

# Rains County Leader

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EMORY, TEXAS - THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2026

PRICE 75¢

## RAINS COUNTY

### Commissioners set county boundaries, apply for grants

By **CHUCK FITTS**  
Rains County Leader staff

The Rains County Commissioners Court approved preliminary boundaries between cities and the county, applied for a grant and issued a proclamation during the regular meeting on Thursday, February 12.

During the meeting, the court was presented with preliminary boundaries that set the division between Rains County and the cities of Emory, Point and East Tawakoni. Official records of

the boundaries had not been maintained over the years and caused the establishment of the new taxing district for the county to fail.

The county authorized a local surveying company to create official boundaries between the local taxing entities and those preliminary plans were presented to the county. The plans were not presented to the local municipalities for approval until commissioners could look over the boundaries.

With the belief that any needed changes could be made later, the pre-

liminary boundaries were unanimously approved by the court.

The court reviewed an application for the U.S. Department of Transportation's (USDOT) Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) grant program. If approved, a local transportation infrastructure project would be fully funded. The motion to apply for the grant was unanimously approved.

The commissioners were presented with a proclamation to designate February as Teen Dating Violence Awareness

Month. The text of the resolution was read aloud in court and unanimously approved.

The court unanimously approved a final plat to combine two lots, a final plat of a property on CR 4520 and a final plat to combine three lots into one. They went over the Jail Standard Commission report for Rains County Jail and accepted 15 hours of continuing education for Jeremy Cook into the minutes of the meeting.

see **COURT** on page 2

## Dealing out the Cards



Leader photo by CHUCK FITTS

Lady Cat senior Presley Kilgore (20) puts up a jump shot for 2 of her 17 points in a 70-53 playoff win over the Pottsville Lady Cardinals on Monday, February 16, at McKinney High School in McKinney. The Lady Cats advance to the area round of the playoffs where they will take on Dallas Madison on Thursday, February 19, at 6:45 p.m. in Royse City.

## SALES TAX ALLOCATIONS

### County, cities see increased holiday sales, returns

By **CHUCK FITTS**  
Rains County Leader staff

Local sales tax allocations for Rains County, the City of Emory and the City of Point increased compared to allocations in February 2025, while East Tawakoni saw a slight decline in growth during the holiday season.

In a press release from the office of Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar, \$1.5 billion dollars is being returned to Texas cities, counties, transit systems and special purpose taxing districts based on sales made in December by businesses that report tax monthly; October, November and December sales by quarterly filers; and 2025 sales by businesses that report tax annually.

Rains County, with a half-cent sales tax rate, will have \$124,824.61 returned from the state. The total is 24.97 percent more than February of last year, and increases the year-to-date total to \$213,495.51, a 21.4 percent increase.

As for the cities in the county, Emory and Point saw an increase while East

see **SALES TAX** on page 2

## RAINS COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICE DISTRICT

### Board approves proposed fire station improvements, hears updates

By **CHUCK FITTS**  
Rains County Leader staff

The Rains County Emergency Services District (ESD) board held their regular meeting on Monday, February 16, to discuss adding sleep quarters to the East Tawakoni fire station and hear updates.

During the meeting, the board reviewed a proposal from the East Tawakoni fire department to build a sleep room in the fire station. The room would consist of a twin bed, under-bed

storage, a nightstand, wall outlets for lamp and chargers, overhead light fixture and HVAC connection.

The fire chief said that the funds for the improvement are coming from donations to the department. When asked, he stated that no work had been done on the project, and would not until the board approves it.

Board members noted that they had received calls that a family was living at the fire station and the chief stated that no one was living at the station. He said that the new room would only be used

by the volunteer fire fighters manning the station on 24-hour shifts.

The board unanimously approved a motion to allow the improvements to the East Tawakoni fire station with donated funds.

Board President Ken Player stated that he had talked with several county officials concerning a fire marshal for Rains County. He noted that the ESD had several ways that they could help with the position but these were only preliminary discussions and no decisions were being made.

The board was informed that over half of the cost of new radios for the fire departments would be paid for by a grant. The new radios would be needed when the new radio tower system is built in Rains County. No action was needed at this time.

Board members unanimously approved the annual tax exemption for historic properties in Rains County, including the Dougherty Community home and the National Farmers Union

see **ESD** on page 2

## SPOTLIGHT

### Three generations of the Ramsey family have been in the dairy business

By **JUDY KRAMER**  
Rains County Leader contributor

Lynn Ramsey and son, Morgan, are partners who own and operate Ramsey Dairy Farm at 1541 S. 779, in Emory. Morgan is an interface designer who designs computer applications, but is now transitioning out of that role to become a bigger part of the business. Other family members also chip in to take care of different parts of providing raw milk to the community.

Lynn was born on a dairy farm "just down the road" in 1943, when the dairy industry was significant. His father was a dairy farmer, and he became one in 1955. He bought his current farm

in 1964, starting with 40 dairy cows and 60 young cows.

After Lynn and his brother, Norm, had spent so much of their lives in commercial dairies, they thought it would be easy to run a raw-milk dairy. Lynn sold his commercial herd in February 2025 and opened his store on October 11, 2025, to sell Grade A milk to the community. They send their milk to a lab where quality and sanitation are monitored. There is a lot to running a dairy, including milking in the barn at 6:00 a.m., bottling, labelling and delivering. They also must feed, water and keep the electricity running on a seven-day-a-week basis. The cows are born on, live on, and are bred

on the farm.

"Cows are milked early in the day and then spend the rest of the day in the pasture, so they are not confined," said Lynn.

Currently, Morgan's wife, Alexis, is helping to set up drop points in Hopkins, Wood and Smith counties where customers can preorder milk and have it delivered on Tuesday evenings. Alexis also helps by overseeing procurement, plant management, and marketing. She also teaches yoga away from the farm.

Lynn's brother, Norm, was available during the interview and said he is an unpaid consultant.

see **SPOTLIGHT** on page 2



Lynn and Morgan Ramsey



**City Girl:**  
*Pushback*  
Page 3

**Jody Dyer:**  
*All the Presidents'...*  
page 3

**Wildcat Sports**  
page 4

**Rain Report**  
Sat., Feb. 14 . . . . . 1.79 in.  
Sun., Feb 15 . . . . . 0.76 in.  
Total for Feb. . . . . 2.55 in.  
Year to date . . . . . 3.87 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](mailto: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.

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

## MEMBER 2026 TEXAS PRESS ASSOCIATION

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H.W. Martin - 1887  
Sam Fitzgerald - Before 1900  
W.O. Hebison - 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 Dinner Sat., Feb. 28

Rabb Brothers Memorial American Legion Post #156 will offer a dinner with desserts and drinks on Saturday, February 22, from 4:00-7:00 p.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.

## COURT

Continued from page 1

In the open forum, seven residents spoke to the court. Their concerns included solar farm compliance, county justice of the peace, the Sanctuary for the Unborn ordinance, use of tax dollars, status of CR 1490 and green energy projects.

All commissioners were present for the regular meeting.

The next regular meeting of the Rains County Commissioners Court is scheduled for Thursday, February 26, at 10:00 a.m. in the courtroom of the Rains County Courthouse.

## SALES TAX

Continued from page 1

Tawakoni experienced a slight decrease in the amount of money being returned in February from the 1.5 percent sales tax rate.

With an increase of 12.98 percent in sales tax revenues from this time last year, Emory is expecting \$168,873.18 from the state. At the year-to-date total of \$321,152.35, they are 14 percent ahead of the total at this time in 2025.

Compared to February of last year, the City of Point saw sales tax returns up 8.89 percent at \$22,466.57 with the yearly total at

\$42,057.81, a 34.23 percent increase from 2025.

East Tawakoni is expected to receive \$13,02.68 which is a decrease of 6.43 percent from this time last year or \$894.92 less than 2025. The city's year-to-date is \$532.43 behind February of 2025 at \$21,272.70.

The Texas Comptroller's office is expected to release local sales tax allocations made from sales in January for those reporting monthly during the first full week of March.

