

Rains County Leader

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Vol. 140, Issue 4 - 1 Section, 8 pages

EMORY, TEXAS - THURSDAY, JULY 2, 2026

PRICE 75¢

RAINS COUNTY

Commissioners welcome new member, approve courthouse improvements

By **CHUCK FITTS**
Rains County Leader staff

The Rains County Commissioners Court welcomed its newest member, approved a proposal to replace windows in the courthouse and agreed to contracts during the regular meeting on Thursday, June 25. Commissioner Jim Jones took his seat on the court for

his first meeting. He was elected to the seat in the Republican primary and is running unopposed in the November election.

He would have become the Precinct 2 representative on January 1, 2027, but with the early retirement of Mike Willis, the court appointed Jones to fill the unexpired term.

The court was presented

with bids for replacement of damaged windows and the installation of ADA-compliant doors in the Rains County Courthouse. They unanimously accepted a bid of \$185,000 from Phoenix 1 Restoration.

The restoration will be paid with \$150,000 that was previously budgeted for the project with an additional \$34,000 coming from the contingency

fund. Officials were informed that the work could begin in the next two weeks.

Commissioners reviewed a retainer agreement with attorney Jim Allison for the court. Judge Brent Hilliard stated that the retainer would allow the county to use Allison on a case-by-case basis.

Hilliard noted that Rains County Attorney Robert Viti-

tow is a licensed prosecutor and has a large case load to manage. This agreement would allow the county to have another attorney to assist with legal issues and allow Vitiow to focus on the job for which he was elected.

Hilliard stated that Allison represented all county judges in

see **COURT** on page 2

If the hat fits



Leader photo by CHUCK FITTS

Local volunteer firefighters hand out goodies to kids at the Hometown Helpers event sponsored by the Rains County Library on Tuesday, June 30. Firefighters from Emory, Point and East Tawakoni as well as other first responders attended the hands-on educational event to show off vehicles and hand out goodies to local youth.



Leader photo by CHUCK FITTS

An EMT from CHRISTUS makes a young resident comfortable as she tells her about the ambulance and all it does during the Hometown Helpers event sponsored by the Rains County Library on Tuesday, June 30. EMTs as well as other first responders attended the hands-on educational event to show off vehicles to local youth.

FOURTH OF JULY

Celebrate the Fourth of July throughout the area

By **CHUCK FITTS**
Rains County Leader staff

Though Poppers in the Park will not be held this year, there are still plenty of places to celebrate the 250th birthday of the United States on this Fourth of July.

The Spirit of East Tawakoni will sponsor the city's annual 4th of July parade on Saturday, July 4th at 10:00 a.m. Decorate your car, motorcycle, bicycle, golf cart, 4-wheeler, tractor, horse, or anything that you want to show off and line up at 288 Briggs Blvd. by 9:45 a.m.

"Stars over Fork" will feature live music, food trucks and fireworks on July 4th at the Caney Point Recreation Area. The Sabine River Authority park is located off

SH154 and participants are invited to bring their lawn chairs, blankets, coolers and enjoy some food, drinks and sweets.

Food trucks will be available at 6:00 p.m. and live music featuring Jason Waldon and the Alibis starts at 7:00 p.m. A fireworks show is scheduled to begin at dusk.

The City of West Tawakoni will hold their annual Independence Day Celebration at the city park on Friday, July 3, starting at 6:00 p.m. The concert lineup includes Michael Summers & Cody Cresswell, Martin Antonio & Brayden Stewart and the Zach Romo Band. The evening will include food trucks, vendors, family fun and fireworks at dusk.

see **FOURTH** on page 2

POINT

Council reviews maintenance contract; accepts bids

By **CHUCK FITTS**
Rains County Leader staff

The Point City Council held a regular meeting on Thursday, June 25, to review the contract for water tank maintenance, consider bids and consider grant variances.

During the meeting, a representative from J&A Coating appeared before the council to update the status of their contract to maintain the city's water tanks. He stated his crews have been keeping busy with rehab of other tanks as they waited for the approval to begin the job of refurbishing the Clearwater tank.

The Clearwater tank would have to be taken offline and temporary storage required. City officials had agreed to install a new tank at the site for

future use, but the approval from Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) took a year.

With the city now financially unable to purchase the tank, they are considering using water tanker trailers for storage while the Clearwater tank is rehabbed. The cost for the tanker rental and installation would cost around \$60,000.

