

Rains County Leader

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EMORY, TEXAS - THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 2026

PRICE 75¢

RAINS COUNTY

Citizens' concerns on green energy; overtime for deputies top commissioners' agenda



Leader phot by TREY HILL

Solar farms like the one located between Point and Lone Oak, and the battery storage facilities that accompany them, were among some of the topics discussed during the meeting of the Rains County Commissioners Court held Thursday, March 12.

By **CHUCK FITTS**
Rains County Leader staff

The Rains County Commissioners Court held a regular meeting on Thursday, March 12, to hear more input on green energy projects in the county, discuss county policy on comp time and consider on options for a fire marshal for Rains County.

The meeting began with a public hearing for county residents to express

their thoughts to the court on forming a Chapter 391 Regional Planning Commission for the county and green energy projects.

The first speaker noted that he was an electric engineer and expressed his concerns regarding more load added to the existing power lines from the solar facility. He stated to the court that he had obtained the Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) from ERCOT stating that the power from the solar farm would go

to a data center.

Several other speakers expressed their concerns on environmental damage, loss of property value, fire department training and grid vulnerability from the green energy facilities. They expressed support in forming the 391 Commission to protect the county and its residents.

During the regular meeting, the court discussed the county's policy regarding compensatory (comp) time instead of

paying overtime for deputies in the sheriff's office. They were provided with numbers showing that comp time costs the county more in the end and the benefits to deputies if they get overtime pay opposed to booking comp time.

Commissioners saw the benefit of moving to overtime, but any change would have to be made during budget time as a policy change affecting payroll

see **COURT** on page 2

EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT NO. 1

Emergency services board discusses new radios, grants

By **CHUCK FITTS**
Rains County Leader staff

The Rains County Emergency Services District board discussed the new radio system of local fire departments and monthly reports during the regular meeting on Monday, March 16.

After monthly reports and payment of monthly reimbursement affidavits of the county fire departments, the board was updated on the current quote for new radios and equipment.

Rains County Commissioner Jeremy Cook stated that the new tower at the Rains County Texas Department of Transportation office on Hwy. 69 is scheduled to be constructed and ready for use in September.

A representative from Motorola Solutions was on hand with two handheld radios to be considered by the departments. The quote for the upgrade of radio equipment in trucks, tower and

handhelds would be around \$700,000.

The board was informed that a FEMA grant obtained by the local departments would cover just over \$360,000 of the cost and donations to the county for the radios would add another \$84,000 for the new equipment.

The local fire chiefs wanted to inspect the new handheld radios to determine which would work best for their departments. They did note the desire to move the current radio repeater to the new tower to act as a backup to the new equipment being installed on the new tower.

The board took no action on the item to allow fire departments to review the equipment and return with decisions by the next meeting.

In monthly activity reports for February, Hopkins County reported 166 requests for service, with 48 refusals. The

see **ESD** on page 2

POINT

Former city secretary files lawsuit for wrongful termination

By **TREY HILL**
Rains County Leader staff

Heather Rollins, the former City Secretary of Point, has filed a petition in state court against the city and several officials, alleging she was wrongfully terminated in December 2025. Rollins asserts her dismissal was in retaliation for repeatedly reporting legal violations by the city, the mayor, and council members.

In her petition, Rollins outlines a series of grievances, which include allegations of violations of the Open Meetings Act, ongoing failures to pay required taxes, and improper efforts to force her resignation without council approval as stipulated by the Local Government Code. She also claims that she experienced official oppression, abuse of authority, and tampering with government records.

According to Rollins, her good-faith

whistleblower reports resulted in retaliation from city officials, leading to her being compelled to surrender her keys, experiencing constructive suspension, and ultimately being terminated. She invokes the Texas Whistleblower Act, asserting that her termination is presumed to be a direct consequence of her reports. Rollins contends that the city has no valid justification for her firing.

Furthermore, she alleges that the city's refusal to address her grievances constitutes a violation of her rights to due course of law. She claims the retaliatory actions and denial of grievance rights reflect a de facto policy established by final policymakers, undermining the integrity of city governance.

Rollins maintains that her free speech rights under the Texas Constitution were violated, emphasizing that

see **POINT** on page 2

SPOTLIGHT

Kelsey Hernandez learned the art of massage on her grandmother's shoulders

By **JUDY KRAMER**
Rains County Leader contributor

Kelsey Hernandez massaged her grandma's shoulders when she was young and decided she would be a massage therapist when she grew up. She eventually accomplished that dream, but not before trying out other careers.

I first started studying to be a teacher," said Hernandez. "But, when I spent some time in classroom situations, and teachers talked about how sometimes the job could be difficult, I realized it might not be the best career for me. Instead I earned my cosmetology certification after attending the Institute of Harmonic Massage in Wylie. Then, I went to

work as a chiropractor assistant before joining the staff at Blissful Massage and Wellness in Point about a year and a half ago."

Hernandez also spent 500 hours studying how to massage and is now licensed to do facials, waxing, massages, shampooing and other therapy treatments including scalp massages. She said her favorite skill is massaging necks and shoulders because it is a customer favorite. She said low back massages for sciatica nerve pain are also often requested.

Hernandez grew up in Campbell and attended school in Rains ISD. Her mother lives in Point. Hernandez graduated in 2019 from Rains High School and married ChaCho Hernandez a year ago. He has lived in the

local area all his life and works in Addison, traveling with his job. She said their interest in each other began about six years ago when they worked at the same grocery store.

Hernandez takes time out to care for her own body by getting regular massages. She has a dog, likes to read and builds Legos. She is planning to get certified in pregnancy massage as well as other new skills. And, she wants to eventually have kids.

Hernandez enjoys traveling and she has been to Colorado, a music fest in Oklahoma and to other concerts.

To earn a Cosmetology license in Texas, a person must complete 1,000

see **SPOTLIGHT** on page 3



Kelsey and ChaCho Hernandez



City Girl:
Simplicity
Page 3

Jody Dyer:
The Coffee Cup...
page 3

Wildcat Sports
page 8

Rain Report
Wed., Mar. 11 0.51 in.
Total for Mar. 3.06 in.
Year to date 6.93 in.

Community outreach & organizations

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS
Emory - Tues. & Thurs. 7:00-8:00 p.m., open meetings.
Emory Methodist Church Fellowship Hall. For info call 903-243-6766 or 903-439-7573

AL-ANON - Thurs., 7:00 p.m., Crossroads Al-anon Group, 103 N. Houston St., Edgewood, 903-896-7270

AMERICAN LEGION POST 156, Rabb Bro. Mem. Rains Co. - 4th Mon., 5:15 p.m., 215 N. Duffy St., Emory, 903-438-6045. Buffet breakfast - 2nd Saturday 7:00-10:00 a.m.

ARBALA DANCE - Mon., 7:00-9:30 p.m., Arbala Community Center

CELEBRATE RECOVERY - every Tuesday, 6:30 p.m. Emory Baptist Church

EAST TAWAKONI SENIOR CITIZEN GAME DAY - every Wednesday, 9:00 a.m., 255 Oakleaf Trail.

EMORY LIONS CLUB - 1st and 3rd Tuesdays, 12:00 p.m., Dos Charros in Emory. Call for information 903-473-2311

FOOD BANK AT FREEDOM CHURCH OF GOD - 3rd Fri., 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., 10830 FM 514, Emory. 903-473-2457

FRIENDS OF RAINS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY - 3rd Thurs., 1:00 p.m., Meadows Cultural Center, Rains Co. Public Library

LAKE COUNTRY NEIGHBORS - 1st Thurs., 11:30 a.m., www.lakecountryneighbors.com

LAKE FORK BAPTIST CHURCH FOOD PANTRY - 2nd Tues., 1-3 p.m. 9483 W. FM 515, Alba

LAKE FORK CHAPTER OF THE WELL ARMED WOMAN - first Thursday, 4-7 p.m. at Winnsboro Gun Club, Winnsboro TX. Sue Parrish 903-473-9819

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

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

PIECEMAKERS QUILT GUILD OF RAINS COUNTY - 3rd Mon., 7:00 p.m., AgriLife Extension and Conference Center

POINT LADIES CIVIC CLUB - 1st Thurs., 6:30 p.m., Point Community Center, 903-269-8446

RAINS AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION
2nd Sat. of each month 9:00 a.m. Emory Volunteer Fire Dept.,

RAINS GARDEN CLUB - 1st Mon., 11:00 a.m., Rains County Library, Email TheRainsGardenClub@gmail.com

RAINS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY - 3rd Mon., 6:00 p.m., Jan., Mar., May, July, Sep., Nov., Emory City Hall.

RAINS COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD - 4th Mon., 5:30 p.m., Feb., Apr., June, Aug., Oct., Meadows Cultural Center, Rains County Public Library

RAINS COUNTY GOOD SAMARITANS - Food Pantry open 1:00-4:00 p.m. Mon. & Thurs.