FEBRUARY '26 SALES TAX STATISTICS							
County City	Taxed	Net pymt. this period	Net pymt. prior year	Pct. change	'26 pymt. to date	Net pymts. prior year	Pct. chg. from '25
Rains	0.5	124,824.61	99,880.01	24.97	213,495.51	175,858.15	21.40
East Tawakoni	1.5	13,022.68	13,917.60	-6.43	21,272.70	21,805.13	-2.44
Emory	1.5	168,873.18	149,460.31	12.98	321,152.35	281,708.69	14.00
Point	1.5	22,466.57	20,631.79	8.89	42,057.81	31,332.57	34.23
Hopkins	0.5	398,609.65	395,215.04	0.85	713,128.30	708,920.41	0.59
Como	1.0	8,882.51	8,129.01	9.26	15,039.83	14,052.40	7.02
Cumby	1.25	24,671.28	20,975.13	17.62	36,939.90	34,221.93	7.94
Sulphur Springs	1.5	949,396.71	979,549.79	-3.07	1,729,365.29	1,764,666.65	-2.00
Hunt	0.5	959,143.46	1,023,804.12	-6.31	1,723,663.51	1,755,548.94	-1.81
Caddo Mills	1.5	142,074.95	149,449.41	-4.93	261,374.94	251,474.86	3.93
Campbell	1.5	16,565.47	19,476.86	-14.94	29,949.27	31,350.18	-4.46
Celeste	1.25	16,716.00	24,395.73	-31.47	29,982.19	36,523.70	-17.91
Commerce	1.5	335,893.55	304,317.78	10.37	516,977.92	484,984.86	6.59
Greenville	1.5	1,326,020.70	1,515,535.29	-12.50	2,461,008.09	2,631,574.85	-6.48
Hawk Cove	1.0	2,957.49	2,350.82	25.80	5,038.36	4,232.46	19.04
Lone Oak	1.5	29,342.61	31,216.90	-6.00	50,736.67	51,595.36	-1.66
Neylandville	1.0	1,329.58	955.18	39.19	2,439.52	1,580.03	54.39
Quinlan	1.5	202,950.26	219,785.31	-7.65	383,835.55	376,942.58	1.82
Union Valley	1.0	7,599.62	6,246.06	21.67	13,201.20	10,914.20	20.95
West Tawakoni	1.5	27,186.53	26,371.27	3.09	46,652.37	42,043.40	8.58
Wolfe City	1.5	24,794.21	28,392.59	-12.67	43,119.30	46,138.92	-6.54
Van Zandt County does not Collect sales tax							
Canton	2.0	533,275.85	576,617.68	-7.51	985,635.87	1,008,933.62	-2.30
Edgewood	2.0	59,087.76	70,142.96	-15.76	106,623.85	111,782.07	-4.61
Edom	1.0	6,051.38	3,770.62	60.48	7,835.94	5,453.87	43.67
Fruitvale	2.0	9,447.80	170,694.48	-94.46	18,396.51	178,030.43	-89.66
Grand Saline	2.0	89,108.64	75,410.26	18.16	160,533.89	128,797.39	24.64
Van	2.0	143,660.72	126,948.38	13.70	261,655.71	224,719.99	16.43
Wills Point	2.0	293,732.73	230,342.98	27.51	460,441.66	427,689.27	7.65
Wood	0.5	343,858.62	314,155.07	9.45	627,623.89	559,347.29	12.20
Alba	1.5	43,444.38	50,184.67	-13.43	72,728.02	81,206.84	-10.44
Hawkins	1.5	57,187.59	56,598.96	1.04	109,894.90	99,378.25	10.58
Mineola	1.5	354,995.43	324,216.57	9.49	642,039.53	569,844.26	12.66
Quitman	1.5	98,383.08	104,106.98	-5.49	185,472.54	182,737.13	1.49
Winnsboro	1.5	141,107.06	155,644.66	-9.34	268,040.05	266,223.91	0.68
Yantis	1.5	17,215.58	20,400.80	-15.61	29,258.48	33,288.12	-12.10

## Your credit score matters more than you may think

Your credit score can have a big impact on your financial life.



**BRANDON ROBERTS**  
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From renting an apartment to getting a cellphone plan, your score can open doors — or close them.

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very good. When determining this score, payment history matters most, making up 35 percent of your score. So, paying bills on time matters. The second most important factor in your credit score is credit utilization, which is 30 percent of your score. So, keep balances below 30 percent of your limit.

You can check your credit report for free once a year at [annualcreditreport.com](http://annualcreditreport.com).

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## ESD

Continued from page 1

Monument.

They unanimously approved a motion to not tax aircraft, recreational and personal vehicles.

In monthly activity reports for January, Hopkins County reported 140 refusals for service, with 36 requests. Response time on life threatening emergencies in the county was 12 minutes and 15 seconds, while city calls averaged at 10 minutes and 47 seconds.

Of the 103 transported to a medical facility by EMS, 67 went to Sulphur Springs, 23 to Greenville, seven to Quitman, one to Tyler and five to other hospitals or air transport. The most common calls were for falls, breathing problems, a sick person, motor vehicle accident and unconscious person.

Emory VFD responded to 110 calls during the month of January. The department is in the middle of a change of software and did not have a call breakdown for the board.

In the month of January, the Point VFD was dispatched on 36 calls, but there was no breakdown of calls due to new reporting software.

The East Tawakoni VFD went on 22 medical assist calls, two unauthorized burns, two fires, a public assist and a lift assist for a total of 28 requests for service during January.

The next regular meeting of the Rains County ESD Board is scheduled for Monday, March 16, at 6:30 p.m. at the Emory VFD Fire Station.

## SPOTLIGHT

Continued from page 1

The brothers agreed that it is hard to get away from work since it is open every day. But Lynn and his family find time to keep up with the Lady Cats at Rains High School, and the family gets together for Sunday dinners like they have done since Lynn's mother cooked for them. Morgan, his wife, and his six-year-old daughter occasionally travel on weekends. Alexis said one of her most interesting trips was to Thailand many years ago.

Lynn is insistent about the need to support local farmers. He says local dairy

farmers are aging, with a median age of 65. He said we need to bring in a new generation that is health-conscious, and he wants to get local folks to bring produce to the farm. He thinks his farm can continue growing even though there were once about 30 dairies locally in the 1950s to the 1970's, and now there are only two.

Lynn also has three daughters who are involved in other careers, including one who is a lawyer, another who is a flight attendant, and one who is a teacher.

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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](http://www.sudokuoftheday.com) for further tips and help about how to play - and good luck!

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

## All the Presidents' Dogs



"All his life he tried to be a good person. Many times, however, he failed. For after all, he was only human. He wasn't a dog."

Charles M. Schulz



JODY DYER  
Typewriter Weekly

Over half of our U.S. Presidents have kept dogs while in the White House. As a dog lover, I find this interesting. And I wanted to know more. Within the confines of this small column, I'm unable to list all the presidents' dogs. But here are a few, beginning with the dogs of our beloved first president, George Washington.

George Washington was an avowed dog lover, owning many throughout his life. His dog named Sweet Lips was the most famous. She was an American Foxhound, a breed developed by Washington himself when he bred his Black and Tan Coonhounds with French hunting hounds. Captain, Pilot, Topsy, Trulove, and Vulcan were also some of Washington's favorite hounds.

Abraham Lincoln's beloved dog Fido, a mixed breed, was well known to the country during the Civil War. Fido became a popular name for dogs as a result. The President also owned other dogs, including one named Jip.

Grover Cleveland loved dogs and had quite a few of various breeds, including St. Bernards, Collies, Cocker Spaniels, Fox Terriers, Dachshunds, Poodles, and Bulldogs. Trivia Note — The small town of Hector, Arkansas, where my mom grew up, was named for one of Cleveland's dogs. As the story goes, a frustrated postmaster asked President Cleveland for help when residents struggled to agree on a town name. Cleveland suggested the town be named for his dog Hector.

Theodore Roosevelt was a great animal lover and kept a multitude of dogs. Among them were Pete, a Bull Terrier, Sailor Boy, a Chesapeake Bay Retriever, Rollo, a St. Bernard, Blackjack, a Manchester Terrier, and his

favorite dog Skip, a mixed breed.

Warren G. Harding's dog, an Airedale Terrier named Laddie Boy is by some considered the first celebrity presidential pet. News about Laddie Boy could often be found in the pages of the *Times* and *Washington Star* newspapers.

