Hazards.fema.gov/nri/map*).

Health care: If you’re enrolled or planning to enroll in original Medicare, check the coverage and availability of providers in your new location. Search by ZIP code for health care providers and facilities at *Medicare.gov/care-compare*, and check star ratings for quality of care. If you’re enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan and you move out of the coverage area, you’ll need to find a new plan in your new area.

Transportation: If you plan to travel much, or expect frequent visits from your kids or grandkids, convenient access to an airport or train station is a big advantage.

Once you have narrowed down your choices, spend a couple weeks in each location at different times of the year so you can get a feel for the seasonal weather changes, and so you can carefully weigh the pros and cons of living there. You may find that you like the area more as a vacation spot than as a year-round residence. It’s also a good idea to rent for a year before buying a home or making a commitment to a retirement community.

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.

Looking to Relocate

Dear Looking,

It’s exciting to think about relocating in retirement! Whether you’re considering seasonal escapes or a permanent change, there are a wide variety of digital resources that can help you find and research new locations. Here are some tips and tools to help you get started.

Where to Retire?

Deciding where to relocate when you retire is a big decision. There are many factors to think about to ensure the move supports your lifestyle, financial goals, and overall well-being. To help you identify some good retirement locations you need to consider things like cost of living, climate, taxes, health care, housing, crime, access to social and recreational activities, access to transportation and proximity to family and friends.

If you’re at the beginning of your search, a good starting point is *BestPlaces.net*. This site compiles demographic data from numerous reliable sources, updates it regularly and lets you easily compare cities using different criteria, such as housing cost, climate, crime, religious practice, voting patterns and education level. They even offer a 10-question “Where

BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU

Before Storm Season: How to Avoid Fraudulent Contractors

Season

BBB recommends the following steps to help homeowners avoid fraudulent contractors:

Understand Your Insurance Coverage. Review your policy now so you know what is covered and what documentation is required. If temporary repairs are necessary after a storm, save all receipts and photos.

Don’t Let Urgency Drive Decisions. Storm damage can be overwhelming, but don’t let fear or frustration rush you into a long-term commitment. Be proactive in choosing a contractor rather than reacting to unsolicited offers.

Shop Around. Get at least three written estimates based on the same materials and scope of work. Check references which are at least one year old and verify licensing and insurance with local authorities when applicable.

Be Wary of Door-to-Door Sales

Contractors who claim to have “leftover materials from a nearby job” or who cannot provide a local business address should raise concerns. Check whether your community requires solicitation permits.

Always Use a Written Contract

Storm season is right around the corner, and East Texans know all too well how quickly severe weather can strike. In 2025, our region experienced multiple rounds of strong storms, including confirmed tornadoes, damaging winds, and widespread hail which left homes, businesses, and vehicles damaged across several counties. These events were a reminder that preparing before storms hit is just as important as knowing what to do after.

Taking a few proactive steps now can help protect you from becoming a victim later.

Know the Red Flags Before You Need Repairs

After major storms, so-called “storm chasers” often travel from area to area, knocking on doors and offering quick, low-cost repairs. While many contractors are reputable, consumers should be cautious of anyone who:

- Shows up unannounced after a storm
- Pressures you to sign a contract immediately
- Requests large upfront payments or cash only
- Claims they can waive your insurance deductible
- Lacks a permanent local address or proper credentials

How to Protect Yourself Before Storm

Never agree to work without a written contract. It should include the contractor’s name, address, phone number, license number if required, scope of work, materials, timeline, and total cost. Never sign a blank or incomplete contract, and keep a copy for your records.

If It Sounds Too Good to Be True, It Probably Is

Unusually low estimates can be a warning sign. Some fly-by-night contractors submit low bids, then cut corners, add hidden fees, or disappear altogether once payment is made.

Avoid Paying in Full Up Front

BBB recommends never paying the full amount before work begins. A good rule of thumb is the “rule of thirds”:

- One-third as a deposit
- One-third when the job is halfway complete
- Final payment only after the work is finished to your satisfaction

Hire Local Whenever Possible


Local businesses are more likely to stand behind their work and return if issues arise. Out-of-area contractors may be difficult to locate once they leave town.

Don’t drive under the influence of your phone.

TALK / TEXT CRASH



I am asking for you to VOTE for me



Growing up in this modest home at 3720 Holley in Odessa, Texas, wasn’t always easy. I walked or rode my bike to school. My father served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War, and afterward, he was a mechanic for Sewell Ford while my mom worked as a bookkeeper at a bank when I was born. My grandparents took my mom and me to Oklahoma when I was just 6 weeks old, where my dad was stationed on an Army base. My mom worked various other jobs during my childhood. We weren’t wealthy. My parents divorced when I was 10, and times got tough—as a single mother, it was a real struggle for my mom to pay the bills and feed us. Those hard days stuck with me.