RAINS COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY - 3rd Sat., 1:00 p.m. Meadows Cultural Center, Rains County Public Library

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

STITCH AND LEARN QUILTING CLUB - Thurs., 9:00 a.m.-noon, 903-598-3021 Miracle Faith Baptist Church

WOMEN'S SERVICE CLUB - 2nd Mon., 6:00 p.m., Rose Community Center

WOMEN IN NEED, INC. - A Battered Women's Shelter. Call 903-455-4612 or 903-454-HELP

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

Democratic Convention Mar. 21

The Rains County Democratic County Convention will be held on Saturday, March 21, at 10:30 a.m., at the Rains County Public Library, located at 150 Doris Briggs Parkway, Emory.

Women's Service Club Potato Dinner

The Women's Service Club will serve baked potatoes with all the trimmings and dessert on Monday, March 23, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m., at the Rose Community Center. All orders will be to go only. Potato only \$10. Potato with meat \$15.

Proceeds will help fund scholarships and Poppers in the Park.

American Legion Dinner Sat., Mar. 28

Rabb Brothers Memorial American Legion Post #156 will offer a Lasagna dinner with garlic bread, salad, desserts and drinks on Saturday, March 28, 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.

Alba Public Library Celebration Apr. 11

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

Take charge of your debt, one step at a time

If you have debt that feels overwhelming, you can regain control.



BRANDON ROBERTS
Edward Jones
Financial Advisor

First, know what you owe. List all balances from mortgages, auto loans, medical bills and credit cards, and

divide that total by your gross income. Aim for less than 35 percent with a mortgage or 20 percent without.

Second, look to lower or simplify your debt by refinancing at lower rates, consolidating multiple debts or transferring high-interest balances to lower-rate cards. Third, determine how

much extra you can pay to bring down the debt. Calculate how much is left after paying essential expenses and minimum payments. If need be, consider freeing up money by cutting spending, such as dining out or shopping for nonessentials.

Finally, decide which balances to pay off first and which will stay at minimums until their turn. Many people start with the highest interest rate; others choose the smallest balance for quick wins.

By building a clear strategy, you can turn debt repayment into a manageable goal.

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

COURT

Continued from page 1

would affect the county's budget. No action was taken on the item to wait for the budget.

The court moved to executive session for personnel matters for about an hour. Upon returning to open session, they accepted a letter of engagement with Dr. Robert Steele as a technical consultant pending official agreement.

The court took no action on hiring a fire marshal and/or building inspector for the county as they wanted to seek more candidates to consider for the position.

Commissioners approved a motion to make the Rains County Courthouse Annex a smoke-free property, convert the last parking spot on the right side of the front of the building into a handicap spot and to get estimates for making the building more handicap accessible.

For the Public Library, the court adopted a resolution to apply for TLA funding to help with the summer reading program and accepted the gift of an iPad to the library.

They approved the librarian's proposal to set May as "Overdue Fine Forgiveness" month for patrons to return overdue books and heard the Library Advisory Board report.

The commissioners approved a road damage agreement and resolution to set a policy of recuperating the cost of damage to county roads during construction of large projects.

They provided funding from the county's contingency fund for members of the Tax Assessor/Collector's office to attend seminars for the Motor Vehicle Department.

Commissioners considered options for the new offices in the Hill Building which included moving all the financial offices into one building for convenience. No action was taken as further research needed to be done. They did approve a motion to allow Rains County Judge Brent Hilliard and Rains County Justice of the Peace Jenkins Franklin to share offices.

The court approved the final plat of CT Ranch on RCR 2300, a replat to combine two lots in the Alexander Estates at the corner of RCR 1278 and Hwy. 276 and a replat to combine five lots on Oak Trails.

The commissioners court granted the use of Heritage Park for the second annual golf ball drop and waived the fee for use as proceeds benefit local Veterans services. They accepted into the minutes of the meeting the continuing education units of three commissioners.

Commissioner Lori Northcutt was not present for the regular meeting.

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

THE PUBLIC FORUM

Solar Energy in Rains County

Dear Editor

Green energy is in Rains County: a solar farm (over 800 acres) on Hwy. 69N and a battery storage project (on about 30 acres) is in the beginning stages about a mile north of Lake Fork in Precinct 3. Additional projects are planned. We should not be caught unaware as this technology is quietly being installed all around us.

Recently about 100 citizens attended a public hearing held at Rains County Courthouse to learn more about the projects and specifically the associated health and environmental safety risks. Many questions and concerns were raised. Some answers were provided and some of those turned out to be dubious, leading to more uncertainty. For example, regarding the California Moss Landing battery facility fire in early 2025, scientific researchers have now reported that with battery storage "the risk of both localized and widespread contamination will increase even as safety protocols improve." That statement is chilling. I'm asking who

benefits, and who or what is at risk? What recourse do we have if those risks are unacceptable?

I'm told there's a lot of money to be made in green energy for those companies and the counties that install it. But, I believe that God requires us to be good stewards of His magnificent gifts. That demands our engagement, to build knowledge and use critical thinking to understand the issues, and it requires the fortitude to do what is right. Would we "sell out" for a few pieces of silver?

I encourage every church, every civic organization, every citizen to reach out to the Rains County Safety Coalition. Contact them at rainscountysafetycoalition.org. Ask to host informative sessions with your groups. Make sure your friends and neighbors are aware of the issues and the impacts to our community. Demand that Rains County government protect its people, property and prosperity.

Deborah Walker
Emory, Tx 75440

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<p>Brandon R Roberts CFP® Financial Advisor 132 N Texas St P O Box 1221 Emory, TX 75440 903-473-1592</p>	<p>Holly Wasson Financial Advisor 132 N Texas St P O Box 1221 Emory, TX 75440 903-473-1592</p>
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SUDOKU

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

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

ESD

Continued from page 1

average response time on life threatening emergencies for city calls was 5 minutes, 28 seconds, while county calls were 10 minutes, 59 seconds.

Of the 111 transports to a medical facility by EMS, 76 went to Sulphur Springs, 27 to Greenville, four to Quitman, two to Tyler and two to "other hospital or air transport." The most common calls were for a person feeling accident and breathing problems.

Emory VFD responded to 98 calls during the month of February. The department categorized the calls as 69 medical services calls, 16 fires, six non-emergency calls, five public service calls,

hazardous conditions and a rescue call.

The Point VFD responded to 26 medical assists, five service calls, four fires, four motor vehicle accidents, two smoke alarms, one controlled burn and one cancelled-in-route call for a total of 43 calls in February.

During the month of February, the East Tawakoni VFD was dispatched on 24 calls including 12 medical assists, six fires, two motor vehicle accidents, two life assists and two smoke investigations.

The next regular meeting of the Rains County ESD board is scheduled for Monday, April 20, at 6:30 p.m. in the Emory VFD Fire Station.

POINT

Continued from page 1

her expressions as a citizen on matters of public concern—both at council meetings and to law enforcement – provoked retaliation from city officials.

In her petition, Rollins seeks the following remedies:

- Reinstatement to her former position, along with back pay, benefits, and seniority.
- Clearance of her per-

sonnel record.

- An end to the ongoing retaliatory actions.

- Declaratory and/or mandamus relief to rescind the punishment imposed on her and halt continued violations of constitutional and statutory rights.

- Damages for mental anguish and emotional distress resulting from these actions.

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

Support your local newspaper!
The Rains County Leader

GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES

EAST TAWAKONI CITY COUNCIL
3rd Tues., 7:00 p.m., East Tawakoni City Hall

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

POINT CITY COUNCIL
2nd Tues., 6:45 p.m., Point City Hall

RAINS COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT
3rd Thurs. of every month, Rains Tax Office at 12:00 p.m.

RAINS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' COURT
2nd & 4th Thurs., 10:00 a.m., Rains County Courthouse

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

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

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

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

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H.W. Martin - 1887	Tom W. Hill - 1904-1937
Sam Fitzgerald - Before 1900	Earl Hill, Sr. - 1937-1960
W.O. Hebisen - Before 1900	Kathleen Hill Becknell - 1962-1995
A.S. Hornbeck - Before 1900	Earl Hill, Jr. - 1995-2019
J.H. Bradford - 1901-1904	

CITY GIRL

Simplicity

By Linda Brendle

A few weeks ago, I wrote a "fluff" piece called Cats and Puppies. It was an easy break from several columns about local politics and other fairly serious subjects.



LINDA BRENDLE
Leader
correspondent

As is my habit, a day or two after the column was published in the Leader, I posted it in my blog, and I received this interesting comment from my cousin: "I think people are craving simplicity in these times, and animals are a way of doing that. You wake up thinking and dreading what's next. Then you think, 'Oh, well. What's Kitty up to today.'"

I think she is absolutely right. In the mid-20th century, a phenomenon called urban flight came into existence as city-dwellers moved to the suburbs looking for more space, lower costs, and maybe a simpler life style. Unfortunately, they brought their city ways with them, and soon the suburbs were simply cities with fewer high-rise buildings and more privacy fences. Now some people, especially those who are near retirement age or have already retired, are leaving the suburbs and seeking relief from life's pressures in more rural areas. Too often, though, these newcomers don't adjust well to the slower pace of country living, so they continue to worry and fret about what comes next or how to keep up with the latest arts and entertainment stars when there are no legitimate theaters within seventy-five miles.