City officials questioned why the city was paying \$10,000 per month to J&A Coating and were informed of the maintenance work and rehab of other tanks that was being done on the city's water system.

The council asked for itemized reports on work performed by the company during the

see **POINT** on page 2

SPOTLIGHT

Margie Giger was named Texas TOPS Queen

By **JUDY KRAMER**
Rains County Leader contributor

Margie Giger was selected as the Texas TOPS Queen for 2025, after losing 100 pounds and keeping it off for many years. She was crowned at the Texas Take Off Pounds Sensibly (TOPS) Recognition Days event in San Marcos on May 22, 2026. Crowned with her was the TOPS King Terry Ritch.

Giger found out about TOPS from a friend that she and her husband, Charles, met at church. The friend was a member of TOPS and encouraged her to join the group. Giger weighed 319 pounds at one time, lost 50 of those pounds, and when

she started membership in TOPS she was down to 250 pounds. Her friend picked her up for the meetings at TOPS and she became successful at losing more weight until her oldest son, who had Down Syndrome, died in 2000. She lost control of her weight and gained most of it back. Then, ladies at TOPS, and her husband, helped her to get back on track, and she was able to lose weight for good, leading to her well-deserved honor of being named Texas TOPS Queen.

"I have five sisters and eight brothers who were very supportive of me when I was trying to lose weight," said Giger. "My oldest son was also a great motivator for me.

Giger stays busy outside of TOPS and has been selling AVON for 20 years, which she loves. She also volunteered at a Lakes Regional facility where her oldest son went to school, and she was named volunteer of the year for going above and beyond her responsibilities.

Giger was born and raised in Matagorda, Texas, but after she and Charles married in 1967, they moved to Colorado for a while. Today they live near Miller Grove.

She and her husband have a cat named Miss Kitty. Charles, a retired electrician, likes to watch shows such as "Walker Texas Ranger" on

see **SPOTLIGHT** on page 3



Terry Ritch and Margie Giger



City Girl:
The Gettysburg Address...

Page 3

Jody Dyer:
The strange story of...

page 3

Bartee Haile:
One-eyed pilot set...

page 6

Rain Report

No rain recorded this week.

Total for June 4.77 in.
Year to date 21.64 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., House of Prayer, 1382 FM 515

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

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

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

GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

MEMBER 2026

TEXAS PRESS ASSOCIATION

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FORMER EDITORS AND PUBLISHERS OF THE RAINS COUNTY LEADER:

H.W. Martin - 1887

Sam Fitzgerald - Before 1900

W.O. Hebisen - Before 1900

A.S. Hornbeck - Before 1900

J.H. Bradford - 1901-1904

Tom W. Hill - 1904-1937

Earl Hill, Sr. - 1937-1960

Kathleen Hill Becknell - 1962-1995

Earl Hill, Jr. - 1995-2019

NEWS BRIEFS

Good Sam Clothes/ Thrift Shop Sales

The Rains County Good Samaritan Clothes Shop will be open Monday-Thursday in the building behind the public library on Hwy. 69 in Emory. Hours for Mon.-Wed. are 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., closed noon-1:00 p.m. Hours for Thursday are 8:00 a.m.-noon. Thrift sales will be open every Saturday in July from 8:00 a.m.-noon. Funds go to buy food for the needy and to operate the center.

American Legion breakfast Sat., July 11

Rabb Brothers Memorial American Legion Post #156 will hold a breakfast buffet on Saturday, July 11, from 7:00-10:00 a.m. at the Post home at 215 N. Duffy St. in Emory. Takeouts are offered. Payment is by donation, which goes towards the upkeep of the home and for veterans' projects.

Friends of Rains Library book sale July 24-25

The Friends of Rains County Library Big Book Sale will be held at the Rains County Public Library, 150 Doris Briggs Pkwy., Emory, on Friday, July 24 and Saturday, July 25, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Prime selection is on Friday and Bargain Day will be on Saturday. Fill a bag for \$4.00, fill a box for \$8.00. Cash or check only.

SPORT CAMPS

Basketball Camp July 6-9

The Rains Basketball camp for boys and girls will be held July 6-9 in Talking-ton Gym. The cost is \$60. The session for incoming second through sixth graders will be 10:00 a.m. to noon, while incoming seventh through ninth graders will hold camp from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Campers need to bring water bottles and sports related gear. For more information, contact the school at 903-473-2222 or email oakesb@rainsisd.org.