I’ve worked since I was 8 years old—helping my uncle deliver potato chips to grocery stores, cleaning buildings with another uncle, and working on a farm (not a family one) in the summers, moving irrigation pipe that fed water from ditches to rows of cotton in the Pecos Valley.

Then, after Stacy and I married, oil prices crashed to almost \$8 a barrel. We had our gas shut off, power disconnected, and nearly lost our house. We had no television, so we played board games. We were thankful when our parents brought us food for the week. These were VERY hard times for us. Our marriage survived, and we did too.

I’ve lived through booms and busts, and I know how to navigate them to come out stronger. No one should face those struggles alone. I call them my Character Building Years!

I’ve worked ALL my life. My work ethic hasn’t changed—I still work hard. It’s just who I am. And I’ve been working hard for you too! I love solving problems, building teams, and seeing those teams execute at a high level.

Everything that I am and all that I have is ONLY by the grace of God. God has had His hand on my life since the day I was born. I remember praying for God to convince Stacy to marry me, and I thank God every day for His gift. He has blessed us with a wonderful, loving family. My success is my family, not financial wealth. I’ve never focused on money. Every last thing in my life comes from God and belongs to God. I’m only a steward of the blessings God has bestowed on my life, and I fully understand they are solely a gift from God.

That’s why, as your Rains County Judge since July 2025, I’m committed to keeping taxes affordable, managing growth wisely to stay rural, and ensuring transparent government that supports families. I’ve been there, and I truly understand when folks share their hardships. Let’s Keep The Fresh Start Going so Rains is a place where we lift each other up!

Together, we can do it!
I am humbly asking for your vote.
Thank you, Brent D. Hilliard

★★★★★ REPUBLICAN ★★★★★

BRENT HILLIARD

FOR RAINS COUNTY JUDGE

KEEP THE FRESH START GOING

#KEEPTHEFRESHSTARTGOING #RAINSCOUNTYSTRONG

Alzheimer Support

I have had the opportunity to meet with many great people while doing my work @YCB each morning from 6am until about 8:30 am all made possible by saying 6 words

“Good morning it’s good to see you “

It is amazing what a difference a few kind words can make in a positive and meaningful way for the people I am grateful to call friends.

We all face challenges daily yet here we are walking on our journey together in our efforts to help a loved one remember how valuable they are in our lives.

God already knows how difficult and seemingly impossible the days work will be never knowing how to do things for our loved ones as they continue their journey with Alzheimer’s disease or early onset dementia.

A caregiver has taken on this role in a 24/7 responsibility to ensure that their loved ones receive the best care possible for as long as their journey lasts.

For the fortunate ones it can be 6 months to a year before their loved one’s passing comes due to other factors such as heart disease, COPD, high blood pressure or diabetes complications which can lead to other conditions.

Many people who suffer from dementia or Alzheimer’s disease may experience a very long term journey with these debilitating conditions meaning long term care is required most of us don’t have the skills to provide.

Medical professionals are often referred to assume the critical care needs our loved ones deserve to receive for as long as they require.

Alzheimer’s and dementia patients may live with their condition for many years further increasing their families support needs.

This is why I believe creating a Rains County Alzheimer’s support group can provide some answers on how to deal effectively with their 24/7 caregivers role.

If you feel that this is something our community can benefit from, I am willing to help bring valuable resources together while providing emotional and spiritual support.

My email address is marvinhenson1960@icloud.com

If text messaging works better for you please contact me at 903-348-4399

Marvin Henson Point, Texas

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

Believers' Baptist Church

By Linda Brendle
You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect. Luke 12:40
“The Incomparable Christ: Ready or Not?” was the title of Sunday morning’s sermon from Luke. After telling his followers not to be anxious for anything, Jesus told them to be dressed for action because, ready or not, He is coming back. He told three parables that illustrated what He was saying. Jesus gave his disciples one more reason for keeping a loose grip on possessions and priorities of this world – He is coming back, and it may be at any time!
Coming Events:
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
Every Sunday until Easter, 4:00 p.m., Easter Choir rehearsal
Every Sunday in March, 9:30 a.m. – Prospective Members’ Class
The Asking for a Friend Podcast Episode #239 is titled “Book Club #6, Spurgeon the Pastor (Cpt 5).” Find the link at www.bbcmory.org.