However, others - like David and me - adjust quite well to simplicity. When we moved here in 2011, I switched my focus from the

national headlines to learning - or trying to learn - how to fight the fungus that blighted my squash plants and the squirrels that were determined to take one bite out of every tomato I grew. While I was in the garden, David was learning to fell a tree so it landed exactly where he planned and how to burn the results without setting every remaining tree on fire. We also exchanged a calendar full of business meetings and project deadlines for a schedule with no more demanding decisions than what to take to the next potluck or whether to take Mexican Train or Scattergories to the next game night.

Along the line of my cousin's comment, we had an interesting conversation with a friend over lunch recently. After a short lull in the conversation, she asked, "Do kids worry about 'the bomb' anymore? I never hear them talk about the bomb. I still worry about the bomb." We reminded her that we were raised in an era when the atomic bomb was relatively new. The general public didn't really understand the bomb, and people fear what they don't understand. At school we had drills during which we climbed under our desks that had been arranged facing each other to provide shelter in the event of an enemy attack. Thankfully, we never had to learn how effective - or ineffective - that would be. Our lunch discussion included the fact that today's youth have a whole new set of issues to worry about other than the latest weapons of mass destruction - climate change, pandemics like Covid, artificial intelligence, gender dysphoria, and an overabundance of problems we had never heard of when we were their age.

When constantly bom-

barded with news, noise, and information, it's difficult to be content with or to even find the simple things in life. But some, especially in small towns like Emory, have discovered the magic of simplicity. Several families in our circle of friends have opted out of the public-school fray and are teaching their children at home. Recently, the mom of one of the families posted pictures of her boys sitting in the backyard, watching in fascination as the "worker men" repaired the broken water main in their back yard. One of the boys even enticed one of the men into shooting a few hoops with him. These boys were learning about the dignity and importance of knowing a trade and of not being afraid to get your hands dirty and about the joy of interaction with other people without a screen in between.

The next time you find yourself, like my cousin, waking up thinking about and dreading what's next, remember the KISS principle, "Keep it simple, stupid!" If you find that offensive, try "Keep it short and simple." I often wake up thinking nothing more complicated than, "What's on the agenda today - Men's Bible and Biscuits, Ladies Bible Study, Java Gypsies Coffee Group, or Home Group?" I might think, "Is the weather going to be warm enough to do some porch sitting today?" Another thought might be, "Who do I know that needs a little encouragement today?" And if that's not simple enough to get my day started off right, I might just think, "I wonder what Kitty's up to today."

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.

The Coffee Cup Consideration

"Life happens; coffee helps."

Anonymous

Coffee is the one beverage consumed on planet Earth that carries with it a certain



JODY DYER
Typewriter Weekly

There is a spirit and energy that accompanies our daily coffee consumption lacking in other beverages. While coffee is good consumed out of any container, whether from a Styrofoam cup as you navigate life from the front seat of your car, a metallic mug over a campfire in the woods, or something else, coffee is good no matter how you drink it. But for my money, nothing quite beats an old-fashioned diner-type mug when enjoying the world's favorite brew. And I recently have stumbled upon what is now my absolute favorite coffee conveyance. I call it my new favorite coffee cup, but in truth, it is the heftier version that should properly be called a coffee mug. I am just fond of alliteration, so like saying coffee cup.

My coffee cup consideration began before Christmas as I searched for a small additional gift for my wife. She loves everything having to do with coffee, so there began my search point. Slumped over my computer, I began looking for unique coffee themed must have gifts, and I found one. We both were so pleased with this item that I thought it worth writing about. The gift was the perfect coffee cup, or mug. I ordered two. Now, settled at my desk with our little dog Mac at my feet as I write, I drink out of nothing else. A steaming cup of coffee next to my typewriter makes me feel like Raymond Chandler in the morning.

(Chandler loved coffee, drank copious amounts every day, and once described it as "the life blood of tired men" - he would have loved this coffee cup gift.)

Until now, I was in the habit of using just any mug or cup for my morning coffee. We have a wide and varied assortment in our cupboards. Not counting the plethora of steel travel containers, we have heaps of regular ceramic coffee mugs in our kitchen. There are garage sale and gift shop finds, bad birthday gifts, flag waving, hand-painted,

Texas themed, sports team, cactus plant shaped, advertising and merch mugs of every stripe (some I had made with my Typewriter Weekly logo on them). There are cracked mugs and joke mugs, movie-themed and broke mugs. There is even one lone Chewbacca mug I've lost after hiding it from my wife (correction on the Chewbacca mug - I just now remembered that I gave it to our slew-foot friend Stuart as a wedding gift six years ago - I am not making this up). I think we need to clean house and toss the old stock because we now use our new favorite mugs all the time.

These wonderful new mugs are handmade in Asheville, North Carolina by the East Fork Company. Crafted from iron-rich red-brown local clay, every mug is an object of practical beauty.

The mugs are available in seven enigmatic core colors (Heron, Blue Ridge, Eggshell, Panna Cotta, Morel, Amaro, Black Mountain), along with additional interesting seasonal shades sometimes available (Pollen, Celery, Utah, Big Sky, Thistle, Sepia, Malachite). Each mug is made using a 3/4 dip glaze which shows raw clay at the top and bottom. These mugs are both rustic

and elegant.

The mugs are bottom weighted, so even when empty, they are heavy and secure in your hand. The oversized and full handle gives you a stable grip. The mug feels like a comfortable extension of your hand, like a favorite baseball glove at the ready as you await fly balls in centerfield. The chunky shape holds 12 ounces and feels cozy. Thick sides retain heat and are tapered towards the top edge, so agreeable to your lips. This gives a soothing skin to mug feel, making it easy to sip your coffee. These mugs are solid and sturdy, freshly fired and straight out of the kiln, ready to ship to your door.

All products from the East Fork Company are lead-free and dishwasher and microwave safe (besides the world's best mugs, they make all types of pottery and dinnerware and have developed something of a cult following - for good reason).

To upgrade your coffee game with a settling alternative to the worn-out cups and mugs you now use for your coffee, consider a mug from East Fork (go to eastfork.com). They are a bit expensive (\$44 as of this writing), but in my warped opinion, they are worth the price. Buy one and you won't drink your coffee from anything else...

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

typewriterweekly.com
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SPOTLIGHT

Continued from page 1

hours and pass both written and practical cosmetology. This allows a graduate to perform a wide range of beauty services, including hair cutting, styling, coloring, nail care, skincare,

makeup application and more.

A massage therapist provides therapeutic relief to treat chronic pain, improve blood flow or achieve a state of relaxation by manipulat-

ing the soft tissue of a client's body. In Texas a license is earned after completing 500 hours of department-approved coursework, clinical work plus a 50-hour internship.

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TEXAS CROSSWORD
by Charley & Guy Orbison
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ACROSS

- USS Houston fought at Battle of the Sea
- TXism: "you can bet the farm ___" (a sure thing)
- prior call letters for KHFZ in Pittsburg
- a pen name of TX Sandra Brown: ___ St. Claire
- TXism: "___ the eye with a sharp stick"
- TXism: "paddle your ___ canoe"
- TXism: "gentle ___ a merry-go-round"
- this Stone directed Texas-based "JFK" film (init.)
- cart-pulling cows
- TXism: "the bigger they ___ harder they fall"
- "Texas Eagle" is an ___ train
- person from Glasgow, e.g. Army trained WWII pilots at ___ Army Field near Victoria
- this Winfield was in TX Roddenberry "Star Trek II" film (init.)
- ex-Cowboy head coach Parcells has a good one
- Rising ___ TX
- TXism: "exciting as a fire at the ___ office"
- unincorporated town in Armstrong County

DOWN

- TX Nolan has most strike ___ in MLB
- Triple Crown winner "Assault" was Texas-___
- old time Texas music party
- TXism: "don't ___ dead horse" (wasted effort)
- flightless bird
- distributes poker hands
- this Warren played TX Clyde Barrow in 1967 film
- abbr. for someone who is "out to pasture"
- Texas-based "Frito" ___
- "Yankee Doodle" actor, James
- "the houses," in Mexico (2 wds.)
- TXism: "___ irons" (silverware)
- UT subject (abbr.)
- a Killeen univ. that became UCT
- TXism: "___ a spell"
- Andrews County seat
- this Leigh was "Scarlett O'Hara" in 1939 blockbuster
- camping shelter (2 wds.)
- ex-Cowboy punter, Mike (1985-92)
- six tennis game wins is this (2 wds.)
- TXism: "big biscuit in the ___ (boss)"
- TX Holly's "___ Boy"
- fuzzy Australian marsupials at the San Antonio Zoo
- Astro mistake
- TX Tanya's "Can ___ You Tonight"
- hoop attachment in a Maverick game
- TX Roy Orbison's "___ Woman"
- TX Byron Nelson was born ___
- "Bold Venture" ___ 38-across
- "legal eagle" abbr.
- TX Steve Martin sang "King ___"
- TXism: "between ___ (night)"
- angry
- TX Janine Turner was this Maggie on "Northern Exposure"
- TX "Cowpokes" artist Ace (init.)
- kitten sound
- Texas newspaper org.
- a threat to Cowboy Dak Prescott
- west Texas plants

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Sheriff's Report

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



MICHAEL HOPKINS
Rains County Sheriff

Arrests

3-9: Felicia Nicole Fuller. Driving with license invalid with previous conviction/suspension without financial responsibility, no bond listed.