President Calvin Coolidge was quoted as saying, "Any man who does not like dogs does not deserve to be in the White House." Coolidge owned many dogs, but his favorite dog was a white collie named Rob Roy.

Herbert Hoover was another president who loved and owned many dogs. His favorite was said to be a large Belgian Malinois named King Tut.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt navigated much of the turbulent depression and war years with his trusted little Scottish Terrier Fala in his lap. Often photographed with the president, Fala became one of the most famous of all presidential dogs.

Sadly, President Harry Truman was not fond of dogs, although for a short time he owned two in the White House. Feller, a Cocker Spaniel puppy, and Mike, an Irish Setter, were given away. Truman was quoted as saying, "They preferred to be a pet-free family." This upset the whole country at the time.

Dwight D. Eisenhower for a season kept his Weimaraner Heidi at the White House, but after she peed on an expensive rug, she was sent to live at the family farm in Pennsylvania. In today's dollars, the damaged rug was worth about \$200,000.

John F. Kennedy owned an interesting dog when he was president. Pushinka was her name. She was a mixed breed dog, a gift from the Soviet Union and the daughter of the first dog in space, whose name was Strelka.

Lyndon B. Johnson owned two Beagles named Him and Her. President Johnson stirred controversy when he was photographed for *Life* magazine holding one of his dogs up by his ears. He was forced to apologize to an outraged American public.

Richard Nixon owned a

few dogs but is most famous for his Cocker Spaniel named Checkers. Nixon, in a televised response to alleged campaign fund impropriety informed the nation that he intended to keep the dog that had been given to his family as a questionable donation, their dog Checkers. The public was sympathetic. Checkers is credited with saving Nixon's political career.

Gerald Ford's Golden Retriever, Liberty, was well known while he was in office. Later, Jimmy Carter's Border Collie Grits evidently had trouble with the family cat, so had to leave the White House.

Ron and Nancy Reagan had a passel of dogs around, but are best remembered for Rex, a Cavalier King Charles Spaniel.

The George Bush presidents (H.W. and W.) were dog folks, with the famous Millie, an English Springer Spaniel, and Barney, a bubbly Scottish Terrier both residing at the White House in their terms. And the Clintons, cat people like the Carters (they had Socks the tuxedo cat) also had Buddy, a Labrador Retriever.

President Obama and family kept two Portuguese Water Dogs while he was in office. Bo and Sunny were considered well-behaved and charming.

During Joe Biden's presidency we had the German Shepherds Champ, Major and Commander roaming the White House grounds. It is rumored that paramedics were always standing by in anticipation of canine encounters, with Secret Service personnel logging 24 documented biting incidents in one year alone. Yowzah!

Currently there are no dogs in the White House. President Trump has said that he does love dogs, but he does not have time to keep one right now. Maybe that will change in the future...

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.

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## CITY GIRL

By Linda Brendle

Last week I wrote about grassroots politics. It was a bit of a departure from the fluff I usually write, but I do get serious once in a while. I was curious as to what, if a n y , response I would get, but it appears that I'm just not that controversial. Response



LINDA BRENDLE  
Leader correspondent

was pretty much the usual — one text from one of my biggest fans. "Great article," he said along with some other nice comments.

As is my habit, after the column was published, I shared it on my blog, Facebook, LinkedIn, and X, and response was minimal there as well. I received ten views on my blog, fifteen views on X, and two "likes," one "love," and one comment on Facebook. It said, "Nicely put!" Of course, the response I really hope for is that some of my readers were inspired to get more involved in the political process, especially at the local level.

I took my own advice — in a small way. When a friend posted his political flyer on Facebook, I shared it along with a brief personal endorsement. That post received a little more response, but it was still far from overwhelming — thirteen "likes," three "loves," one "care," one "share," and four comments. One of the comments was a large thumbs-up from David; the other three were from my brother Jim. He said, "Thanks for getting involved, Sis...The only way this nation will truly be about 'we the people' is when 'we the people' — across the board — get involved...Just

## Pushback

be prepared. More than likely you will get pushback."

Jim is a minister who is very outspoken about his beliefs and his politics, and he gets lots of pushback from his posts. But the pushback he predicted for me didn't materialize. I guess being very outspoken doesn't run in the family.

I experienced much the same thing when I began publishing books. My son Christian, who had published several books at that time, advised me on how to deal with negative reviews. He is a lot like his Uncle Jim and likes to stir the pot — a lot! He said he didn't read any of his reviews, and he advised me to follow his example. I was too curious, though, and read every one.

Compared to a lot of writers, I get few reviews. I've never even broken the fifty-review mark that makes books more visible on Amazon. But most of my reviews have been positive. I've had one or two readers complain that my books had too much "church'y stuff," but that's what you get when you choose a Christian author. One author didn't like my first memoir because it was written in a narrative non-fiction style, what she called "slice of life." I had to laugh when she actually emailed me and asked if she should give it three stars or four. And one reviewer said that *Tatia's Tattoo* would have been more effective if it had been more graphic. Everyone else who took the time to leave a review was complimentary.

I invite feedback to my writing by including my email address at the end of my books and my columns, and it's also posted in the "About" section on my blog. As a result, I have had some interesting correspondence.

One sweet elderly lady — elderly is anyone older than I am — wrote about her cat who had just crossed over the rainbow bridge recently and about how much she enjoyed reading about Kitty. And one young man — young being anyone younger than I am — wrote me from prison. His mother subscribes to the *Leader* for him, and he is a fan of City Girl. We have corresponded fairly regularly for several years. Although I prefer feedback to pushback, I did receive a letter from one reader who blasted me about something I had written. I responded in what I think was a civil manner only to be blasted again. It made such an impression that I don't even remember what his complaint was, but I didn't respond a second time.

Being a writer can be a lonely business, sitting behind a keyboard, putting thoughts on a screen and wondering if anyone actually reads them. I prefer feedback to pushback, but I continue to invite either. Maybe one reason I don't get a lot of pushback is because I try to write on even controversial subjects with gentleness and respect. Compliments are always welcome, but if you feel a need to push back against something I've written, please do so we can talk about it — but please do so with gentleness and respect.

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](mailto:LindaBrendle@yahoo.com).

Visit us online  
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# I am asking for you to VOTE for me

True leadership in Rains County isn't about bossing people around—yes, it's not about that at all. It's about getting everyone to work together as one big team, where people join in because they want to, for the good of our community.

Coming from my days as an entrepreneur, I've started businesses from scratch, worried about paying my workers on time when money was tight, handled tough risks, and kept going to make things succeed in the real world. That hard work taught me how important it is to bring different people together—from business, government, and everyday folks—to team up on a common goal, not because anyone is forced to, but because it helps us all.

That's the kind of helpful, team-first leadership I've brought to Rains County since I was appointed in July 2025—getting commissioners, neighbors, and local people on board to rebuild trust and keep our fresh start moving forward. It means growing our county in a smart way to stay rural and affordable, keeping taxes steady even when property values go up, and making sure government is open and clear for everyone.

I love this way of leading because it puts people first, just like in business: building trust, working as a team, and getting real results that count. Rains County deserves that—let's keep building it together!

**What are your thoughts?**  
Come to our last meeting and Voice Your Ideas to move Rains County forward.

**Together, we can do it!**

**I am humbly asking for your vote.**

**Thank you, Brent D. Hilliard**

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ REPUBLICAN ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**BRENT HILLIARD**

**FOR RAINS COUNTY JUDGE**

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**ACROSS**

1 Lone Star Park wager (2 wds.)

5 TXism: "keeps his \_\_\_ polished" (goody-goody)

6 seat of Jackson County

7 Bentzen State Park groove-billed birds

8 real estate investment (2 wds.)

19 TXism: "got \_\_\_ left feet" (bad dancer)

20 Sam Houston's baptismal statement: "Lord have \_\_\_ fish"

21 TXism: "guilty \_\_\_ sin"

22 ex-Ranger catcher Petralli (1985-93)

23 good Texas chili requires a proper blend of \_\_\_

24 TXism for "fellows"

29 seat of Garza County

30 breeding horse

31 this Dallasite still sang with Crosby, Nash & Young (int.)

32 TXism: "short as \_\_\_ memory"

34 TXism: "I don't want to hear a \_\_\_ out of you"

35 some Texans used it for long distance

36 seat of Duval County (2 wds.)