Football Camp July 21 & 22

The Rains Wildcat Youth Football Camp will be held on July 21 and 22 at Wildcat Stadium from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. The camp is for second through ninth graders and the cost is \$50. Campers need to bring water bottles and sports related gear. For more information, contact the school at 903-473-2222 or email oakesb@rainsisd.org.

Turn your savings into paychecks in retirement

Retirement changes everything — especially how you feel about your money. After years of saving, spending can feel uncomfortable. But a clear strategy helps you move forward with confidence.

Start with a conservative budget and give yourself permission to spend those amounts.

Next, consider adding guaranteed income, like an annuity, to create steady cash flow.

A cash cushion helps you avoid selling in down mar-

kets, so try to keep about a year of withdrawals in a cash account and three to five years' of withdrawals in short-term investments.

Review your plan at least annually and adjust after major life changes.

And stay flexible — adjusting spending when markets decline can help your retirement strategy endure.

With a thoughtful approach, you can help make your savings last and enjoy the retirement you've earned. A financial advisor can help you build a strategy tailored to your goals and your lifestyle.

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

Friends of the Library Writing Challenge

The Rains County Friends of the Library are hosting a Writing Challenge for all writers under the age of 18 who live in Rains County. Submissions are due at the Rains County Library during the Book Sale July 24-25. Each essay must begin with the prompt "My Magical Summer" and can be typed or handwritten but must be legible. Ages 9 and under may submit two paragraphs, 10-13 year olds a page, and 14-18 yr. olds two pages. There will be prizes for each essay that meets all requirements.

Edward Jones

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> edwardjones.com

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!

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

COURT

Continued from page 1

Texas as well as the Texas Association of Counties (TAC). The agreement was unanimously approved by the court.

The court approved a resolution to implement Title VI policy for Rains County to be in compliance for federal funding for the replacement of the bridge on Rains County Road 1495 by the Texas Department of Transportation. Title VI is part of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in any program or activity that receives federal financial assistance.

Commissioners discussed options for the sign in front of the Hill building and approved for the new sign to identify the building as the

Rains County Public Safety Building. They opened and accepted all bids for road materials for the county.

The court approved a motion to accept an inter-local agreement with the City of Point for road work and environmental safety. They renewed the county's health insurance plan through TAC and approved rescheduling the July 23 meeting to July 30 as commissioners will be gone for training.

All commissioners were present for the regular meeting.

The Rains County Commissioners have scheduled their next meeting for Thursday, July 9, in the courtroom of the Rains County Courthouse.

FOURTH

Continued from page 1

Lone Oak will host the Red, White and Bloom on Saturday, July 4, on the town square from 2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Everyone is invited to the square for food, vendors, DJ, bounce house, family fun and more. A fireworks show is scheduled for dusk.

In Greenville, the Annual Bottle Rocket Bash theme will be "Celebrating 250 Years of America" on Saturday, July 4, from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. in the Greenville SportsPark at 3603 Leo Hackney Blvd. Admission is free with live music, food, a jam-packed Kids Zone, family-friendly activities, and a fireworks show at dusk.

First Monday Trade Days celebrates the 250th birthday of America with two days of fun.

After a day of shopping the trade grounds on Friday, July 3, finish the evening with a concert by Roger Creager at the West Side of First Monday Trade Days

Grounds. Gates open at 5:00 p.m., Matt Bradshaw opens at 6:00 p.m. followed by Roger Creager at 7:30 p.m. Parking is \$10.

The celebration continues on Saturday, July 4, in downtown Canton with the Bicycle Decorating contest at 9:30 a.m. and Watermelon Eating contests at 10:00 a.m.

The annual 4th of July parade through Canton begins at 10:30 a.m. The parade route starts at the First Baptist Church of Canton, turns east on Hwy. 64 towards downtown, turns south onto Buffalo St. and concludes at Canton Junior High School.

A car show will be held at the west side of First Monday Grounds starting at 5:00 p.m. The fireworks show will begin at dark.

Enjoy a safe, fun and festive 250th Fourth of July celebration this weekend in East Texas.

POINT

Continued from page 1

time that the city had been paying them. The item was tabled while council members explored options to get the repairs to the Clearwater tank completed.

The city council was presented with a bid to complete work on a 4-inch sewer main. Anchor Plumbing was called to resolve a resident's problem, but determined that the problem was on the city's side.