3-10: Nathan Daniel Brown. Traffic offense class C, no driver's license, \$15,000 bond.

3-10: Jaxx Jared Lemons. Public intoxication, \$217 bond.

3-13: Andre Valencia. No drivers license (probation violation)/ possession of marijuana less than 2 oz. (probation violation), no bond listed.

3-15: Madison Paige Bunton. Driving while intoxicated, second, \$20,000 bond.

3-15: Jeremy Kyle Hogue. Possession of controlled substance PG 1/1-B greater than or equal to 1 gr. less

than 4 gr., \$40,000 bond.

Calls

3-9: E Lennon Dr. Welfare concern; FM 2795 Medical assist; Hwy. 19N Reckless driving; Hwy. 19 Controlled burn; Lakeview Dr. Medical assist; Sheriff's Office (SO) lobby Meet complainant; E Lennon Dr. Welfare concern; FM 779S Medical assist; Hwy. 69 Medical assist; (SO) lobby Meet complainant; CR 4015 Follow up investigation; (SO) lobby Meet complainant; FM 2737 Abandoned vehicle; CR 1310 Follow up investigation; FM 779 Livestock on roadway; PR 5451 Assault; CR 4480 Controlled burn; S Texas St. Burglary; PR 5451 Medical assist; FM 2324 Medical assist; (SO) lobby Agency assist; Hwy. 69W Criminal trespass warning; Nix Dr. Public assist; (SO) lobby Meet complainant; N 1st St. Point Medical assist; Smith Cir. Controlled burn; FM 5451 Neighbor dispute; N Texas St. Medical assist; CR 1310 Animal bite; CR 4510 Theft; Ravine St. City ordinance violation; CR

3345 Stolen vehicle; CR 1315 Medical assist; PR 6611 Animal bite; N Texas St. Meet complainant; CR 3202 Hwy. 276 at CR 1320 Motorist assist; FM 47 Pedestrian stop.

3-10: Hwy. 19S Accident; W Lennon Dr. Business alarm; FM 514 Medical assist; CR 1536 Welfare concern; E Lennon Dr. Stolen vehicle; Quitman St. Accident; CR 2570 Livestock on the roadway; PR 5451 Assault; N Texas St. Aggressive animal; FM 514 Medical assist; (SO) lobby Meet complainant; SO lobby Follow up investigation; Locust St. Noise complaint; N Locust St. Disturbance; FM 275 Medical assist; Hwy. 276 Livestock on the roadway; FM 47 Animal welfare concern; SO lobby Suspicious person; Hwy. 19N Reckless driving; CR 4310 Suspicious person; CR 3410 Suspicious vehicle; CR 4250.

3-11: E Lennon Dr. suspicious person; N Hwy. 19 Meet complainant; 2nd St. Gas leak; Hwy. 69 Motorist assist; CR 1503 Medical assist; Smith Cir. Suspicious person; Ave. C Welfare

concern; CR 1315 Debris in the roadway; (SO) lobby Meet complainant; CR 1308 Medical assist; CR 2570 Livestock on the roadway; CR 3330 Medical assist; (SO) lobby Meet complainant; Littlefield Dr. Medical assist; (SO) lobby Meet complainant; Hwy. 276 Animal welfare concern; N 1st St. Medical assist; Industrial Park Rd. Business alarm; Briggs Blvd. Theft; CR 2470 Reckless driving; Tawakoni Dr. Bank alarm, DR 2570 Livestock on roadway; CR 1640 Public assist; CR 4250 Trespassing; Katy Dr. Medical assist; FM 2795 Controlled burn; SO lobby Disturbance; E Lennon Dr. Suspicious vehicle; Hwy. 69 Business alarm.

3-12: CR 2300 Livestock on the roadway; N 1st St. Medical assist; CR 1310 Follow up investigation; E Lennon Dr. Agency assist; Hwy. 19N Medical assist; Hwy. 276 Medical assist; CR 1525 Medical assist; E Lennon Dr. Meet complainant; CR 2570 Livestock on roadway; CR 3357 Residence alarm; CR 4488 Controlled burn; W Lennon Dr. Criminal trespass; Quitman St. Escort; SO lobby Medical assist; CR 3329 Suspicious person; CR 3346 Residence alarm; Hwy. 69 Reckless driver; PR 5450 Medical assist; CR 3202 Animal at large; SO lobby Warrant service; CR 4250 Harassment; E Lennon Dr. Welfare concern; SO lobby Controlled burn; FM 2324 Medical assist; Hwy. 276 Animal welfare concern; FM 513 Suspicious person; 3rd St. Point Criminal trespass; PR 7710 Welfare concern.

3-13: 3rd St. Point Disor-

derly conduct; FM 515 Criminal trespass; S Texas St. Animal at large; FM 515 Pedestrian stop; FM 799 Reckless driver; E Lennon Dr. City ordinance violation; CR 4020 Pedestrian stop; CR 1533 Medical assist; Circle Dr. Medical assist; (SO) lobby Meet complainant; PR 5451 Stolen vehicle; CR 2570 Livestock on the roadway; CR 2572 Livestock on roadway; CR 2572 Animal bite; CR 2181 Child custody; FM 515 Livestock on the roadway; PR 5451 Abandoned vehicle; CR 2570 Livestock on roadway; CR 4235 Criminal trespass; River bridge Reckless driver; CR 2181 Child custody; SO lobby Supervisor request; Skyline Dr. Smoke investigation.

3-14: Hwy. 69 Pedestrian stop; FM 513 Disturbance; Littlefield Dr. Medical assist; CR 2570 Livestock on the roadway; Hwy. 69 Reckless driving; PR 7709 Controlled burn; S Hwy. 19 Medical assist; FM 514 Abandoned vehicle; Hwy. 276 Pursuit; W Quitman St. Meet complainant; Oak Leaf Tr. Medical assist; PR 5451 Medical assist; CR 4455 Trespassing; E Lennon Dr. Suspicious person; FM 3274 Medical assist; S Dunbar Ln. Medical assist; SO lobby Medical assist; Hwy. 276 Public assist.

3-15: FM 513 Accident; CR 2365 Public assist; Clark Dr. Extra patrol; Hwy. 19S Vehicle in the roadway; N Texas St. Medical assist; PR 7702 Medical assist; CR 1450 Shots fired; S Texas St. Medical assist; Hwy. 276 Suspicious person; CR 2440 Medical assist; (SO) lobby Meet complainant; SO lobby

Follow up investigation; CR 2360 Downed power lines; PR 5451 Neighbor dispute; (SO) lobby Meet complainant; CR 3315 Downed power lines; Hwy. 276 Welfare concern; CR 2430 Child custody; CR 1622 Power outage; CR 1413 Agency assist; E Lennon Dr. Pedestrian stop; CR 3210 Residence alarm; CR 1640 Meet complainant; CR 1402 Residence alarm.

The Sheriff's Department reported 314 calls for the week. Among the calls were: 5 criminal trespass, 1 debris in the roadway, 1 disorderly conduct, 3 disturbances, 2 downed power lines, 1 escort, 1 extra patrol, 7 follow up investigations, 1 harassment, 1 gas leak, 11 livestock on roadway, 17 meet complainant, 2 neighbor disputes, 1 noise complaint, 21 public service; 1 pursuit, 8 reckless driver, 1 request supervisor, 1 shots fired, 1 smoke investigation, 3 stolen vehicle, 8 suspicious person, 1 power outage, 3 suspicious vehicle, 3 thefts, 1 vehicle in roadway, 1 warrant service, 7 welfare concerns, 2 trespassing, 3 accidents, 7 controlled burn, 1 animal aggressive, 6 public assist, 5 pedestrian stops, 3 abandoned vehicles, 3 agency assists, 1 bank alarm, 3 business alarms, 4 residence alarms, 2 animal at large, 3 animal bite, 3 animal welfare concerns, 2 assaults, 2 assist motorist, 1 burglary, 3 child custody, 2 city ordinance violations.

There were 105 traffic stops, 80 warnings, 19 citations, 39 medical calls, and 25 transports.

TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION SERVICE

How to get rid of fire ants: Expert tips that work

Science-backed fire ant treatments to protect lawns, gardens and pastures

Are fire ant mounds popping up in your yard, garden or pasture? As temperatures rise, so does fire ant activity. The good news is that science-backed ways to control fire ants can eliminate entire colonies — and not just the ones you see.

Robert Puckett, Ph.D., Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service entomologist and associate professor in the Texas A&M Department of Entomology, has helped landowners across Texas and around the world fight red imported fire ants. He offers expert advice for getting rid of fire ants' annoying mounds and fiery stings.

"There are a few reliable research-backed options and approaches when it comes to fire ant control," he said. "It just comes down to how quickly you want results, and your budget to reach the desired level of protection."

Puckett's recommended annual fire ant treatment method costs about \$25-\$35 per acre.

What is the best way to control fire ants?

Puckett said the most effective way to control fire ants is to use granular fire ant bait.

Fire ant mounds are the clearest sign of a colony and its underground activity. New colonies start when flying queens mate, land and

dig into the soil to lay eggs. That means new colonies can start even if you routinely treat visible, established colonies.

Granular baits work because worker ants pick up the bait and carry it back to the colony to feed other ants — including the queen. This method eliminates the entire colony.