37 TXism: "\_\_\_ shed" (bar)

**TEXAS CROSSWORD**

by Charley & Guy Orbison

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38 TXism: "your barn \_\_\_ is open" (unzipped fly)

39 UNT mascot

40 Sam Houston State mascots: Bear \_\_\_

41 1963 film: "\_\_\_ for Texas" (written numeral)

42 1974 film: "The Texas Chainsaw \_\_\_"

44 South \_\_\_ Island

45 Astro position between 2nd and 3rd (abbr.)

46 book loaner

48 SW Houston suburb

49 TX Weddington won the case of \_\_\_ v. Wade

50 TXism: "brains \_\_\_ box" (computer)

51 classified messages

52 TX singer, Stuckey

**DOWN**

1 TXism: "got \_\_\_ Texas" (kind)

2 Houston-based 1977 sequel: "The \_\_\_ Bears ..."

3 climatological event that brings rains to south Texas (2 wds.)

4 breakfast bread

9 TXism: "\_\_\_ of" (great quantity)

10 how Texans say "loaned"

11 Otter or Cowboy

12 \_\_\_ Cola

13 \_\_\_ Creek, TX

14 infield fly hit by an Astro (hyph.)

15 Oklahoma town

16 concealed carry law like in Texas, generally (abbr.)

17 this indicates who wins on Friday night (2 wds.)

18 polite affirmative response (2 wds.)

22 TXism: "Sunday \_\_\_ meetin' clothes"

24 \_\_\_ la la ...

25 TX Perot's old co.

26 Houston's last wife, Margaret

27 Dallas has a HOV \_\_\_ for some cars

28 TX Carolyn Jones was Morlicia on "The \_\_\_ Family"

29 book leads

30 TXism: "\_\_\_ like a bat without radar" (poor eyesight)

33 slippery Gulf fish

34 this "Easy Rider" actor bought custom boots from TX bootmaker Charlie Dunn

35 grieve for the dead

37 TX Robert E. Howard created the character Conan the \_\_\_

38 TXism for "gadget" (hyph.)

40 Fox TV station in Amarillo

41 TXism: "turn about is \_\_\_ play"

43 Texans Dexter, Freeman Jr., and Neiman

44 \_\_\_ and con

47 "It's either \_\_\_ or a tamine"

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# Sports

RAINS LADY CAT & WILDCAT BASKETBALL

## Ladies advance in playoffs, Wildcats season ends

By **CHUCK FITTS**  
Rains County Leader staff

The Rains Lady Cat varsity basketball team claim a bi-district championship and move to the next round of the UIL Class 3A playoffs. The Rains Wildcats celebrate seniors as they finish District 12-3A play.

The Rains boy's basketball team traveled to Paris on Friday, February 13, to take on the Mustangs. They lost the district game to Chisum, 63-32.

The Lady Cats opened the Class 3A Division 1 playoffs against the Pottsboro Lady Cardinals on Monday, February 16. They pulled away in the second quarter and held on for the 70-53 victory.

Senior Kenzy Thompson led the Lady Cats with 20 points, while senior Presley Kilgore contributed 17 points and junior Arianna Philson had 16 points in the victory.

On Tuesday, February 17, the Wildcats recognized seniors playing their final game and suffered a loss to the Lone Oak Buffaloes, 44-39.

The Rains Lady Cats improve to 31-4 for the season.

They remain the ninth ranked team in Class 3A by the Texas Association of Basketball Coaches (TABC)



Leader photo by CHUCK FITTS

The defense can only watch as Lady Cat Jaycee Phillips (1) glides by her for a layup during the 70-53 playoff victory.

and eighth ranked team by the Texas Girls Coaches Association (TGCA).

The Rains Wildcats finish the season with a district record of 4-8 and season record at 11-19.

The Lady Cats will con-

tinue the Class 3A playoffs against the Dallas Madison Lady Trojans on Thursday, February 19, in Royce City.

The area round playoff game is scheduled to tip off at 6:45 p.m.



Leader photo by CHUCK FITTS

Lady Cat Arianna Philson (0) blocks the pass attempt of the Lady Cardinal and turned into a quick basket during the 70-53 victory over Pottsborro in McKinney on Monday night.

## Celebrating Wildcat seniors



Contributed photo

Wildcat seniors honored before their final home game against the Lone Oak Buffaloes on Tuesday, February 17. Seniors pictured with their families are Rodney Gilcrest, Aiden Cason, Jordan Hobbs, Kade Sustaire, Gunner Cook and Kaliyah Ragsdale.

LUKE CLAYTON

## A fishing trip to remember

What constitutes a banner fishing trip? Catching fish must rank as one of the primary ingredients, but also camaraderie with family and friends, and its possible the weather could play a part. Catching the biggest or most fish of one's life could be a factor!



Luke Clayton  
Outdoor Columnist

Many things could contribute to creating one of those fishing trips that remain etched in our memory banks forever. Such a trip occurred last week and I'm about to tell you about a few hours out on the water with some fine friends catching blue catfish in a very exciting and action-packed manner.

I don't wish to mislead you, I absolutely love the tug of a big catfish while fishing with rod and reel, it's the stuff great fishing memories are made of. But there's another style of catching catfish that is action packed and a great way to catch the makings of many fish fries!

The term "jug line fishing" is an old one and goes back to the days when a section of line is tied to a milk jug, hooks are attached and usually baited with cut bait. The jugs are tossed into the water and the angler keeps close watch from his boat. When one of the jugs begins bouncing or moving across the surface of the water, the angler motors or paddles to catch up with the jug. He uses a gaff to hook the line and then either hoists a small catfish into the boat or nets a big one!

A few fishermen still use the old-style milk jugs, but now most use "noodles" which are sections of swimming pool noodles, usually about 14 inches long, with PVC pipe through the center, and extending out a few inches so that the fishing line can be attached. Each end of the pipe is capped, and some noodles have round pieces of lead installed. The noodles lay flat in the water and when a catfish pulls the bait down, the ball rolls down and causes the noodle to stand up, making it more visible from a distance. There are many variations to noodles, and many fisher-

men add alterations to suit their style of fishing. Usually two very sharp circle hooks are attached. Circle hooks are preferred over "J" style hooks because when a fish takes the bait and begins to swim away, the hook threads into the corner of the fishes mouth, much like a corkscrew.

NOW TO THE FISHING- My friend's lake is comprised of over a couple hundred acres, actually a giant gravel pit that was created back in the fifties. As is common with most gravel pits, the excavation process left a very irregular bottom. There are areas in the lake that are very shallow and spots with deep water, ideal habitat for all sorts of fish but especially blue and channel catfish. The river is not far away and during periods of floods and high water, the lake has been stocked with blue catfish through the years. Blue catfish in such a larger watershed will also spawn which ensures a good supply of these good eating catfish.

As one would expect, there is very healthy population of gar in the lake and Donny has a big boat designed for bowfishing. With an elevated platform to shoot from, this boat is ideal for jug line fishing. We launched on the south end of the lake and motored north, the idea was to place the noodles on the north side of the lake and allow a gentle northerly breeze to drift the noodles across the lake. The plan was to place a total of 22 noodles across the lake all baited with cut bait, roughly 30 yards apart and then position the boat upwind and with Jeff Rice up in the elevated shooting deck, to watch for one of the noodles to begin bobbing or scooting across the surface. After tossing out four or five noodles, the first one began skiing across the lake's surface. Immediately we stopped baiting and tossing out noodles and raced to catch up with that first jug. A chunky blue catfish was in the boat before we got half the noodles out, so the morning went. It took us a good fifteen minutes to get all the noodles baited and in the water. Every time we resumed tossing out noodles, a catfish would grab one we

had just set. Very early on this trip, it was very obvious we were in for some exciting catching! In a couple hours we had a big 54-quart cooler chock full of catfish, most weighing between 4 and 8 pounds but a couple that would tip the scales in the mid-teens.

In the planning stage of our trip, we discussed bringing rods and reels and drift fish for the blues while watching the noodles but we decided against it. That was a good call, we were kept busy for a solid couple hours pulling in fish, rebaiting and positioning the noodles. The rods would have only gotten in the way.