The contractor replaced a pipe that had been compromised by tree roots and determined that the next section did not have the proper slope for flow. The bid presented would pay for the work already completed as well as correcting the slope.

City officials stated that Anchor Plumbing had been allowed to work on the city's sewer due to public work staff being over burdened. The bid for \$15,000 was unanimously approved.

Council members reviewed a bid to replace the doors at the Point Community Center. The Point Ladies Civic Club told city officials that they would pay for half of the cost to replace the two front doors and the back door into the kitchen. A bid for \$5,000 for the work

was unanimously approved.

The council considered a variance to place a 28x56 manufactured home on a lot on FM 47. The house is a 2026 model and over the square footage requirement and was approved by the council by a 3-1 vote. Councilman Douglas House voted against the variance.

A variance to place a 14x50 mobile home built in 2014 on a vacant lot at 291 Meadowview Lane was denied as the manufactured home was below the square footage requirement.

The council tabled a replat of a lot at 1094 Industrial Blvd. into two lots as there were questions on if the new lot would have utilities and meet minimum lot size.

Council members reviewed the budget of the Rains County Appraisal District, approved the yearly contract for software for the municipal court, switched electric providers to Charity Energy and renewed the city's health insurance plan for employees.

The next regular meeting of the Point City Council is scheduled for Thursday, July 9, at 6:00 p.m. in the council chambers of the Point City Hall.

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Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation,

be. In today's society, however, it's unclear what the ultimate goals of many of the factions are, and it's nearly impossible to distinguish the good guys from the bad guys or to know what the ultimate cost will be. With that in mind, Lincoln might change this phrase to "testing

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 strange story of Silence Dogood

JODY DYER
Typewriter Weekly

Franklin possessed solid economic insight and exhibited a deep understanding of trade, money, and the paper currency supply in the Colonies. It is fitting that his likeness graces the highest denomination of U.S. cash in circulation. Many today know him only as the face on the \$100 bill, or the old guy they keep talking about in the movie *National Treasure*. But Franklin is one American we should all know more about. His life was full to the brim with accomplishment, adventure, and good stories. And of all the Ben Franklin stories, this is my favorite. Buckle up buttercup, this is

With her first letter, Silence Dogood was warmly welcomed with empathy into the folds of Boston society, becoming the talk of the town. She was so popular and interesting that she even garnered numerous proposals of marriage. And newspaper circulation surged, with Boston's residents eagerly waiting to read the widow's next letter.

Franklin went on to write 14 Silence Dogood letters over several months, secretly sliding them under the door

In Philadelphia, Ben Franklin opened his own print shop, made his home, and began to leave his mark on the Colonies and the world. As Americans, we owe a special debt of gratitude to Franklin, one of our finest patriots and citizens. He reminds us even today that words matter, and that there is no liberty without free speech and the resulting written word.

Ben Franklin wrote things worth reading, lived a life worth writing about, and helped build our great nation. As we celebrate America's 250th birthday, let's remember him.

Thank you Ben...

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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Continued from page 1

television. Giger goes to meetings every Wednesday and motivates other members by coming up with game ideas such as modified bingo and bean bag toss. She also gives members exercises they

"Never give up!" said Giger. "Keep trying and inside your heart say to

yourself 'YES' I can do this. It took me 20 years to lose a total of 219 pounds. Through God and my family and friends we all did it together."

TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

Texas county officials push for local say on data centers, water protections

AUSTIN — Two Texas county officials told state lawmakers last week that rural communities need a greater voice in decisions about large-scale data center development — including the power to protect water supplies those communities depend on.

According to a press release from the Texas Association of Counties, Victoria County Judge Ben Zeller and Tom Green County Commissioner Shawn Nanny testified June 23 before the House Committee on Natural Resources. Their appearance comes as concerns about data center development have grown among rural Texans, including residents who have raised the issue with the Rains County Commissioners Court.

Data centers house the computer servers that power cloud computing and artificial intelligence applications. The facilities can consume millions of gallons of water

daily for cooling and place heavy demands on local power grids and roads — concerns that have surfaced in rural counties across the state.

Under current law, counties have limited authority to regulate such projects even when residents bear the direct impacts. Zeller asked lawmakers to consider reforms allowing counties to require buffer zones near homes and farms, mandate water impact statements from large industrial users, and hold public hearings for projects above certain size thresholds.

"Our success requires that the economic development and the projects that we welcome today don't jeopardize the resources future generations of Texans will depend on tomorrow," Zeller told the committee.