Emory Methodist Church

By Mary White
Jesus answered them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” Luke 5:32
Rev. David Banks continued his series “The Word Goes Forth” with a message titled “The Word Welcomes” with scripture text taken from Luke. The Pharisees complained to Jesus’ disciples about Him eating with tax collectors and sinners. Jesus welcomes the unrighteous and touched those that the law forbid touching. The Word went forth with arms wide open. Lord teach us to welcome as we have been welcomed, for You are the Word who welcomes all.
Our Communion offering for this month is the Rains County Good Samaritans. We all know what a great ministry this is.
We will have our Ash Wednesday Service February 18. at 6:00 p.m. and Rev. Banks will also be out in front of church to apply ashes if you wish. EMW will be having a fund raiser on Friday, February 20, to be used for Student Back to School supplies. We will have a soup/stew luncheon from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The ticket will be \$10.00 or you can pay at the door. Come join us for a great lunch.
Birthday wishes go to Dee Woods, Billy Morris and David Britt. Anniversary wishes go to Stan and Margaret McNear and Roy and Doris Bryant.
Pray for Windell House, Mary Cash and the Youth Group Mission Trip.
Have a great week and be kind.

FISHING REPORT

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department released the following information for Lake Fork and Lake Tawakoni taken on February 4:
Fork: Slow. Normal stain; 43 degrees; 3.05 feet below pool. Water temperatures are 39-43 degrees.
Bass have been slow due to weather conditions. Bass can be caught slowly working Texas rigs and jigs on boat houses with brush. Square bill crankbaits and lipless crankbaits are fair in the flats around drains or ditches 5-8 feet. Report by Marc Mitchell, Mitchell’s Guide Service.
Lake Fork crappie fishing has survived the arctic blast of 2026 without it affecting the bite like it did in 2021 and 2025. Fish are still stacked up on deep timber along the main lake creek channels like they have been all winter. Look for fish in the 35-60 feet depth range with fish around 15-30 feet down. We still have some fish on other patterns like bridges, brush piles, tire reefs, points and ledges. These are more hit or miss and may be smaller fish. Small hand tied jigs and minnows are working well and I’m sure soft plastics will produce fish also. The most important thing I’ve seen after the last huge cold front is to fish slowly. Try to keep your baits in the strike zone just above fish as long as possible and as still as possible. Low wind days may be the best days for catching fish until the water temperature begins rising up and the bite changes. Not all fish will bite and you may see fifty percent of the fish bite well and the other half just do not respond to baits. Do not spend tons of time on non responsive fish. Move on to fish that want to bite and you’ll end up filling the cooler up. Report by Jacky Wiggins, Jacky Wiggins Guide Service.
Tawakoni: Good. Water lightly stained; 46 degrees; 1.95 feet below pool.
Lake Tawakoni is still fishing well despite falling water temperatures after the winter weather. Water temps are 46 degrees on the main lake and much colder in the shallow areas. The white bass and hybrid-striper are still feeding. The best bite was with soft plastics in 20-25 feet on the main lake. Eating sized blue catfish are good in 40-50 feet on small cut shad and punch bait. Bigger fish are being caught compared to last week. The trophy catfish are good as fish feed up due to the falling temperatures. Quality fish up to 40 pounds are on main lake points and mid depths in 30-45 feet of water. The crappie are still fair on bridge columns and deep timber with jigs in 20-28 feet. The largemouth bass bite has slowed down with the cold shallow water temperature. Try rip rap with larger plastics in 8-12 feet. Report by Captain Michael Littlejohn, Lake Tawakoni Guide Service.

The Way of Love

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.
I Corinthians 13:1-3 (ESV)

Obituaries

Jan Jones Feil
1943 – 2026



A memorial service for Jan Jones Feil, 83, was held on February 7, at Lake Fork Baptist Church, Alba, with Bro. Barry McClure officiating, under the direction of the church and family. Mrs. Feil died on February 5, 2026, at her home in Alba. She was born on January 14, 1943, in Tyler, to John Paul and Rosa Lee Hurt Jones. On June 16, 1978, she married Jon Feil in Mineola. She lived most of her life in the Alba area and was a member of Lake Fork Baptist Church. She loved “junkin”, spending time with her family, and game nights at the church. She enjoyed music and all the folks in her Sunday School Class. Mrs. Feil is survived by her husband of 47 years, Jon Feil, of Alba; three sons, James Bowdoin and wife Angie of Alba, John Bowdoin and wife Tami of Florida, and Lance Feil of Lindale; two daughters, Lee Ann Cockrum and husband Billy of Golden and Dana Feil of Lindale; 18 grandchildren; 37 great-grandchildren with one more on the way; and numerous other relatives and friends. She was preceded in death by her parents; and great-grandson, Theo Bowdoin. Memorials may be made to Morgan’s Mercy Mansion thru Cottonwood Church, P.O. Box 38, Golden, Texas 75444.