A highlight of the trip occurred when one of the noodles we were near simply disappeared below the water's surface, much like a floater when a crappie grabs the bait! A couple of us observed the entire noodle go under and every eye was watching for it up bob back to the surface. A good 25 yards away, the noodle surfaced and then began skiing across the lake's surface. We first thought a forty- or fifty-pound blue catfish had grabbed the bait. It took some boat maneuvering on Donny's part but we finally caught up with the noodle, pulled it to the boat with the gaff, and grabbed it. On closer inspection, it was obvious this was no catfish, not even a giant one but rather a powerful alligator gar. We managed to get the hook out of the corner of the big fish's mouth after several action-packed minutes. We were all hoping the big fish would simply pull loose but with the help of needle nose pliers were were about to dislodge the hook and release the monster back to the murky depths!

Back at the launch we divided the catfish. It took a solid hour for me to transform my share into snow white blue catfish nuggets, ready for a huge fish fry at the Seventh Annual Outdoor Rendezvous at the Top Rail Cowboy Church in Greenville on March 28. You're invited to come and sample this very fresh catfish, landed with great friends on a mid winter fishing trip that none of us will soon forget!

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**EARLY VOTING**

February 17 - February 27  
Rains County Courthouse Annex

POLITICAL AD PAID FOR BY TONY INGRAM

# Sheriff's Report

The Rains County Sheriff's Office took the following reports of activity during the week of February 9-15:

### Arrests

**2-9:** Joey Wayne Grier. Possession of a controlled substance PG 1/1-B less than or equal to 4 gr. less than 200 gr., \$75,000 bond.

**2-10:** Lindsey Ellen McKenzie. Driving while intoxicated BAC greater than or equal to 0.15, \$2,500 bond.

**2-10:** Clinton Eugene Sharp. Evading arrest detention with previous conviction, tamper with evidence, possession of controlled substance Warrant Hopkins Co., \$340,000 bond.

**2-11:** Nicky Norris. Criminal trespass, theft, \$3,000.

**2-13:** Wafaa Banna. Driving while intoxicated with child under 15 years of age, \$200 bond.

**2-13:** Cody Weathers. Pension payment/affidavit/warrant, not bond listed.

**2-15:** Gene William Wager. Contraband in correction facility, no bond listed

### Calls

**2-9:** Hwy. 276 Abandoned vehicle; CR 1490 Controlled burn; S 1st St. Business alarm; Hwy. 276 Motorist assist; Clark Dr. Animal at large; CR 3430 Medical assist; CR 3160 Grass fire; Ave. A Suspicious person; FM 275 Livestock on roadway; FM 2946 Controlled burn; PR 6946 Agency assist; N Texas St. Medical assist; FM 515 Smoke investigation; CR 1307 Medical assist; S 1st St. Medical assist.

**2-10:** E Lennon Dr. Suspicious activity; Hwy. 19N Reckless driver; CR 1155 Medical assist; Locust St. Abandoned vehicle; W Quitman St. Agency assist; CR 4510 Welfare concern; Sheriff's Office (SO) lobby Meet complainant; CR 4235 Grass fire; FM 513 Terroris-

tic threats; S Texas St. Medical assist; S Texas St. City ordinance violation; CR 3202 Medical assist; SO Meet complainant; Quitman St. Pedestrian Stop; Hwy. 19N Abandoned vehicle; SO Follow up investigation; Littlefield Dr. Intoxicated individual; FM 2946 Extra patrol.

**2-11:** FM 513 Suspicious activity; W Lennon Dr. Theft; Hwy. 19N Welfare concern; CR 1605 Controlled burn; CR 2210 Medical assist; SO Release property; CR 1315 Controlled burn; CR 4480 Welfare concern; CR 3270 Livestock on the roadway; SO Lobby Criminal trespass; Enterprise Blvd. Disturbance; Locust St. Extra patrol; E Lennon Welfare concern; W Quitman St. Problems with a juvenile; CR 3330 Civil matter; CR 1470 Welfare concern; E Lennon Reckless Driving; Littlefield Dr. Disturbance; Smith Cir. Welfare concern.

**2-12:** SO lobby Follow-up investigation; Hwy. 69 Found property; SO lobby

Follow-up investigation; 2nd St. Point Meet complainant; CR 3232 Suspicious vehicle; CR 1230 Pedestrian stop; W Quitman St. Medical assist; CR 1623 Welfare concern; Hwy. 19 at Ravine St. Livestock on roadway; Locust St. Abandoned vehicle; Enterprise Blvd. Criminal trespass; Hwy. 19S Reckless driver; E Lennon Dr. Medical assist; FM 275 Controlled burn; CR 3210 Livestock on roadway; W Hwy. 69 Pedestrian stop; PR 6180 Medical assist; FM 514 Grass fire; E Lennon Dr. Escort; Hwy. 19N Medical assist; FM 514 Welfare concern; CR 4455 Animal welfare concern; E Lennon Dr. Smoke investigation; CR 1532 Medical assist; N Texas St. Suspicious vehicle; S Dunbar Ln. Fight in progress; Larissa St. Fire alarm; Briggs Blvd. Medical assist.

**2-13:** Briggs Blvd. Public assist; S Hwy. 19 Agency assist; N Locust St. Public assist; CR 4325 Medical assist; CR 2400 Criminal trespass; W North St. Criminal trespass; CR 1495 Medical assist; Quitman St. Escort; Hwy. 69 Disturbance; CR 4325 Medical assist; N Texas St. Criminal trespass; CR 1605 Medical assist; E Lennon Dr. Follow up investigation; Hwy. 19S Reckless driving; Wood St. Medical assist; FM 515 Medical assist; Hwy. 69W Missing person; Hwy. 19 at CR 3205 Livestock on roadway; Texas St. Accident; CR 1402 Welfare concern; E Lennon Dr. Controlled burn; CR 1330 Noise complaint; CR 1622 Medical assist; SO lobby Follow up investigation; SO lobby Warrant service; Hwy. 276 Suspicious activity; S Dunbar Ln. Courtesy transport provided; FM 3274 Brush fire; Hwy. 69W Medical assist; Barns St. Suspicious person; CR 2250 Animal welfare concern; Dunbar Ln. Medical assist.

**2-14:** E Lennon Dr. Medical assist; CR 1330 Noise complaint; CR 1320 Medical assist; CR 1490 Warrant service; Alexander Dr. Debris in roadway; FM 2795 Medical assist; E Lennon Dr. Livestock on roadway; CR

1626 Welfare concern; FM 515 Medical assist; Dunbar Ln. Suspicious vehicle; Lake Highland Medical assist; PR 5450 Medical assist; CR 4255 Accident; CR 4510 Animal welfare concern; CR 2350 Medical assist; Locust Dr. Pedestrian stop.

**2-15:** Littlefield Dr. Disturbance; W North St. Medical assist; Quitman St. Motorist assist; FM 779 Livestock on roadway; FM 514 Criminal trespass; CR 3200 Death; Hwy. 69 Theft; CR 1605 Disturbance; Ave. B Medical assist; E Lennon Dr. Scam; CR 1414 Medical assist; Hwy. 276 at CR 1230 Motorist assist; W Quitman St. Medical assist; CR 3362 Reckless driver; CR 3330 Harassment; Briggs Blvd. Aggressive animal; FM 47 Motorist assist; Hwy. 19S Noise complaint; Hwy. 276 Abandoned vehicle; FM 2737 Medical assist; FM 47 Medical assist.

The Sheriff's Department reported 377 calls for the week. Among the calls were: 1 paper service, 6 criminal trespass, 1 debris in roadway, 5 disturbances, 2 escorts, 2

extra patrol, 1 fight in progress, 1 brush fire, 1 fire alarm, 7 follow-up investigation, 1 found property, 1 harassment, 1 intoxicated individual, 7 livestock on roadway, 3 meet complainant, 1 neighbor dispute, 1, 3 noise complaints, 3 grass fire, 1 problems with a juvenile, 19 public service calls, 5 reckless driving, 2 scams, 2 smoke investigations, 1 missing person, 3 suspicious activity, 2 suspicious persons, 3 suspicious vehicle, 1 terroristic threats, 2 thefts, 1 traffic control, 2 warrant service, 10 welfare concern, 2 accident, 6 controlled burns, 1 death, 1 aggressive animal, 3 public assist, 4 pedestrian stop, 5 abandoned vehicles, 3 agency assist, 8 business alarms, 1 animal at large, 1 property release, 3 animal welfare concerns, 4 motorist assist, 1 city ordinance violation, 1 civil matter, 1 courtesies transport.