Nanny drew on firsthand experience in Tom Green County, a drought-prone region where residents have

raised concerns about a proposed large data center's effect on water supplies and community character.

"Most anybody would say that water is our most precious and valuable resource, but I disagree," Nanny said, reading from remarks he gave at a local community hearing. "Our most valuable resource is the people who live here."

He urged the committee to set limits on large-scale data center construction and restore local officials' ability to speak for their constituents. His remarks drew applause from those in attendance.

Both officials said Texas can lead in economic growth while still giving counties the tools to protect their communities. "The goal is not choosing between economic growth and preservation of resources," Zeller said, "but insisting on both."

SHSU

Sam Houston State University' 2026 Deans List

HUNTSVILLE, Texas — Samantha Houchins of Emory, and Seven Hart and Sarah Roberts of Point earned the honor of being named to the Dean's List for the spring 2026 semester at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville.

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

SHSU

Sam Houston State University' 2026 President's List

HUNTSVILLE, Texas — Samantha Houchins of Emory and Sarah Roberts of Point earned the honor of being named to the President's List for the spring 2026 semester at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville.

Students listed on the President's Honor Roll at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, Texas, are undergraduates who have achieved a perfect 4.0 grade point average in all work attempted while enrolled in not less than 12 semester hours.

Advertising Works 903-473-2653

"Hometown Banking With Your Neighbors & Friends"

A Celebration of America's Independence

 **CBTx**
Commercial Bank of Texas

On July 4, 1776, our founding fathers signed the Declaration of Independence declaring our freedom from England and creating a new nation.

CBTx will be closed Saturday, July 4, to celebrate our nation's birthday. We will reopen Monday, July 6.

TEXAS CROSSWORD

by Charley & Guy Orbison

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ACROSS

- 1 old athl. confer. for UTSA
- 5 this Alan starred with TX Burnett in "The Four Seasons"
- 6 folksinger Burl Ives
- 7 TXism: "_____ cat" (skunk)
- 8 Astro or Ranger pitcher's stat.
- 9 in general (3 wds.)
- 16 song "Texas When _____"
- 18 Jerry Jones has _____ of the Dallas Cowboys
- 21 elected county prosecutor (abbr.)
- 22 founded in San Antonio: "La Quinta & Suites"
- 23 it has supercenters in Texas: _____-Mart
- 24 postage adhesive
- 30 mistaken adjective
- 34 Gov. _____ Culberson (1894-98)
- 35 TX Elmer Kelton's "The _____ Never Rained"
- 36 TXism: "never _____ eyes on it"
- 37 "know more than they _____"
- 39 in Palo Pinto County on U.S. 281 (2 wds.)
- 43 seat of Jim Wells County
- 44 Texas-born actress, Needham UT Heisman winner, Earl (init.)
- 46 TXism: "no brag, just _____"
- 47 art competition in Texas

- 49 TXism: "just a _____ bucket"
- 52 Texas-born Steve Martin's astrological sign
- 53 Jason Witten's former position with the Cowboys (abbr.)
- 54 former East Texas tree farm: "Pine-_____"

- 55 what any college accounting major must do? (2 wds.)
- 58 sphere
- 59 leather hole-piercing tool
- 60 TXism: "let sleeping dogs _____"
- 61 Cut _____ Shoot, TX

DOWN

- 1 the Taiwan office of the state of Texas is in this city
- 2 in Wise County on U.S. 81
- 3 Austin's sister city in Australia
- 4 see 27-down
- 5 Olajuwon's init. when at UH
- 10 TXism: "I got sheared like a spring lamb"
- 11 TX actress Gwynne
- 12 TX or gamblin' NV town
- 13 this Address was in "Pussycat" film with TX Paula Prentiss
- 14 Gov. _____ Ross (1886-90)
- 15 this White was the first Texan to walk in space (init.)
- 17 Texas cafeteria founder (var.) (2 wds.)
- 19 this Lee hired TX Carroll Shelby at both Ford and Chrysler
- 20 neither Earth, TX nor Venus, TX were named for a _____
- 24 _____ Jo, TX