"Studies have shown time after time that fire ants have an extremely efficient foraging behavior and dominate those baits," Puckett said.

How long does it take bait to work?

Puckett said store-bought baits vary in price and how quickly they work. In general, the cost of bait typically reflects how quickly it eliminates a colony.

Lower-cost baits may take six to eight weeks to eliminate a colony, while more expensive ones usually work in less than a week.

"There is really just a cost-versus-time-to-kill-decision matrix to consider when using baits," he said. "But I am confident in our field research that tells me using these products is effective. Some just take longer."

How should you apply ant bait?

Puckett recommends these key steps when applying bait:

- **Sprinkle bait around the mound's perimeter** rather than directly on the mound. When disturbed, ants go into defense mode and won't collect bait.

- **Apply bait when temperatures are about 70**

degrees or above, when ants are actively foraging.

- **Check the forecast** and avoid applying bait within 48 hours of rain.

- **Broadcast bait around your yard once or twice a year.** This routine will help treat visible mounds and new colonies you can't see.

- **Follow the label.** The typical application is 1 to 1.5 pounds per acre. Using more is wasteful and doesn't improve results.

The broadcast and spot-treatment fire ant control regimen will deal with colonies you see and those you may not see yet. (Michael Miller/Texas A&M AgriLife)

What are some organic or garden-safe options?

If you are controlling ants in a vegetable bed or prefer an organic approach, Puckett recommends using products containing spinosad. These products are the best alternatives to insecticides with synthetic active ingredients.

Another option is to slowly pour boiling water onto the mound and stir with a stick. But this method requires caution and often repeated attempts.

Need help managing other insects?

AgriLife Extension has practical guidance for insect pests in homes, lawns, gardens, acreage or livestock operations. Learn how to address the insect and pest challenges common across rural and urban landscapes.

Browse insect and pest resources

STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

Cornyn reverses filibuster stance

U.S. Sen. John Cornyn last week reversed his opposition to changing the Senate's filibuster rules, writing



GARY BORDERS
Texas Press Association

in an op-ed that legislation in that chamber should pass with a simple majority, the San Antonio Express-News reported.

Cornyn said the change should be made to advance the so-called SAVE America Act, legislation pushed by President Trump that would require a birth certificate or passport to register to vote.

"After careful consideration, I support whatever changes to Senate rules that may prove necessary for us to get the SAVE America Act and homeland security funding past the Democrats' obstruction, through the Senate, and on the president's desk for his signature," Cornyn wrote.

Cornyn has long opposed ending the filibuster, which requires a 60-vote majority to end debate on the Senate floor. The practice dates back to the early 1800s.

Cornyn is in a tough runoff race with Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton. That election is set for May 26.

Middleton, Roy go on offense ahead of AG runoff

State Sen. Mayes Middleton, R-Galveston, and U.S. Rep. Chip Roy, R-Austin, are taking the gloves off as they also head to a runoff in the GOP primary for Texas attorney general, The Dallas Morning News reported. Middleton finished first in the March 3 primary but fell short of a majority. Paxton didn't seek reelection to the state attorney general post, opting instead to run against Cornyn.

"Chip Roy is on the ropes," Middleton said. "We've got all the momentum."

Roy, a four-term congressman, criticized what he called Middleton's lack of legal experience.

"I wouldn't hire Mayes Middleton into the office of the attorney general, except at a very basic level, because he has no discernible legal skills," Roy said. Both are framing themselves as Trump allies.

On the Democratic side, state Sen. Nathan Johnson, D-Dallas, faces former Galveston Mayor Joe Jaworski in a runoff. Johnson received 48.1 percent of the vote to 26.4 percent for

Jaworski in the March 3 primary.

Trump taps emergency oil reserves from Texas sites

The Trump administration pledged 172 million barrels of oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve last week, with the oil coming from sites along the Gulf Coast, the Houston Chronicle reported. Prices for West Texas Intermediate crude oil have been hovering just below \$100 per barrel since the U.S. and Israel attacked Iran. Iranian officials have responded by essentially shutting down oil transported through the Strait of Hormuz, which Iran controls.

"The market is seriously unbalanced, and that will continue until the Strait is reopened and upstream and downstream operations return to normal," said Jim Burkhard, Vice President and the S&P Global Energy Crude Oil Markets. "It will not happen quickly."

The national oil reserves are held in dozens of man-made underground salt caverns in Texas and Louisiana.

State ban on smokable cannabis takes effect on March 31

Smokable cannabis products must be gone from Texas store shelves by March 31, the Texas Standard reported. The new rules were formulated by the Texas Department of State Health Services after the Texas Legislature couldn't agree on whether to regulate THC products or ban them entirely.

Annual fees charged to retailers are set to rise to \$5,000 per year for each retail location and \$10,000 per year for each manufacturing facility — 33 and 40 times higher, respectively, than current levies. More than 9,100 retail locations in the state are registered to sell consumable hemp products.

Cannabis advocates say the higher fees and ban on cannabis flowers and smokable extracts will send users to the underground market.

"Our concern is some of these measures are so draconian that you are going to drive people out of the business and then folks' access to the products," Mark Bordas, head of the Texas Hemp Business Council, said. "Invariably, we're going to have to bring forth a [lawsuit], and the state has to defend what it's done, and that's taxpayer money, and it's a waste."

Water woes in Corpus could prompt state action

A looming water crisis in Corpus Christi has prompted Gov. Greg Abbott to warn the city's leadership that the state may intervene to ensure that the city's residents and businesses have access to water, The Texas Tribune reported. The city's water supply could be outpaced by demand as soon as June 2027, according to one model.

"Corpus Christi is a victim not because of lack of water. They're a victim because of a lack of ability to make a decision," Abbott said at a press conference.

The city currently has \$1 billion in water projects underway to increase supply, but many of them won't come online until later this year or next year.

The city's water woes stem from low reservoir levels, a long-lasting drought, and rising demand driven by an industrial boom, especially in petrochemical and energy projects near the bay. A large seawater desalination plant proposal was turned down by the city council last year after it faced fierce criticism because of its cost and potential harm to the marine ecosystem.

Corpus Christi Mayor Paulette M. Guajardo has called for a special emergency meeting to vote again on the plant proposal.

Big Bend projects removed from 'Smart Wall' plan

U.S. Customs and Border Protection has updated its "Smart Wall" map to remove two planned projects in the Big Bend area, including one slated for Big Bend National Park, according to the Texas Standard. The plan has drawn considerable opposition from park lovers, including a newly formed group, No Big Bend Wall.

"While this shift from potential 'physical wall' to 'detection technology' is a signal that the public pressure is working, lack of transparency means we don't know if this is a real policy shift or a tactical one designed to lower our guard," the group said.

CBP did not publicly announce the change and did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

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.

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MY TAKE ON TECH

Improvements to AI

Last summer, I wrote about the hallucinating problem with Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems. AI systems are said to be “hallucinating” when answers include events that did not happen or cite data that is incorrect. The engineers who build AI systems have been working to lessen that possibility so that results that come from AI inquiries will increasingly be more reliable and trustable.

How are AI engineers doing that? By using a technique known as Retrieval Augmented Generation, abbreviated RAG. Simply stated, RAG is a smart fix that combines AI’s creativity (which many AI users love, but it can be very error-prone) with real time fact checking to make answers more accurate. Older AI models often had the creativity part nailed down nicely but were very short on factchecking (I once even had the Gemini AI add two numbers together and come up with

the wrong sum!). RAG works like this: when you ask a question, the AI first searches a large library of trusted info like articles or databases for the best matches. It’s sort of like using your favorite search engine to find reliable sources super-fast. Then, it adds those key facts right into the question so that AI can use them as a guide. Finally, the AI will write an answer based on its own smarts plus the fresh info. Think of it as giving the AI a cheat-sheet—no more making stuff up blindly!

The good news is that with RAG engaged, AI will get things correct more often than before. It will cut down on incorrect information by grounding answers in real facts, and better handle events (like recent news) that were not in the original training the AI got. This should make responses more detailed, timely, accurate, and fair.

For example, tools like conversational chatbots in search apps are increasingly using RAG techniques to answer trivia or homework questions with correct citations. It’s not yet perfect—if the library has bad info to start with, the AI might mess

up, and it can take a bit longer to straighten out. (Like they say, “GIGO: garbage in, garbage out.”) RAG should make AI feel more like a reliable tutor which can help students and everyone else trust it for schoolwork, research, or just fun facts. The goal is to keep the creativity that users love but also make sure answers are factual. RAG is the “secret sauce” that is helping that to happen.

I predict that it won’t be long before there will be some kind of rating system that will rate the various AI models as far as accuracy and reliability goes. Organizations or agencies will submit identical questions to all the AI models, and judge their answers as far as relevance, completeness, and most importantly, lack of errors. The results should be available to the public.

Science fair suggestion: Submit identical questions to all the main AI models and judge them on their creativity and accuracy. Who knows, you could be setting the standard for a whole new industry that will no doubt emerge! The next Facebook, perhaps?

John can be reached at john2645@mytakeontech.net.