There were 36 medical calls, 27 transports, 195 traffic stops, 54 citations, 124 warnings, 4 criminal trespass warnings and 11 unable to locate.



MICHAEL HOPKINS  
Rains County Sheriff

## FISHING REPORT

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

**Fork:** Slow. Normal stain; 54 degrees; 3.07 feet below pool. Water temperatures have risen to 51-56 degrees.

The morning bite is slow, but picks up by mid morning. Squarebill crankbaits and chatterbaits are good in 4-6 feet around flats. Lipless crankbaits and suspending jerkbaits are good around ditches or drains in 5-7 feet. Some deeper fish showing up suspended over road beds and humps in 16-23 feet of water with deep diving crankbaits or flutter spoons. Report by Marc Mitchell, Mitchell's Guide Service.

Crappie are 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; 52 degrees; 1.98 feet below pool.

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.

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# JAY FORD

FOR

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**ELECT REPUBLICAN JAY FORD**  
Candidate for Rains County Judge

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STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

**Paxton, Crockett leading in primary polls**

Republican Attorney General Ken Paxton and Democratic U.S. Rep. Jasmine Crockett are leading their respective primary campaigns for U.S. Senate, according to a poll released last week by the University of Houston's Hobby School of Public Affairs, the Austin American-Statesman reported. Early voting began Feb. 17 and runs through Feb. 27.

Among Republicans, Paxton led incumbent U.S. Sen. John Cornyn 38 percent to 31 percent. U.S. Rep. Wesley Hunt polled at 17 percent, making it likely that race will go to a runoff in May if these margins hold. Among Democrats, Crockett led with 47 percent while state Rep. James Talarico was favored by 39 percent of respondents.

The margin of error for both parties was plus or minus 4 percentage points. The election is on March 3.

**Roy leading in polls in attorney general's race**

In the race to succeed Paxton as attorney general, U.S. Rep. Chip Roy, with 33 percent in the latest poll leads a crowded GOP field by 10 percentage points, with state Sen. Mayes Middleton in second at 23 percent. The Texas Tribune reported state Sen. Joan Huffman polled at 13 percent, and Aaron Reitz, a former federal assistant attorney general, trailed at 6 percent.

However, 25 percent of those polled remain undecided in that race.

On the Democratic side, state Sen. Nathan Johnson led with 25 percent of the 550 people polled, followed by former Galveston mayor Joe Jaworski at 22 percent. Attorney and former FBI agent Tony Box held 13 percent. A majority of those polled said they didn't know enough about any of the

candidates to express a preference.

That poll was also conducted by the Hobby School of Public Affairs.

**State, feds prepare to fight screwworm invasion**

U.S. Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins and Gov. Greg Abbott presided last week over the opening of a new facility in Edinburg to produce sterile flies in order to combat a potential invasion of New World screwworms from Mexico that could threaten the nation's leader in cattle production, The Tribune reported.

Cases of the screwworm, which lays eggs in open wounds on cattle, have been detected in Mexico as close as 70 miles from the border.

"I don't want to underplay it because it is a big threat to our country, but I believe we're as prepared as we could possibly be, if that happens, to deal with it, to move toward eradication,"

Rollins said sterile flies were released last week in Northern Mexico and in Texas within 50 miles of the border as a precautionary measure.

Abbott has issued a disaster declaration to enable a newly formed response team to have adequate resources. The USDA plans to open its own production facility in Edinburg by the end of 2027. For now, the facility is using larvae produced in Panama and flown to Texas.

**Abbott breaks with Trump over nationalizing elections**

The governor has broken with Trump over the president's call to nationalize elections in some parts of the country, *kut.org* reported. He was asked about Trump's suggestion at a recent campaign event.

"Listen, my understanding of the United States Constitution, and that is elections for state positions are to be conducted by states, and I don't think we should devi-

ate from that," Abbott said.

Legal experts and some Trump allies highlight that the Constitution grants states the primary authority over elections, making any effort to nationalize the process both legally complicated and logistically challenging.

**High stakes for Abbott in comptroller's race**

As the Houston Chronicle reported, while Abbott is widely expected to win his primary reelection bid, the governor has a lot on the line in the Texas comptroller's race. Acting comptroller Kelly Hancock, appointed when Glenn Hegar left to become chancellor of the Texas A&M University System, faces a serious challenge from one of the governor's biggest political foes, former state Sen. Don Huffines — who ran and lost to Abbott in 2022. Also on the GOP primary ballot is Railroad Commissioner Christi Craddick.

The winner of that race will oversee the state's new voucher program.

**Galveston's Elissa sailing to New York for 250th celebration**

The 1877 "tall ship" Elissa, docked in Galveston Bay, will sail to New York City for the Fourth of July, the Texas Standard reported. The Galveston Historical Foundation purchased the ship in 1979, and it normally serves as a museum. Will Wright, creative director of the foundation, said the ship is one of only two of its kind in the world that can still actively sail.

"Elissa is still traditionally sailed," Wright said. "We benefit from a lot of the technological advances, but at the end of the day, the ship is a sailing ship."

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

THIS WEEK IN TEXAS HISTORY

**Fort Griffin: "The Toughest Town in Texas"**

by Bartee Haile

Convinced he had been cheated out of a pot on Feb. 18, 1872, an angry poker player started shooting at the owner of Fort Griffin's first saloon.



BARTEE HAILE  
Historical Columnist

The military outpost was established five years earlier on a bluff high above the Clear Fork of the Brazos River northeast of present-day Abilene. To discourage raids by the tribes in the Indian Territory, an all too common occurrence during the Civil War, the fort was well-stocked with cavalry ready to ride at a moment's notice.

The tumble-down village that gradually came to life on the plain down below borrowed the name of the frontier guardian, but most people called it "The Flat." For the next seven years, the small community was surprisingly free of the vice and violence that one day would earn it the reputation as "the toughest town in Texas."

Their February 1872 run-in was the second act of a feud involving saloonkeeper Joe Bowers and a perpetually unhappy customer named J.B. Cockrell. In the relatively minor opening act, Bowers shot Cockrell's horse while he was still in the saddle. The next episode escalated into a full-scale battle as the badly wounded Cockrell and his friends filled the saloon full of holes without hitting their target.

By the time Cockrell recovered, "The Flat" had two new watering holes. Since he no longer had to set foot on his nemesis' premises, that should have kept Cockrell out of trouble. But a few drinks too many on a May afternoon resulted in a third confrontation, and Bowers ended the unpleasantness with a shotgun.

Before the murder victim's body was cold, the commanding officer at Fort Griffin took severe measures

to restore the peace. He put "The Flat" under military law and ordered all the booze peddlers, gamblers and prostitutes to clear out, which they did in record time.

"The Flat" was a model, if somewhat dull, town for two years. Then in 1874 a couple of things happened to set the stage for its overnight transformation: first, the buffalo hunters moved their base of operations from Kansas to Fort Griffin and, second, the army relinquished control to newly organized Shackelford County.

"It looked to me like all the bad characters from everywhere were swarming around there," a pioneer settler recalled many years later. "It got so tough I was afraid to ride down the street."

In the twinkling of an eye, "The Flat" became a magnet for the worst of the Old West along with those colorful individuals busy making household names for themselves.

"The Flats" was, of course, where Wyatt Earp met Doc Holliday and "Big Nose" Kate, if Earp's less than reliable memory is to be believed. It also was where a lady gambler from the Deep South cemented her claim to the title "best card player in Texas."

Born into a wealthy Kentucky family in 1844, Carlotta J. Thompkins spent much of her youth traveling with her father, a racehorse breeder and inveterate gambler who taught his oldest daughter how to win at cards. After dad died early in the war with the North, her widowed mother sent the attractive teenager and chaperone Mary Poindexter, her seven-foot slave nanny, to Detroit to find a proper husband.

Instead of shopping for a rich mate, Carlotta hooked up with a no-account jockey who had once ridden for her dead father. Infuriated by her bad taste in men, her mother cut the purse strings and legally disowned her.