- 25 this TX Brown won Heisman at Notre Dame (1987)
- 26 TX Charley Fide 1974 hit: "Then Who _____"
- 27 with 4-down, slang for an irrational person (2 wds.)
- 28 this Raymond was a Baylor world class sprinter
- 29 ozone layer is in the _____ sphere
- 31 Texas actress, Meredith Mac
- 32 TXism: "black gold"
- 33 "It's all about me"
- 38 TX Sam Houston's Indian wife
- 40 king topper in poker
- 41 nickname for the carrier moored at Corpus Christi
- 42 eggs order
- 43 _____ Rim State Park
- 50 TXism: "don't give a hoot _____ holler"
- 51 TXism: "gone to _____" (deteriorated)
- 56 Australian marsupial
- 57 UT event venue: Frank _____ Center, aka "The Drum"

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Sheriff's Report

The Rains County Sheriff's Office took the following reports of activity during the week of June 22-28:



MICHAEL HOPKINS
Rains County Sheriff

Arrests

6 - 2 4 4 : David Edward Taylor. Possession of a controlled substance PG 1/1-B greater than or equal to 1 gr. less than 4 gr. \$20,000 bond.

6-25: George Lee Peeples. Aggravated assault with a deadly weapon, no bond listed.

Calls

6-22: S Texas St. Meet complainant; FM 47 Live-stock on the roadway; E FM 2795; McMillan Dr. Suspi-cious activity; Sheriff's Office (SO) lobby Investigation; CR 3150 Medical assist; Hwy. 69 Debris in roadway; PR Medi-cal assist; FM 2946 Medical assist; N Texas St. Medical assist; SO lobby Meet complainant; SO lobby Investiga-tion; CR 3324 Medical assist; Briggs Blvd. Medical assist; FM 275 Criminal trespass warning; Hwy. 19N Welfare concern; SO lobby Meet complainant; E Lennon Dr. Motorist assist; N Texas St. Medical assist; CR 1470 Theft; CR 4500 Medical assist; CR 1475 Grass fire; FM 2795 Meet complainant; CR 4254 Medical assist; CR 1540 Medical assist.

6-23: CR 4261 Medical assist; W North St. Animal at large; FM 47 Suspicious vehi-cle; FM 3299 Animal welfare concern; N Texas St. Debris in roadway; PR 7332 Medical assist; FM 2946 Domestic disturbance; N Texas St. Public assist; Raintree Cour-tesy transport; CR 4254 Medi-cal assist; CR 1470 Meet complainant; Hwy. 276 Wel-fare concern; S Texas St. City ordinance violation; FM 514 Medical assist; CR 3328 Medical assist; CR 1275 Medical assist; CR 4253 Meet complainant; SO lobby Meet complainant; Hwy. 19N Medi-cal assist; FM 779 Structure fire; FM 515 Reckless driver; W Lennon Dr. Meet com-

plainant; CR 1189 Damaged property; Hwy. 19N Harass-ment.

6-24: FM 515 Distur-bance; CR 3202 Medical assist; N Texas St. Medical assist; E Lennon Dr. Distur-bance; Hwy. 19 Motorist assist; FM 515 Meet com-plainant; CR 1531 Aban-doned vehicle; Barn. St. Medical assist; FM 514 Welfare concern; SO lobby Meet complainant; N Texas St. Medical assist; W North St. Disturbance; W 275 at CR 4320 Controlled burn; Hwy. 69 at Hwy. 19 Accident; CR 3422 Medical assist; PR 7328 Theft; Hwy. 276 Reck-less driver; CR 3422 Medical assist; Hwy. 69 Motorist assist; CR 1525 Medical assist; E Lennon Dr. Fight in progress.

6-25: CR 3025 Distur-bance; Hwy. 19 Reckless driver; E Lennon Dr. Medical assist; PR 7720 Warrant service; E Lennon Dr. Medi-cal assist; CR 1525 Medical assist; CR 1640 Disturbance; W North St. Public assist; W Quitman St. Public assist; Hwy. 276 Meet complainant; E Lennon Dr. Public assist; CR 3380 Medical assist; FM 2737 Death; Hwy. 69E Reck-less driver; CR 1640 Medical assist; PR 7334 Gas leak; SO lobby Meet complainant; FM 515 Reckless driver; N Texas St. Medical assist; FM 779 Domestic disturbance; Hwy. 69 Debris in roadway.

6-26: CR 3130 Reckless driver; Hwy. 276 Debris in roadway; N Planters St. City ordinance violation; Hwy. 276 at CR 2737 Smoke investiga-tion; CR 1470 Suspicious vehicle; FM 2795 Animal welfare concern; W North St. Meet complainant; CR 4254 Medical assist; N Texas St. Funeral escort; Hwy. 69 Reckless driver; Pierson Xing City ordinance violation; CR 1402 Domestic disturbance; CR 2430 Noise complaint; CR 1399 Disturbance; FM 2737 Motorist assist; S Dun-bar Ln. Suspicious person, S Dunbar Ln. Accident.