Jerry Wharton “Doc” Rodgers
1943 – 2026



A memorial service for Dr. Jerry Wharton “Doc” Rodgers, 82, was held on February 9, at Lake Fork Baptist Church in Alba. Mr. Rodgers, affectionately known as Pop J, died from natural causes on February 3, 2026. He was born on April 24, 1943, in Corpus Christi, to George and Winona Rodgers. After graduating as valedictorian from Roy Miller High School in Corpus Christi, he attended the University of Texas at Austin before earning his medical degree from the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School in Dallas. He served his country as a Captain in the U.S. Army Medical Corps during the Vietnam era, where he practiced medicine in a bunker, caring for wounded soldiers as well as civilians and children. It was work that required courage, steadiness, and compassion-qualities that defined him throughout his life. For more than 50 years, he practiced family medicine, a calling he chose intentionally because it allowed him to care for entire families and walk alongside people through every stage of life. Medicine was both his profession and his passion, sustained by a lifelong devotion to learning, teaching, and serving his patients and community. He was a long-time member of Lake Fork Baptist Church, where his faith was an important and steady part of his life. He never met a stranger, and children were instinctively drawn to him. Regularly, he could be found leading a sing-along, creating and directing talent shows, enjoying his favorite tech and lake toys, teaching swimming, coaching youth soccer, and beating everyone who challenged him in ping pong. He worked hard, lived fully, and had a rare ability to make people feel better simply through his presence. Mr. Rodgers is survived by his wife, Marcy Rodgers; children, Ryan Rodgers and wife Tish, and Raegan Saylor; stepdaughters, Mendi Garrett and Melani Windham and husband Joey; grandchildren, Kayden Rodgers and fiancé Maguire Lind, Zach Rodgers, Avery and Anthony Arrington, Hailey, Madelyn, and Parker Saylor, Collin Garrett and wife Jessica, Colten Garrett and wife Aleigh, Devin Windham and fiancé Kevin Pollinzi, Braeden Windham and wife Hannah, and Eric Windham; great-grandchildren, Leah Valdez, Jett and Lauren Renger, Minnie and Marlie Garrett, Samuel Garrett, and soon-to-be Tobias Garrett; and the extended family of his late wife, Linda Rodgers. Donations can be made in memorium to the Children’s Ministry at Lake Fork Baptist Church in Alba.

Eddy Ray Turner
1957 – 2026



A private memorial service for Eddy Ray Turner, 69, will be held at a later date. Mr. Turner died on January 21, 2026. He was born on January 8, 1957, to Douglas Ray and Marena Joyce Turner. He attended Rains High School before joining the US army. He loved the outdoors and to fish and grill. His smile was contagious and he loved life and his family. He was a member of Chapel Hill Baptist Church. Mr. Turner is survived by his wife, Trena of Massillon, Ohio; children, Mandy Donnelly and husband Terrance of Washington, Pennsylvania., Kimber Skaggs and husband Brad of Blain, Kentucky, Douglas Turner of Emory, Kari Hill and husband Steven of Emory, Stephanie Kennedy of Oklahoma, Michael Williams of Ft. Myers, Florida, and Justin Shaffer and wife Sandra of Massillon Ohio; sister, Kathy Ainsworth and husband Robert; and numerous grandchildren, nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents; son, Kaden Turner; brother, James Turner; sister, Charlotte Haren; and niece, Clisha Hendry.

VISIT US ONLINE AT:

WWW.RAINSCOUNTYLEADER.COM

Church Directory

Calvary Baptist Church
INDEPENDENT FUNDAMENTAL BAPTIST
11:00 a.m. Worship
6:00 p.m. Worship
Pastor: Jimmy Jarrett
Hwys 515 & 779
2-1/2 Miles East of Emory
903-269-8737

Daugherty Baptist Church
2 miles west of Hwy 19N on FM 514
Sunday School 10:00 a.m.
Morning Worship ... 11:00 a.m.
Evening Worship 6:00 p.m.
Pastor Joe Pierce
903-259-1147 & 903-259-0348

EMORY METHODIST CHURCH
We All Matter To God
Dr. David Banks
456 Texas St.
One Block from the Square
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Worship Time 10:30 a.m.
903-473-2411 • EmoryMC.org

MIRACLE FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH (Independent)
820 SH 276 • Emory
Sunday School 9:00 a.m.
Worship Service 10:00 a.m.
Wed. Night Youth 5:30 p.m.
Wed. Night Service 6:30 p.m.
Pastor: Robert Burns II
Church: 903-473-3238

Pilgrims Rest Baptist Church
1140 FM 2964, Emory
Sunday School.....9:45 a.m.
Morning Worship..11:00 a.m.
Evening Worship.....6:00 p.m.
“Reaching Out Because We Care”
Pastor Keith Prather
www.pilgrimsrestbaptistchurch.org

Point Church of Christ
Bible Classes 9:00 a.m.
Worship Service 10:00 a.m.
Evening Worship 6:00 p.m.
Wed. Eve. Service 7:00 p.m.
Everyone welcome!
Richard Kellam
www.pointchurchofchrist.org