Carlotta managed just

fine on her own. She supported not only herself and Mary but the leech Golden as well with her steamboat winnings on the Ohio and Mississippi.

The couple parted in 1863 with plans for a San Antonio reunion. Carlotta arrived in the Alamo City sometime in 1865 and took a job as a "house gambler" at the University Club. When her boyfriend failed to show, she felt free to follow her heart and did so right into the arms of Frank Thurmond, son of her employers.

Golden finally appeared insisting the "Angel of San Antonio," as Carlotta was known, was his lawfully wedded wife. His unwanted intrusion coincided with Thurmond's hasty departure after a fatal shooting. Warning Golden not to follow, Carlotta skipped town too on the trail of her true love.

With Thurmond living in the shadows under an alias, Carlotta worked her way across West Texas adding to her legend at each stop. When she reached Fort Griffin, everyone knew her as the unbeatable "Lottie Deno," and she soon proved it by cleaning out Doc Holliday in a head-to-head game.

In May 1877, jilted Johnny Golden tracked her down. The same day he stepped off the stage, he was arrested by the sheriff and shot to death on the way to jail for allegedly trying to escape.

Lottie Deno paid for the coffin and the suit of clothes Golden was buried in but did not hang around for the funeral. She left Texas for good, married Frank Thurmond, gave up gambling and lived her last 52 years in Deming, New Mexico as a respected though mysterious pillar of the community.

Contact Bartee Haile at [barteehaile@gmail.com](mailto:barteehaile@gmail.com) or by mail at P.O. Box 130011, Spring, TX 77393.

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[www.rainscountyleader.com](http://www.rainscountyleader.com)



**Joan Huffman**  
Republican for Attorney General



**PROSECUTOR. JUDGE. SENATOR.**

**Joan Huffman is the most qualified conservative for Attorney General:**

- ✓ **Chief felony prosecutor where she tried more than 100 cases to a jury verdict.**
- ✓ **Elected as a criminal court judge presiding over multiple death penalty cases.**
- ✓ **Leading Conservative State Senator who banned Sharia law from Texas family courts.**

**Law Enforcement Backs Joan Huffman for Attorney General**



**TMPA**  
The Voice of Texas Law Enforcement





**CLEAT**  
STRENGTH JUSTICE UNITY

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

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

[www.JoanHuffman.com](http://www.JoanHuffman.com)

Pol. Adv. paid for by Texans for Joan Huffman

**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

**Believers' Baptist Church**

By Linda Brendle

At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ,

Colossians 4:3

Saturday night the Student Ministry hosted a Valentine's Day Dinner to raise money for their summer mission trip. The event was enjoyed by all who attended, and the fundraiser was a success.

Adam Burrell, Donor Relations Director for HeartCry Missionary Society, was the special guest speaker at BBC this Sunday in honor of Great Commission Month. During Sunday School, he met with all the adult classes and explained HeartCry's strategy of mobilizing and equipping indigenous missionaries through support, training and resourcing.

During morning worship, Burrell brought a message titled "Cultivating a Missional

Prayer Life." He said we must pray diligently, being persistent, watchful and thankful. We should engage in intercessional prayer, asking among other things for God to open doors to gospel opportunities and to open the ears, minds and hearts of those who hear the Word.

Coming Events:  
Feb. 21, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., Deep Dive into Baptism Seminar  
Feb. 22, The Great Commission Offering during morning worship  
Feb. 22, 6:00 p.m. Members' Meeting  
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 #240 is titled "Let's Talk Denominations, Baptists." Find the link at [www.bbcmemory.org](http://www.bbcmemory.org).

**Emory Methodist Church**

By Mary White

And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!"

Luke 9:35

On the last Sunday in Epiphany Rev. David Banks gave a message titled "The Word Goes Forth: The Word Glorified" with scripture text taken from Luke. Epiphany revealed the teacher, healer and rabbi. On a high mountain, before trusted witnesses, the veil lifted. Now we are moving into the season of Lent and Lent prepares us for the work.

This Wednesday we had our Ash Wednesday Service and Rev. Banks was in

front of the church doing imposition of ashes.

On February 20 the Methodist Women will have a fundraiser luncheon from 11:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. The proceeds will go toward Back to School Supplies. Tickets are \$10.00 and you can eat in or take out.

Birthday wishes go to Steve Bowyer. Pray for John Rick, Larry Smith and Windell House.

We finally received a good rain and we are very thankful. Have a great week and don't forget to vote and don't forget it is better to be kind than right.

**Obituaries**

**Lorraine Bernice Dougherty**

1937 - 2026



Lorraine Bernice Dougherty, 88, died on February 15, 2026, at her home in Cumby. She was born on December 26, 1937, to Sigmund and Hedwig Olesiewicz (Stypinski) in Camden, New Jersey.

Mrs. Dougherty worked as a nurse for over 30 years. Even when her health prevented her from continuing her nursing career, she found ways to show her love and support to those around her. She remained active in her community, giving to charities and always seeking to uplift others with thoughtful gestures.

She loved to celebrate her birthday,

which she would spend at Bone Fish Grill in Allen. She was an active member of Emory Baptist Church and was baptized on December 22, 2024. She contributed to many initiatives, including Operation Christmas Child. In her leisure time, Lorraine enjoyed crocheting.

Mrs. Dougherty is survived by her son, Skip and wife Sandra; and granddaughters, Kayla Brantley and Alyssa Chapman.

She was preceded in death by her husband of 50 years, Walter H. Dougherty; parents; sister, Joanne Wypych; and brother, Ron.

**Carl Roden**

1957 - 2026



A graveside service for Carl Roden, age 68, of Emory, was held on February 17, at Trumble Cemetery.

Mr. Roden died on February 13, 2026. He was born on March 29, 1957.

He is survived by his son, Eric Roden; sisters, Brenda Glossup, Carolyn Melton and Barbara Perryman; granddaughter, Maddie

Roden; grandson, John Wyatt Roden; and numerous nephews, great-nieces, great-nephews and a great-great niece.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Coy Roden and Mary Combest; nephew, Colt Perryman; brother-in-law, Mike Perryman; and significant other, Debbie Chapin.

**Bruce Wayne Thompson**

1957 - 2026



Funeral services for Bruce Wayne Thompson, 68, were held on February 13, at County Line Baptist Church. Mr. Thompson died on February 9, 2026. He was born on March 9, 1957, in Dallas, to Phillip DeMills Thompson and Wanda Louise Thompson (Anderson).

Mr. Thompson was a man of deep faith and strong devotion to his family. He shared over 50 beautiful years of marriage with his high school sweetheart and loving wife, Irene Thompson.

They raised two children, Rocky and Christy, who were the pride of his life. He was a proud and devoted grandfather to his grandchildren.

He dedicated more than 35 years to his profession and also served his community as a volunteer firefighter. He loved horses and enjoyed riding his side-by-side. He treasured time spent with his family.

Mr. Thompson is survived by his loving wife, Irene Thompson; children, Rocky Thompson (Amy) and Christy Northcutt (James); grandchildren, Braxton Northcutt and Harlee Northcutt; siblings, Phyllis Alexander, Venita Collins (David), and Patricia Clemens; and numerous nieces, nephews and dear friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents; and his brother, Phillip Thompson Jr.

**SAVVY SENIORS**

**How To Navigate Inheriting an IRA From a Parent**

Dear Savvy Senior, What are the rules regarding inherited IRAs? My brother and I recently inherited our father's IRA when he passed away late last year and would like to know what we need to do to handle it properly.



JIM MILLER Savvy Senior

Oldest Sibling

be split into separate inherited accounts. This allows each beneficiary to manage withdrawals independently, as if they were the sole beneficiary.

You can open an inherited IRA at most banks or brokerage firms, although the simplest option is often to set it up with the firm that already holds your father's account.

**The 10-Year Withdrawal Rule**

Under the SECURE Act, signed into law in December 2019, most non-spouse beneficiaries must withdraw all the money from an inherited IRA by the end of the 10th year following the original owner's death. This rule applies if the owner died in 2020 or later.

If your father had already begun taking required minimum distributions (RMDs), you generally must continue taking annual RMDs while also emptying the account within 10 years. If he had not yet started RMDs, annual withdrawals aren't required, as long as the entire IRA is withdrawn by the end of the 10-year period.