JOHN KELLY
Certified Information Systems Security Professional

THIS WEEK IN TEXAS HISTORY

Carolina Casanova Casualty of Texas Feud

by Bartee Haile

Midshipman Robert Potter resigned from the U.S. Navy on Mar. 20, 1821 and headed home to North Carolina to raise a little hell.



BARTEE HAILE
Historical Columnist

When the ex-sailor was not studying the law, he was raking the Tar Heel elite over the coals. A sharp-tongued critic of the privileged planter class, he wrote sarcastic poems publicly humiliating cowardly aristocrats who declined his invitation to a duel.

Potter’s soaring popularity with the common man won him a seat in the North Carolina legislature, the House of Commons. His tell-it-like-it-is appeal soon earned him a promotion to the U.S. Congress, where everyone predicted big things for ambitious Bobby Potter.

All that changed on a violent afternoon in August 1831 in the North Carolina community of Oxford. Tipped off to his wife’s infidelities during his long absences, Potter took a pocketknife to two of the alleged home-wreckers. The victims of the sadistic castrations were a middle-aged preacher and a boy still in his teens.

Potter gave up his congressional seat before serving a six-month sentence for the vicious and evidently unprovoked attacks. But the scandal only served to strengthen his standing among his constituents, who returned their hero to the state legislature in the fall of 1834. Neither a messy divorce nor an attempt on his life by a brother-in-law had an adverse effect on the election.

Potter’s fellow lawmakers were not happy, however, to see him and came up with an excuse to ban the hot-tem-

pered outcast. He was expelled from the House of Commons in January 1835 for the unpardonable sin of cheating at cards, a shocking violation of the chivalrous code of southern conduct.

Facing the fact he had no future in North Carolina politics, 35 year old Potter packed his bags for Texas. Arriving on the eve of the Lone Star Revolution, he made the most of the golden opportunity. As the Nacogdoches delegate to the colonists’ convention in March 1836, he signed the Declaration of Independence and accepted an appointment as acting secretary of the navy.

When President Sam Houston chose his cabinet that October, Potter was nowhere to be found. For months the good-looking gadabout had ignored his official duties to concentrate on chasing other men’s wives, a dangerous pastime that kept him in hot water.

Mrs. Harriet Page fell for the Carolina Casanova with an indiscreet thud that offended even broad-minded frontiersmen. She later claimed the smooth talker convinced her that Mr. Page was among the handful of Texans killed at the Battle of San Jacinto. In reality her husband was alive and kicking, an inconvenient technicality that made Harriet a bigamist when she tied the knot with Potter.

The couple set up house-keeping in East Texas on the shores of Caddo Lake. Potter had not lost his knack for wooing voters and spent two terms in the Republic Senate representing Fannin and Red River counties.

In the meantime, a feud of epic proportions transformed much of eastern Texas into a combat zone. Regulators fought Moderators in backwoods ambushes and full-scale pitched battles.

Potter locked horns with a leading Regulator named William Pinckney Rose, alias

“The Lion of the Lakes,” who happened to hail from Oxford, North Carolina. The sly senator persuaded his pal, President Mirabeau Lamar, to bring three murder charges against Rose and to put a hefty price on his head. He set out in March 1842 to remove the troublesome thorn from his side and collect the reward.

Potter and a posse of 17 supporters swooped down on the Rose place. After searching high and low for his foe, he rode away unaware “The Lion” was hiding under a pile of burning brush.

The Regulators returned the compliment at dawn the next day. Ignoring Harriet’s hysterical warning, Potter panicked and ran for the lake where he propped his shotgun against a tree and tried to swim for it.

As Rose held Harriet back, his son-in-law shot Potter to death with his own weapon when he came up for air.

“Now what do you think of your pretty Bobby?” asked the triumphant Rose.

Pointing at an artillery piece just out of reach, Harriet retorted, “If only I had a match to touch off this cannon, I would shoot your tongue down your throat!”

Rose and seven other Regulators were detained briefly, but murder charges were dropped due to insufficient evidence. The feud was finally winding down, and amnesty was the order of the day.

When Robert Potter’s will was probated the next year, Harriet got the surprise of her scandalous life. The bulk of the Carolina Casanova’s estate, including the house where his widow lived with her latest husband – the late senator’s handyman – was bequeathed to yet another woman.

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

BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU

Tips to Help Protect Older Adults from Scams

Older adults continue to be frequent targets for scammers, who often attempt to exploit trust, financial stability, and established credit. While scams affect people of all ages, fraudsters often tailor their tactics toward seniors through impersonation, emotional manipulation, and high-pressure requests for money.

According to data from BBB Scam Tracker, scammers continue to adapt their strategies using phone calls, emails, text messages, and social media. Since 2015, BBB has received hundreds of thousands of scam reports, helping identify emerging trends and educate consumers about how to recognize and avoid fraud.

Financial grooming scams — where criminals build relationships with victims before asking for money — have become increasingly common and often lead to the largest financial losses. According to the BBB Scam Tracker Risk Report, these scams can involve romance, investment opportunities, or long-term impersonation tactics designed to gain a victim’s trust.

Unfortunately, not all fraud is committed by anonymous strangers online.

A recent East Texas case illustrates how financial exploitation can occur in unexpected ways. Authorities say a Tyler man was

charged after allegedly stealing more than \$17,000 from a woman’s bank account, including transactions which occurred before and after her death. Investigators reported dozens of suspicious withdrawals and cashier’s checks connected to the account.

While the estate was ultimately reimbursed, the case serves as a reminder that financial exploitation can occur even in situations involving individuals or institutions consumers believe they can trust.

BBB encourages families and caregivers to watch for these scams which frequently target seniors:

Impostor scams. Fraudsters pose as representatives from government agencies, banks, Medicare, or even family members. Victims are pressured to send money or share sensitive information immediately.

Sweepstakes and lottery scams. Victims are told they’ve won a prize but must first pay taxes or processing fees. Legitimate sweepstakes never require payment to claim winnings.

Investment and cryptocurrency scams. Scammers promise unusually high returns and attempt to rush victims into sending money before they have time to research the opportunity.

Tech support scams. Criminals claim a computer or device has been compro-

mised and request remote access. BBB recommends the following steps to reduce the risk of fraud:

Take your time. Scammers often create a sense of urgency. Slow down and verify unexpected requests.

Talk with someone you trust. Discuss financial decisions or suspicious contacts with family members or trusted advisors.

Research before responding. Look up businesses, charities, and investment opportunities on BBB.org before sending money.

Monitor financial accounts regularly. Review bank and credit card statements and report suspicious activity quickly.

Education remains one of the most effective tools for preventing fraud. Consumers who encounter suspicious activity are encouraged to report it to BBB.org/ScamTracker. Reports help warn others in the community and assist investigators in identifying emerging scams.

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

ALBA PUBLIC LIBRARY

Alba Public Library & Museum on the horizon!

On April 18, the Alba Public Library & Museum will celebrate its 15th Anniversary with the posting of Alba-Golden students’ works and desserts inspired by a tour of the Museum, a 5K run, a large book sale, and a museum and library tour.

Fifteen years ago, volunteers were strategizing, building bookshelves, planning, receiving books from all over the area, and learning how to create a well-run library and museum. The museum has become a show-place with artifacts from Alba and communities beyond.

A list of activities for everyone on April 18:

- View the Alba-Golden

students’ works inspired by a tour of the museum. Also, partake of the desserts that the students will have made based on historical recipes.

• 5K runners will meet at the square at 7:00 a.m. to begin their run. Participation in the run requires a \$25 entry fee. This fee will help pay for an artist to create a mural on the outside of the library. Flyers with information on the 5K are posted everywhere and are displayed on Facebook. If interested, call 903-765-2665 for information on how to register.

• At the same time, sacks of books are available for \$.50 from the book sale in the back room of the library.

Hundreds of books will be available!

• Visitors can experience Alba’s past with a museum tour.

• Members of the community can enter the library and view the thousands of books available. Anyone can sign up for a library card, no matter where their home is. The library’s patrons are all over the U.S., thanks to Lake Fork fishing and summer vacationers.

Remember April 18...a 5K run, a tour of the library and museum, eating historical food, and punch from today, finding just that right book, and signing up for a library card....

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SAVVY SENIORS

What Happens if You Die Without a Will?

Dear Savvy Senior, I've put off making a will for years. What actually happens to my money and property if I die without one?



JIM MILLER Savvy Senior

--Getting Old

Dear Getting,

If you die without a will, your assets will be distributed according to the laws of your state, known as intestacy laws. These laws determine who inherits your property and financial accounts when there's no will or trust. Since rules vary from state to state, it's important to check the specifics where you live.

A helpful starting point is heirbase.com, which offers Intestacy Evaluators for 37 states. You enter your household information and see how your estate might be distributed. If your state isn't included, Nolo has a useful state-by-state intestate succession guide at nolo.com/legal-encyclopedia/intestate-succession.

In the meantime, here is a general overview of what can happen, depending on your family situation.

Married with children: When a married person with children dies without a will, all property, investments and financial accounts that are "jointly owned" automatically goes to the surviving co-owner without going through probate, which is the legal process that distributes a deceased person's assets.

But for all other separately owned property or individual

financial accounts, the laws of most states award one-third to one-half to the surviving spouse, while the rest goes to the children.