EMORY BAPTIST CHURCH
On The Square
Corner Of North & Planters
Downtown Emory
903-473-3357
emorybaptist.org
Dr. Richard D. Piles—Pastor
Chris Henderson—Minister of Music & Sr. Adults
Ronnie Witt— Minister of Youth & Education
Sunday
Sunday Morning
Small Groups 9:15am
Morning Worship 10:30am
Evening Worship 6:30 pm
Wednesday
Wed. Worship 6:30pm (Adults, Youth, Children)
Choir Practice 6:30pm

Believers' Baptist Church
Sunday
Sunday School 9:15 a.m.
MorningWorship 10:30 a.m.
Wednesday
Adult Bible Study 6:30 p.m.
Student Ministry 6:30 p.m.
Dr. Jason Rolan — Pastor
Jerod Haygood — Student & Family Pastor
Duffey Henderson — Music & Media Minister
www.bbcmory.org 903-474-0027
903-473-2653 to have your church placed in this directory

Pastor Rudy and CJ Bond
Come worship with us
Sundays - 10:45 am
Wednesdays - 7:00 pm
Clarks Chapel Church of God
Our Mission and Vision is to help connect people to Jesus
6345 FM-47 Point TX
http://clarkschapelcog.org/
http://www.facebook.com/clarkschapelcogemorytx

Classified Ads

We Accept

903-473-2653

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 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 bathhouses and docks since 2001. Steel/metal bldgs., & home remodeling. www.mckenzielakeworks.com. 903-269-6173.

Toby Boatman

GARAGE DOORS

Residential Commercial

Sales • Service Installation

903-348-6170

903-438-1970

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION

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

CONSTRUCTION
HOOTEN'S HARDWARE, LLC
Has all your welding, welding repair and lumber needs available on site. Hwy. 69N in Emory. 903-473-8788.

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

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.

LAWN/LANDSCAPE/MOWING
Get your fence rows spring ready now. The roots of vegetation are more accessible for removal limiting future regrowth with minimal impact on wildlife habitat. Affordable pricing, Marvin 903-348-4399, text please.

TREE SERVICES
LEGACY TREE SERVICE. www.TheWilsonLegacy.com 903-455-1587. Insured, credit cards, appointments. We specialize in high risk removals. Trimming, Removals, Stumps.

HOOTEN'S LAWN & TREE SERVICE, LLC. Tree trimming/removal. Credit cards, insured. LI0019094. 903-473-8706, 903-474-4402.

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

ADVERTISE Here

PUBLIC/LEGAL NOTICE

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

NOTICE OF
PUBLIC HEARING
RAINS I.S.D. WILL HOLD ITS ANNUAL PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE DISCUSSION OF THE ANNUAL TEXAS ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE REPORT. THE HEARING WILL BE HELD MONDAY, MARCH 2, 2026 AT 6:30 P.M. IN THE RAINS SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION BUILDING AT THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED BOARD MEETING. THE PUBLIC IS INVITED TO ATTEND.

UNKNOWN HEIRS AND KNOWN HEIRS WHOSE ADDRESSES CANNOT BE ASCERTAINED
CITATION BY PUBLICATION
TO THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF STEPHENS, TIMOTHY DON, DECEASED – GREETINGS:
YOU ARE HEREBY COMMANDED TO APPEAR BEFORE THE COUNTY COURT OF RAINS COUNTY, TEXAS AT THE RAINS COUNTY COURTHOUSE ANNEX LOCATED AT **220 W. QUITMAN ST., EMORY, TEXAS 75440.** BY FILING A WRITTEN CONTEST OR ANSWER TO THE APPLICATION FOR LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION AND FOR DETERMINATION OF HEIRSHIP FILED BY **BONNIE RUTH STEPHENS, ON 02/03/2026 IN CAUSE 3391** IN THE COUNTY COURT OF RAINS COUNTY, TEXAS AND BEING STYLED: **IN THE ESTATE OF TIMOTHY DON STEPHENS, DECEASED** ON OR BEFORE THE MONDAY NEXT FOLLOWING THE EXPIRATION OF 10 DAYS FROM THE DATE THIS CITATION WAS PUBLISHED. BY THE APPLICATION FOR LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION AND FOR DETERMINATION OF HEIRSHIP, APPLICANT SEEKS THE COURT TO DETERMINE AND DECLARE THE HEIRS OF **TIMOTHY DON STEPHENS, DECEASED** AND THEIR INTERESTS IN SAID ESTATE. ISSUED AND GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL OF SAID COURT AT OFFICE IN EMORY, TEXAS, THIS February 9, 2026.
Mandy Sawyer, County Clerk
Rains County, Texas
By: Molly Lennon