You may take withdrawals faster if you choose, but distributions from a traditional IRA are taxable as ordinary income in the year taken. Roth IRA withdrawals, however, are usually tax-free, provided the account has been open at least five years.

If you fail to take a required RMD, or don't withdraw enough, the penalty is

25 percent of the amount you should have taken. That penalty can be reduced to 10 percent if the mistake is corrected within two years.

**Exceptions to the Rule**

Several beneficiaries are exempt from the 10-year rule, including a surviving spouse, a minor child, a disabled or chronically ill beneficiary, or someone who is within 10 years of age of the original IRA owner. These beneficiaries may be allowed to stretch withdrawals over a longer period.

**Minimize Your Taxes**

As tempting as it may be to cash out an inherited IRA in a lump sum, or take large withdrawals over just a few years, proceed carefully. Doing so could trigger a hefty tax bill. Withdrawals from a traditional IRA are generally taxed as income at your regular tax rate.

For many heirs, spreading distributions over the 10-year period can help manage taxes and reduce the risk of being pushed into a higher tax bracket. Other strategies may make sense if your income fluctuates or you're nearing retirement.

To help navigate these decisions, consider working with a financial advisor. If you don't have one, you can find a fee-only, fiduciary financial planner through the National Association of Personal Financial Advisors at [nappfa.org](http://nappfa.org).

Dear Oldest, I'm sorry to hear about the loss of your father, but you're smart to be planning ahead. Inheriting an IRA from a parent comes with a unique set of rules. Understanding them can help you make the most of the money you inherit and avoid an unpleasant surprise at tax time. Here are some basics you should know.

**Setting It Up**

Many people assume they can roll an inherited IRA into their own IRA, but that's not allowed for most beneficiaries. If you inherit an IRA from a parent, sibling, or anyone other than a spouse, you cannot treat the account as your own. Instead, your share must be transferred into a newly established inherited IRA, properly titled in the deceased owner's name—for example, John Smith, deceased, for the benefit of Jane Smith.

If your father named multiple beneficiaries, the IRA can

**Church Directory**

**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](http://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](http://www.pointchurchofchrist.org)

**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

**St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church**  
Rev. Michael Ledesma  
551 East FM 2795  
903-473-5116  
Visit [stjohnemory.org](http://stjohnemory.org) for Mass times.  
From Brookshires, go east 1.2 miles. Turn right onto FM 2795

**County Line Baptist Church**  
**Bro. Wayne Darty**  
Sunday School 9:45 a.m.  
Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.  
Sunday Evening 6:30 p.m.  
Wednesday Night 7:00 p.m.  
*nursery available*  
**HWY. 275, 3 miles south of Miller Grove**  
**903-994-2125 • 903-459-3219**

*We invite you to study God's word with us soon.*  
**CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
Hwy. 69 N. • P.O. Box 68  
Emory, TX 75440  
903-473-2658  
Sunday Bible Classes 9:00 a.m.  
Sunday Morning Worship 10:00 a.m.  
Sunday Evening Worship 4:00 p.m.  
Wed. Bible Study 7:00 p.m.  
[emorychurchofchrist.org](http://emorychurchofchrist.org)

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH Point, TX**  
9:45 a.m. .... Sunday School  
11:00 a.m. .... Morning Worship  
6:00 p.m. .... Evening Worship  
6:00 p.m. .. Wednesday Service  
**Pastor Dan Wynn**  
903-598-3220  
[www.fbcpoint.com](http://www.fbcpoint.com)

**EMORY BAPTIST CHURCH**  
On The Square  
Corner Of North & Planters  
Downtown Emory  
903-473-3357  
[emorybaptist.org](http://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.bbcmemory.org](http://www.bbcmemory.org) 903-474-0027

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<http://clarkschapelcog.org/>  
<http://www.facebook.com/clarkschapelcogemorytx>

903-473-2653 to have your church placed in this directory

**PUBLIC/LEGAL NOTICE**

**TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**



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

**PERMIT NO. WQ0013659001**

**APPLICATION.** Steamboat Shores Owners Association, 2 Steamboat Shores, Emory, Texas 75440, has applied to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to renew Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) Permit No. WQ0013659001 (EPA I.D. No. TX0110647) to authorize the discharge of treated wastewater at a volume not to exceed a daily average flow of 13,500 gallons per day. The domestic wastewater treatment facility is located at 2 Steamboat Shores, near the city of Emory, in Rains County, Texas 75440. The discharge route is from the plant site directly to Lake Fork Reservoir. TCEQ received this application on January 15, 2026. The permit application will be available for viewing and copying at Rains County Courthouse, 220 West Quitman 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=-95.666666,32.892777&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 countywide 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](http://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](http://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 Steamboat Shores Owners Association at the address stated above or by calling Debbie Andrews, President, at 903-530-8024.

Issuance Date: February 11, 2026

**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 1/2 ACRES; JAMES MCMILLAN SURVEY.**

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

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

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

LAURA PATE, DISTRICT CLERK  
RAINS COUNTY, TEXAS  
By: MELISSA BUTLER, DEPUTY CLERK

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- Property auctions
- Public hearings
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- Adoptions

Find out about these and more in your local paper!  
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Read your Public Notices.**

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We Accept  **903-473-2653**  
**CLASSIFIED DEADLINE**  
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**FOR SALE SALES RENT/LEASE CONSTRUCTION LAWN/LANDSCAPE/MOWING PUBLIC/LEGAL NOTICE**

**FOR SALE SALES**  
 The Rains County Good Samaritan Thrift/Clothes store will be open Saturdays in February 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.

**RENT/LEASE**  
 For Rent 3BR/2BA manufactured home on Duffy St., \$1,300/mth. Apply at eagleinapartments.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.

**CONSTRUCTION**  
**HOOTEN'S HARDWARE, LLC**  
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**G&G GRAVEL.** All types of gravel, chipped asphalt, available for spreading, free estimates. Miller Grove. Bret Garrett 903-268-6910.  
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 Painting, drywall, carpentry and more. 903-259-8541. For plumbing needs call Scott Trieb 903-474-4129.

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

**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

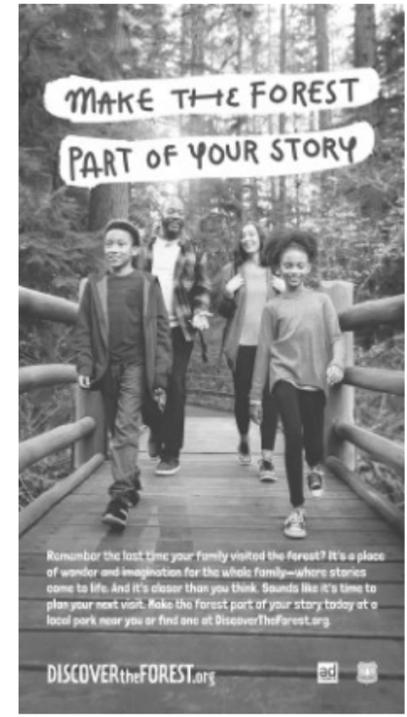
**NOTICE OF ADOPTED ORDINANCE**  
 ORDINANCE NO. 3-2026  
 AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF EMORY, TEXAS, AMENDING THE CITY OF EMORY CEMETERY AND FORBIS CEMETERY FEE SCHEDULE: UPDATING FEES INCLUDING BURIAL PLOT SALES AND SERVICE FEES FOR INTERMENT AND DIRT REMOVAL.  
 On 2/10/26 the City of Emory Council adopted Ordinance No. 3-2026 to adjust City owned cemetery fees to reflect current operational and maintenance costs. Major changes include adjustments to the price of individual burial plots and labor charges for maintenance and dirt removal. A copy of full ordinance and updated fee schedule is available for public inspection at the Office of the City Secretary, located at 399 N. Texas St. Emory, Texas 75440, during regular business hours and on the City's website at Cityofemory.com  
 This ordinance shall take effect on 3/2/26.  
 Donna Raper, City Secretary

**RENT/LEASE**  
 RENTAL HOMES AVAILABLE in Emory. \$1,350/mth & \$1,200/mth. Call 903-474-4007.  
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 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.  
**LAKE WORKS.** Building boathouses 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.

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



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

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."



KEEP THE FRESH START GOING

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