Married with no children: Some states award the entire estate to the surviving spouse, or everything up to a certain amount (for example the first \$100,000). But many other states award only one-third to one-half of the decedent's separately owned assets to the surviving spouse, with the remainder generally going to the deceased person's parents, or if the parents are dead, to brothers and sisters.

Jointly owned property, investments, financial accounts, or community property automatically goes to the surviving co-owner.

Single with children: All state laws provide that the entire estate goes to the children, in equal shares. If an adult child of the decedent has died, then that child's children (the decedent's grandchildren) split their parent's share.

Single with no children or grandchildren: In this situation, most state laws favor the deceased person's parents. If both parents are deceased, many states divide the property among the brothers and sisters, or if they are not living, their children (your nieces and nephews). If there are none of them, it goes to the next of kin, and if there is no living family, the state takes it.

Make a Will

To ensure your assets go to those you want to receive them, you need to create a will or trust. If you have a

simple estate and an uncomplicated family situation, there are do-it-yourself resources that can help you create all these documents for very little money.

Some top-rated options include the Quicken WillMaker & Trust (willmaker.com), \$109 and Trust & Will (trustandwill.com), \$199). Or, if that's more than you're willing to pay, you can make your will for free at freewill.com or doyourownwill.com.

If, however, you want or need assistance or if you have a complicated financial situation, blended family or have considerable assets, you should hire an attorney. An experienced attorney can make sure you cover all your bases, which can help avoid family confusion and squabbles after you're gone.

Costs will vary depending on where you live, but you can expect to pay anywhere between \$200 and \$1,000 for a will.

The National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys (naela.org) and the American College of Trust and Estate Counsel (actec.org) websites are good resources that have directories to help you find someone in your area.

If money is tight, check with your state's bar association (findlegalhelp.org) to find low-cost legal help in your area. Or call the Eldercare Locator at 800-677-1116 for a referral.

Send your senior questions to: Savvy Senior, P.O. Box 5443, Norman, OK 73070, or visit SavvySenior.org. Jim Miller is a contributor to the NBC Today show and author of "The Savvy Senior" book.

Believers' Baptist Church

By Linda Brendle

"It is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his garden, and it grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air made nests in its branches."

Luke 13:19

Sunday morning Pastor Haygood brought a message from Luke called "How the Kingdom Grows." In last week's text, Jesus healed on the Sabbath and the religious leaders objected. In this text, Jesus said the Kingdom is not about your rules. The growth of the Kingdom may seem slow but it is steady, but the results are amazing - the Kingdom of God will reach the nations. When we submit to God, His Kingdom will permeate our entire life, our local churches, and the world. Are you submitted to the

Kingdom of God?

Coming Events:
Every Sunday until Easter, 4:00 p.m., Easter Choir rehearsal
Every Sunday in March, 9:30 a.m. - Prospective Members' Class
March 23, 4:00 p.m. - Bibles & Bogeys, see Duffey Henderson for information
March 29, immediately after church, Youth Paintball or Crafts
March 29, 6:00 p.m. - Members' Meeting
April 3, 6:00 p.m. - Good Friday Service
April 5, 10:30 a.m. - Resurrection Sunday Service

The Asking for a Friend Podcast Episode #244 is titled "Let's Talk Denominations, The Churches of Christ." Find the link at www.bbcmemory.org.

Emory Methodist Church

By Mary White

For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Ephesians 2:10

Rev. David Banks continued his series Shaped By The Word: with a message titled "Shaped By the Path" with scripture text taken from Ephesians. David spoke on how God prepares the path for us, but sometimes we resisted His path, choosing our own way. We will have a special guest on March 23 at 5:30 p.m. Tim Turner, Tanzania Mission-

ary, will speak about his ministry in Tanzania.

The Methodist Women will have a Plant Sale April 11, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. and April 12, 12:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.

AA Meets every Tuesday and Thursday at 7:00 p.m.

Birthday wishes go to Mary Eversult. Pray for Rev. Marcus Mills and family, Judy Claunch, Brad Thomas, David Metzner, Adrian Shipp, and Debbie Fischer and family.

Have a great week and as always be Kind.

Obituaries

Steve Michael Hardy

1954 - 2026



Steve Michael Hardy, 72, of Emory, died on March 12, 2026, in Houston surrounded by family and cherished friends. He was born on February 17, 1954, in Georgia, to John Henry Hardy and Grace Virginia (Kerley) Hardy.

Mr. Hardy was a self-employed painter by trade and devoted his career to honing his craft with meticulous attention to detail.

He had a deep love for riding his Harley, embracing the freedom and adventure that the open road offered. He was also a talented craftsman and found joy in building small

projects that showcased his creativity and hands-on expertise.

Mr. Hardy is survived by his sisters, Cathy (Larry) Vogel of Keller, and Shelia Meachum of Heber Springs, Arkansas; brother, Stanley Kelly (Kimberly) of Villa Rica, Georgia; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Services are tentatively scheduled for Friday, March 20, at noon, with a visitation on Thursday, March 19, from 6:00-8:00 p.m. See the Wilson-Orwosky Funeral Home website for more information.

Sally Mace

1939 - 2026



Sally Mace, 86, died on March 9, 2026. She was born on October 18, 1939, in McKeesport, Penn., to Edwin and Eleanor Cunningham.

Her family moved frequently due to her father's job in the aerospace industry. She met Carl Mace on a blind date and they were married soon after. They had four children Debbie, Carl, Juli and Stephen.

They lived in Ohio and were members of the Akron Baptist Temple until they moved to Texas in 1988. There they were members of the First Baptist Church of Heath for many years before moving their membership to the First Baptist Church of Rockwall. She sang in the choir, counted tithes and offerings, and worked in the sound booth to help out in whatever way she could. She was also faithful to attend her Sunday School classes.

They enjoyed singing in choirs together, traveling (especially their yearly wildflower trips), date nights to The Gospel Jubilee. She

was an excellent cook and Carl was her best customer.

Mrs. Mace was a homemaker and could often be found cooking, decorating cakes, and working in her gardens. Her pasttimes included crafts as well as her gardening and she had a particular fondness for sewing and painting. She was an avid bird enthusiast.

After Carl's passing, she moved to Wesley House Quiltman.

Mrs. Mace is survived by her children, Debbie Phillips and husband James, Juli Garner and husband Joey, and Stephen Mace; grandchildren, Troy Ruetz, Chelsea Ruetz, Colten Garner, Jolee Poteet and husband Wyatt, Josee Garner, Jayson Garner, Jayci Garner, Azure Alicandro-Mace, and Cedar Alicandro-Mace; great-grandchildren, Maci Ruetz, Lukas Ruetz, Liam Phillips and Yuri Phillips; and sister, Nancy Yuschak and husband Phil.

She was preceded in death by her husband of 62 years, Carl Luther Mace Jr.; son, Carl Luther Mace III; and her parents.

Confirm Your Calling and Election

His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.

2 Peter 1:3-4

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903-473-2411 • EmoryMC.org

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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.

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Wed. Eve. Service 7:00 p.m.

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www.pointchurchofchrist.org

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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 for Mass times.
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County Line Baptist Church
Bro. Wayne Darty

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Sunday Evening 6:30 p.m.
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903-473-2658

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Sunday Evening Worship 6:00 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study 7:00 p.m.
emorychurchofchrist.org

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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
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www.bbcmemory.org 903-474-0027

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SALES

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

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Please be advised that the **Rains County Emergency Services District #1** Administrative Office is located at 1205 W. Lennon Drive, Emory, TX 75440, with a Mailing Address of PO Box 4, Emory, TX 75440, and the Contact Phone Number is (903)473-2468.

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

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 Sulphur Springs, Texas 75482

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of Dickie Juanita Hodges, Deceased, were issued on March 10, 2026, in Docket No. 3388, pending in the County Court of Rains County, Texas, to Wanda Carol Cole and Stacy Hodges, Independent Co-Executors.

Claims may be presented in care of the attorney for the Estate executors addressed as follows:

c/o Steve Spitzer
 Ramey & Flock, P.C.
 100 East Ferguson, Suite 500
 Tyler, Texas 75702

All persons having claims against the Estate, which is currently being administered are required to present them within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.