THE STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTY OF RAINS
CITATION BY PUBLICATION
TO: UNKNOWN OWNERS OR CLAIMANTS OF THE SUBJECT REAL PROPERTY; RESPONDENT, GREETINGS:
NOTICE TO DEFENDANT: YOU HAVE BEEN SUED. YOU MAY EMPLOY AN ATTORNEY. IF YOU OR YOUR ATTORNEY DO (DOES) NOT FILE A WRITTEN ANSWER WITH THE CLERK WHO ISSUED THIS CITATION BY 10:00 AM ON THE MONDAY NEXT FOLLOWING THE EXPIRATION OF FORTY-TWO (42) DAYS FROM AND AFTER THE DATE OF ISSUANCE HEREOF, THE SAME BEING THE 3RD DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2026, (WHICH IS THE RETURN DAY OF SUCH CITATION) A DEFAULT JUDGMENT MAY BE TAKEN AGAINST YOU.
The PLAINTIFF'S ORIGINAL PETITION file by **BILLY MIKE COOKE**, was filed in the 354TH DISTRICT COURT of Rains County, Texas on the 3rd day of February, 2026, styled,
CAUSE NO. 12116
BILLY MIKE COOKE
-VS-
UNKNOWN OWNERS OR CLAIMANTS OF THE SUBJECT REAL PROPERTY
The **real property** made the basis of this suit is described as follows: **80 ACRES, WILLIAM GARRETT SURVEY A-103; 1.1 ACRES WILLIAM GARRETT SURVEY.**
Plaintiff requests "TO ESTABLISH TITLE BY LIMITATIONS OF THE SUBJECT REAL PROPERTY, IN FEE SIMPLE ABSOLUTE, INCLUDING ALL OIL, GAS, AND OTHER MINERAL INTEREST IN AND UNDER AND THAT MAY BE PRODUCED FROM THE SUBJECT REAL PROPERTY." as is more fully shown by Plaintiff's Petition on file in this suit.
The Court has authority in this suit to enter an order that will be binding on you.
ISSUED AND GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND THE SEAL OF SAID COURT, at office, this **3rd day of February, 2026.**
LAURA PATE, DISTRICT CLERK
RAINS COUNTY, TEXAS
By: **LAURA PATE, DISTRICT CLERK**

THE STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTY OF RAINS
CITATION BY PUBLICATION
TO: UNKNOWN HEIRS OF C.A. DUCK DECEASED, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF W.P. MCLEAN DECEASED, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF J.E. TURNS DECEASED, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF I.S. COLES DECEASED, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF ROBERT TURNER DECEASED, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF LELA TURNER DECEASED, UNKNOWN OF HEIRS H.R. MONTGOMERY DECEASED AND UNKNOWN OWNERS OR CLAIMANTS OF THE SUBJECT REAL PROPERTY; RESPONDENT, GREETINGS:
NOTICE TO DEFENDANT: YOU HAVE BEEN SUED. YOU MAY EMPLOY AN ATTORNEY. IF YOU OR YOUR ATTORNEY DO (DOES) NOT FILE A WRITTEN ANSWER WITH THE CLERK WHO ISSUED THIS CITATION BY 10:00 AM ON THE MONDAY NEXT FOLLOWING THE EXPIRATION OF FORTY-TWO (42) DAYS FROM AND AFTER THE DATE OF ISSUANCE HEREOF, THE SAME BEING THE 4 CONSECUTIVE WEEKS, (WHICH IS THE RETURN DAY OF SUCH CITATION) A DEFAULT JUDGMENT MAY BE TAKEN AGAINST YOU. IN ADDITION TO FILING A WRITTEN ANSWER WITH THE CLERK, YOU MAY BE REQUIRED TO MAKE INITIAL DISCLOSURES TO THE OTHER PARTIES OF THIS SUIT. THESE DISCLOSURES GENERALLY MUST BE MADE NO LATER THAN THIRTY (30) DAYS AFTER YOU FILE YOUR ANSWER WITH THE CLERK. FIND OUT MORE AT TexasLawHelp.org.
The PLAINTIFF'S ORIGINAL PETITION file by **IDA LAVELLE MIDDLETON**, was filed in the 354TH DISTRICT COURT of Rains County, Texas on the 14th day of November, 2025, styled,
CAUSE NO. 12019
IDA LAVELLE MIDDLETON
-VS-
UNKNOWN HEIRS OF C.A. DUCK DECEASED, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF W.P. MCLEAN DECEASED, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF J.E. TURNS DECEASED, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF I.S. COLES DECEASED, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF ROBERT TURNER DECEASED, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF LELA TURNER DECEASED, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF H.R. MONTGOMERY DECEASED, AND UNKNOWN OWNERS OR CLAIMANTS OF THE SUBJECT REAL PROPERTY
The **real property** made the basis of this suit is described as follows: **76 ½ ACRES; JAMES MCMILLAN SURVEY.**
Plaintiff requests "TITLE TO THE SUBJECT REAL PROPERTY IN FEE SIMPLE ABSOLUTE, INCLUDING ALL OIL, GAS, AND OTHER MINERAL INTERESTS IN AND UNDER AND THAT MAY BE PRODUCED FROM THE SUBJECT REAL PROPERTY BY ADVERSE POSSESSION." as is more fully shown by Plaintiff's Petition on file in this suit.
The Court has authority in this suit to enter an order that will be binding on you.
ISSUED AND GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND THE SEAL OF SAID COURT, at office, this **20th day of January, 2026.**
LAURA PATE, DISTRICT CLERK
RAINS COUNTY, TEXAS
By: **MELISSA BUTLER, DEPUTY CLERK**