DATED March 16, 2026
 Ramey & Flock, P.C.
 By: /s/ Steve Spitzer
 Attorneys for Estate Executor

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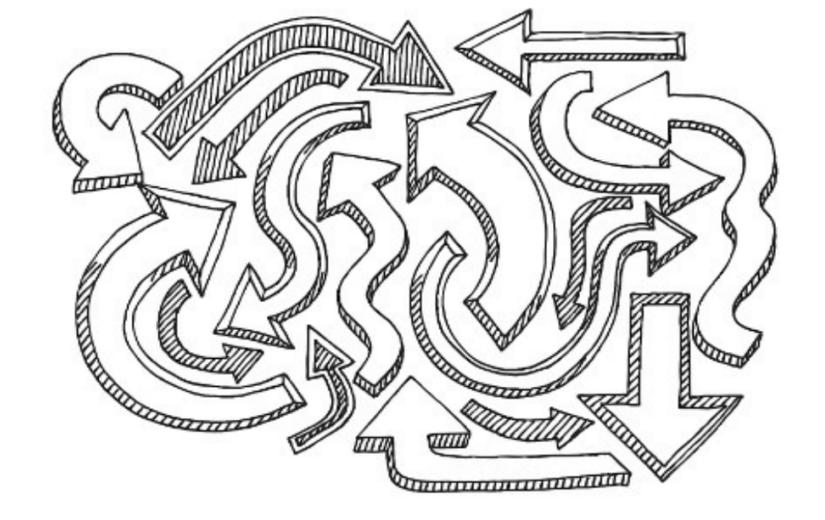
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3	2	7	1	9	4	6	5	8
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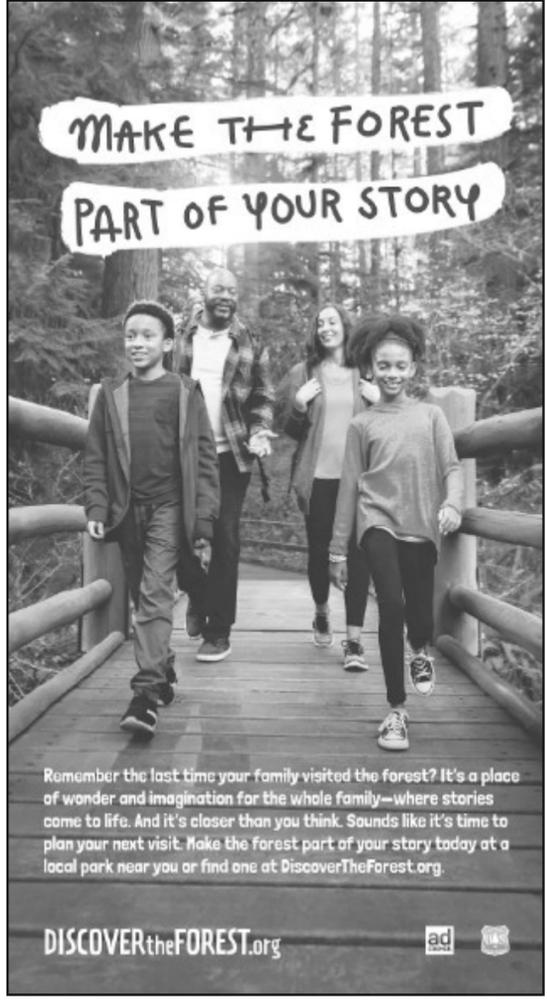
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Sports

RAINS LADY CAT SOFTBALL & WILDCAT BASEBALL

Lady Cats start district with wins, Wildcats start down



Leader photo by CHUCK FITTS

Sophomore Lady Cat Aubrey Moore secures the catch at first base for an out during the 10-2 victory over the Winstboro Lady Raiders on Monday, March 16, at Rains High School.

By **CHUCK FITTS**
Rains County Leader staff

The Rains Lady Cat softball team stays undefeated in District 12-3A, while the Rains Wilcats start district with a loss.

The Lady Cats were able to schedule extra work with a game against the Chapel Hill Lady Red Devils in Mount Pleasant on March 9.

They jumped out early with two home runs by senior Presley Kilgore and cruised to an 18-1 victory.

The softball team returned to district play on Wednesday, March 11, in Commerce against the Lady Tigers.

Kilgore finished four-for-four at the plate with a home run while Peyton Bryant added a home run in the victory over Commerce, 13-2.

The Wildcats wrapped up non-district play in Mineola on Thursday, March 12, against the Yellowjackets.

Mineola scored early and held off the late rally to get the 5-2 victory over Rains.

With the spring break holiday over, the Lady Cats got back to work with a district game at home on Monday, March 16, against the Winstboro Lady Raiders.

The Lady Raiders scored first, but Rains rallied with three runs in the fifth and seven in the sixth to get the win, 10-2.

The Wildcats and Lady Cats traveled to Paris on Tuesday, March 17, for district games against the Mustangs and Lady Mustangs.

On the softball field, the girls scored early and secured a win over Chisum, 12-2.

The baseball team battled with Chisum and kept it close until an eight-run fifth inning doomed them to a 12-2 district opening loss.

The Lady Cats are 4-0 in District 12-3A and 8-4-1 for the season. The Wildcats fall to 0-1 in district and 3-13 for the season.

The Lady Cats will continue district play against the Lone Oak Lady Buffaloes on Friday, March 20, at Rains High School.

They travel to Pattonville on Tuesday, March 24, for a district game against the Prairiland Lady Patriots.

The Wildcats will wrap up their district series with the Chisum Mustangs at home on Friday, March 20.

They will start a district series with the Prairiland Patriots in Pattonville on Tuesday, March 24.

LUKE CLAYTON

Making Ready

It seems I am either making ready for my next outdoor adventure or unpacking and stowing my gear from the last outing. I imagine this is par for most folks that enjoy fishing, hunting, photographing wildlife or just about any outdoor endeavor. There's just lots of things we need to have ready to be successful.



Luke Clayton
Outdoor Columnist

I thoroughly enjoy the planning stage of an upcoming hunt or fishing trip. Turkey season is approaching fast and I've been "playing" with all my gear. I gave Heneretta, the plastic turkey hen decoy I've used for decades, a fresh wash job and even sprayed her with a little WD 40 to give her that sheen that hopefully make her look more realistic to any gobbler that might see the sun glinting off her wings.

I read an article on how the native Americans hunted turkeys and learned they often used freshwater mussel shells for turkey calls. On a recent creek fishing trip for crappie, I spied half a mussel shell that was in excellent condition. It appeared like it had just been placed there on the bank by possibly a raccoon or maybe a river otter. I gave it a good wash job and allowed it to dry in the sun one afternoon and then tested it with one of the hardwood strikers I use on my slate turkey calls. The sound was perfect, but I did learn that different parts of the shell produced different sounds. After a bit of practice I found the shell call works great with a better variety of sounds than my best slate call. I will still use my box call for working distant gobblers but for up-close calling when the old gobbler hangs up a few yards back in the brush, my new shell call should work very well.

I've been preparing for the upcoming Outdoor Ron-de-Voux at the Top Rail Cowboy Church in Greenville on March 28. This is the seventh year for the event, and I've become pretty good at getting ready. Each year I cook a huge cobbler over the campfire for our guests and often supply some barbecue links or fajitas for folks to sample. I started preparing for this event a month or so ago. We have a fish cooking team that has been serving fish for the past several years, but the fillets go fast and we often run out a bit too early. This year, I started fishing with several friends and stocking up on tasty blue catfish fillets. I have about eight gallon bags full of fillets frozen now and am planning on another fish procurement trip to Lake Tawakoni later this week with my friend Guide Tony Pennebaker. The team usually fries fish in big cast iron skillets but this year my Kaufman County friends Edgar and David Cotton offered to bring their high-volume fish cooker that will crank out a lot of fried fish in short order. My job this year is to ensure we have plenty of fillets, a task several good friends and I have been enjoying accomplishing. I try to have a big Dutch Kettle full of tasty smoked venison links on the campfire for my guests at the event each year but this year I hope to also serve some pulled pork barbecue. I keep a couple of loaves of bread and some barbecue sauce handy for preparing quick fold-over sandwiches. Note I stated that I "hope" to serve pork barbecue! I must first shoot the perfect eater hog and the stage is set for that to happen. Chances for success are very high. Preparation for this wild pork barbecue actually began several months ago when my neighbor gave me a wood-fired smoker on wheels, not one of the huge propane tank smokers, but one about half that size. It is just right to be portable but still big enough to cook a big quantity of meat. He mostly used the smoker for grilling. I determined it needed a larger diameter smokestack to get the heat up to 250 degrees. Last month another good friend welded a much larger exhaust stack on the smoker and now it's easy to maintain cooking temperatures.

This wild pork procurement hunt I have scheduled for tomorrow night when the temperature is supposed to drop into the thirties. I sometimes collect my wild pork when the weather is warm but the upcoming chill down should be perfect for not only hunting but taking care of the meat I hope to put on the smoker. I have a

corn feeder hanging from a limb of a giant pecan on my buddy's place and a trail camera set to monitor the hogs. For the past week, there has been a sounder of between twenty and thirty hogs hitting the corn every night, usually within an hour of darkness each evening. I've spotted a few younger sows (gilts) that weigh about 80 pounds, there is no better eating from the wild to my way of thinking than a fat wild sow.

I'll be doing my hunting with my CVA Cascade VH in .223, the perfect rifle for the meat hog hunter. The rifle is topped with an ATN Thor mini 6 thermal scope which will allow me to collect my pork in total darkness and even film the video and audio through the scope for an upcoming segment of our TV show A Sportsman's Life on Carbon TV as well as YouTube. I'll back my old GMG into a little depression about 45 yards from the feeder, settle into my favorite hunting chair in the bed of the truck and wait until the porkers arrive. I've mentioned that I am a planner and my plan is to stay no later than 9:30 p.m. If they don't show by then the cool weather is expected to stick around a couple of days and I'll get them the next night. But my skinning knives are sharp and I plan to get it done the first evening! If all goes well, there will be plenty of pulled pork to go around at the event!

For more details on the Ron-de-Voux, visit my website at www.catfishradio.org. Hope to see you there! I promise to tell you 'the rest of the story' of my hog procurement hunt!

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