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Sports

RAINS LADY CAT & WILDCAT BASKETBALL

Ladies co-district champs, Wildcats push for playoffs



Leader photo by CHUCK FITTS

Lady Cat Kenzy Thompson (12) slips through the Lady Patriot defense for a layup during the 73-28 victory over Prairiland on Tuesday night, February 10, in Talkington Gym.

By CHUCK FITTS
Rains County Leader staff

The Rains Lady Cat varsity basketball team heads to the playoffs as co-district champions of District 12-3A, while the Rains Wildcats continue their push to the playoffs. The Rains basketball teams began their home stand with games against Mount Vernon on Friday, February 6. The Lady Cats kept the Lady Tigers scoreless in the first quarter and rolled to a 61-27 victory. The Wildcats built an early lead and held off a late come back by the Tigers to secure the win, 55-41.

On Tuesday, February 10, the varsity girls team celebrated Senior Night with a 73-28 victory over the Prairiland Lady Patriots. Making the night even more special, senior Kenzy Thompson crossed the 1,000 points milestone for her high school career. The Wildcat’s winning streak was halted by the Patriots on Tuesday night, 49-41. The Rains Lady Cats finish the season 11-1 in District 12-3A and 30-4 overall. They remain the ninth ranked team in Class 3A by the Texas Association of Basketball Coaches (TABC) and eighth ranked team by

the Texas Girls Coaches Association (TGCA). The Rains Wildcats surge to 4-6 in district and 11-17 for the season. The Lady Cats will open the Class 3A playoffs against the Pottsboro Lady Cardinals on Monday, February 16, in McKinney. The Wildcats will travel to Paris to take on the Chisum Mustangs on Friday, February 13. They will wrap up the regular season at home against the Lone Oak Bufaloes on Tuesday, February 17. As it is the last home game, Rains will recognize senior Wildcats before the tipoff.

LUKE CLAYTON

Making Plans

I honestly think the planning stage of an upcoming outdoor adventure is almost as much fun as the outing itself. A good case in point is a fishing trip I have planned later this week. When you have been as heavily involved in the outdoors for as long as

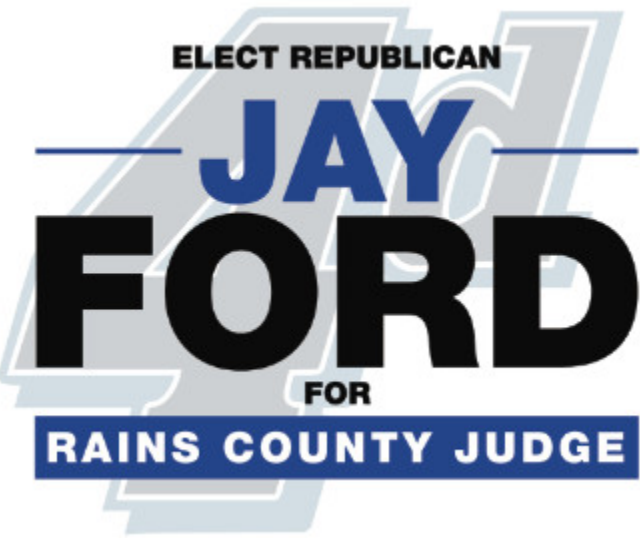


Luke Clayton
Outdoor Columnist

I have been, it’s only natural to make lots of friends that share the same interests. It seems the older I get the more I find myself reconnecting with friends that I once spent a lot of time with. One such friend is Donny Rice. Well over a decade ago, I fished and hunted with Donny and his brother Lawrance a great deal. Donny lives only a short drive from my home and owns a big lake that comprises several hundred acres connected to the Trinity River via a feeder creek. The bottomland is perfect habitat for the wild hogs that I love to hunt as well as some bruiser river bottom white-tail bucks. Through the years, when the river has gotten high, Donny’s big private lake is stocked with all sorts of fish, including blue and channel catfish. I used to fish the shallow water in the spring for the channel cats, concentrating on the edge of cattails, using a 12-foot crappie pole and vertical dunking treble hooks baited withcheese bait into little openings in the vegetation. I never caught anything big but loaded up on good eaters up to about 5 pounds. When targeting the larger blue catfish, I often set out ten or twelve jug lines baited with cut bait. I’ve enjoyed some great times watching my jug line sets while drift fishing with rod and reel. The trick is to set the jugs

out from the shoreline the direction the wind is coming from and then stay within sight as they drift several hundred yards across the lake. It’s exciting to watch the jugs begin bouncing around on the water’s surface when a big blue catfish is biting and then race across the water when he takes the bait. I’ve been rigging my jug line sets and have everything ready for a fun winter’s day of ‘jug fishing.’ Another great friend, Jeff Rice, who produces “A Sportsmans Life” our weekly TV show on Carbon TV and YouTube, will join us for the festivities. Donny has a big 21-foot boat he has rigged for fishing and I’m expecting us to have a big time and probably boat some good eating catfish and possibly a jumbo-size fish or two. I remember catching some blue catfish there years ago that weighed up to around thirty pounds. They ought to be fifty pounders now! I plan to bring some seasoned cornmeal, a cast iron skillet and cooking oil, everything necessary for a quick shoreline fish fry- might as well make a memorable outing out of our reunion! I’m eagerly awaiting the arrival of a new CVA short barrel Cascade in 308 caliber, which should be in later this week. For several years, I’ve been shooting the long barrel version of the Cascade in 6.5 PRC caliber and topped with a Stealth Vision scope, it shoots tight groups much farther than I would attempt to kill game. The shorter barrel version should be ideal for hunting hogs in the woods as well as hunting deer in more open country. I’ve never owned a 308 but I’m well aware of it’s effectiveness as an all-around big game caliber. The last time I actually shot this caliber was with a M14 back in the late sixties and I wasn’t hunting game animals.

My deer hunting is a wrap for this season with the possible exception of a late season hunt on a friend’s ranch in Kaufman County who still has several buck permits to fill. On many managed land ranches, we have until the end of the month to fill the permits. Next week, I have a hunt planned in Red River County just a few miles from where I was raised on Mr. Bart Payne’s Friendswood Ranch near Bogota. I know the area well and grew up hunting the hardwood and pine forests in the northern part of the county. The Friendswood is managed for trophy deer and like many areas, it has a wild hog population that needs to be thinned. This should be a great opportunity to get to know my new rifle and spend a couple days with a new friend. Hopefully some fresh pork chops from the wild will be icing on the cake! Creek fishing is the next big fishing event. I’ve had some excellent reports of crappie already moving up into the feeder creeks to spawn. Water temperature dictates when crappie move shallow and the recent warming trend has triggered the early stage of this annual push to the shallows. Catching can be fast and furious when big schools of crappie pack a creek and tactics are basic. I’ve had great luck through the years with a white or chartreuse/white jig set about a foot under a floater. I try to make long casts and fish parallel to the creek bank. A few cranks of the reel handle allowing the bait to pause, and sometimes a jiggle of the rod is all it takes to trigger a strike and other times a steady retrieve is best. Listen to Luke’s weekly podcast, Catfish Radio with Luke Clayton and friends just about everywhere podcasts are found.



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

Hi, I’m Jay Ford and I’m running for Rains County Judge

I grew up in a small, rural community in northwest Louisiana—not much different from Rains County. My family raised cattle and horses, worked hay fields, and lived the kind of life where you learn the value of hard work, honesty, and taking care of your neighbors. That’s a big part of why Rains County feels like home to me.

In 2018, my wife Deborah and I bought a small farm in Emory as a weekend retreat. Then COVID happened, and like many folks, our plans changed. Before long, we were spending most of our time here, and in early 2022 we bought the house and property next door, officially making Rains County our full-time home. We’re proud to be part of this community. Deborah and I have two sons and daughters-in-law, and five grandchildren—two of whom attend Rains ISD.

After high school, I graduated from Louisiana Tech University with a degree in Business Management, focusing on supply chain, business law, and statistics. I spent 18 years in leadership roles in telecommunications manufacturing, followed by more than 20 years in executive positions in logistics and warehousing. Most recently, I’ve served as a Senior Executive Advisor to the Postmaster General of the United States in Washington, DC. Through all of this, I’ve learned how to manage budgets, lead teams, solve problems, and make thoughtful, responsible decisions—skills that I believe are critical for running our county effectively.



What matters most to me, though, is integrity. I believe county leadership should be honest, transparent, and accountable to the people it serves. I know many residents feel like their voices haven’t always been heard. As county judge, I will work to change that by creating opportunities for open communication and making sure decisions are clear, well-explained, and made with the best interests of our citizens in mind.

I love this community and want to help prepare Rains County for a strong, successful future—while keeping the small-town values that make it special. I truly want to hear from you. Whether you’re part of a church group, a business, a civic organization, a neighborhood, or just an individual with something on your mind, I’d love to listen.