6-27: E Lennon Dr. Suspi-cious activity; FM 2795 Live-stock on roadway; FM 275 Medical assist; E Lennon Dr. City ordinance violation; S Texas St. City ordinance violation; W North St. Scam; Hwy. 19N Criminal trespass;

FM 2946 Civil matter; SO Medical assist; PR 7026 Medical assist; SO lobby Meet complainant; CR 4254 Medi-cal assist; Hwy. 276 Theft; W Lennon Dr. Medical assist; E Lennon Dr. Theft; CR 3422 Medical assist; Mohawk Tr. East Tawakoni (ET) Suspi-cious vehicle; FM 515 Wel-fare concern; Hwy. 69 Reck-less driver.

6-28: FM 2737 Motorist assist; FM 275 Medical assist; CR 1308 Shots fired; CR 1640 Intoxicated individual; E Lennon Dr. Suspicious activ-ity; CR 3025 Medical assist; W Quitman St. Scam; FM 515 Reckless driver; CR 1605 Medical assist; Wood St. Courtesy transport; S Texas St. Medical assist; CR 2370 Grass fire; FM 514 Medical assist; CR 3415 Theft; FM 515 Neighbor dispute; CR 1399 Damaged property; CR 2460 Welfare concern; CR 1533 Brush fire; Ave. D Emory Suspicious activity; Planters St. Welfare concern; FM 2946 Medical assist.

The Sheriff's Department reported 398 calls for the week. Among the calls were: 2 paper service, 2 criminal trespass, 2 damaged property, 4 debris in roadway, 6 distur-bance, 3 domestic distur-bance, 32 extra patrols, 1 fight in progress, 1 brush fire, 7 follow up investigation, 1 funeral escort, 1 harassment, 1 structure fire, 1 intoxicated individual, 2 investigation, 1 gas leak, 2 livestock on roadway, 14 meet com-plainant, 1 neighbor dispute, 1 noise complaint, 2 grass fires, 29 public service, 9 reckless drivers, 2 scams, 1 shots fired, 1 smoke investiga-tion, 4 suspicious activity, 1 suspicious person, 3 suspicious vehicle, 5 thefts, 1 warrant service, 6 welfare concern, 2 accidents, 1 controlled burn, 1 death, 5 public assist, 4 911 hang up calls, 1 abandoned vehicle, 1 business alarm, 1 residence alarm, 1 animal at large, 2 animal welfare concern, 5 motorist assist, 5 city ordinance violations, 1 civil matter, 2 courtesy transport.

There were 173 traffic stops, 116 warnings, 49 cita-tions, 44 medical calls, and 19 transports.

TEXAS RURAL REPORTER

What kind of government are we building?

By Suzanne Bellsnyder,
Texas Rural Reporter

Ronald Reagan once joked that the nine most terrifying words in the Eng-lish language were, "I'm from the government, and I'm here to help."

Conservatives laughed because we understood the principle behind the joke. Government has an impor-tant role, but it also has limits. Strong families, local communities and account-able local government have long been viewed as the foundation of a healthy America. Government should do what only govern-ment can do, and it should remain accountable to the people it serves.

That old idea came to mind several times this week.

One education story raised questions about what state agencies owe elected officials — and ultimately the public — when major decisions are made. Another revealed taxpayers would foot an \$8 million bill cor-recting mistakes in the state's adopted curriculum. At the Capitol, I spent nearly ten hours listening to county judges, commissioners, landowners and rural Texans testify about data centers, water, energy and the future of their communities. Beneath the varied topics ran a common thread: local officials repeatedly described carrying responsibility with-out having the authority to shape decisions that will affect their communities for decades.

Individually, these are education stories and rural development stories. Together, they tell us some-thing about the kind of government we're building.

For the past year, I've traveled across Texas cover-ing the issues shaping rural communities — public edu-cation, health care, data centers, water, land use and economic development. Increasingly, I hear the same concern expressed in differ-ent ways. Decisions once made closer to home are gradually moving farther away from the people who must live with the conse-

quences. Local communities still shoulder the responsibil-ity, but the authority increas-ingly rests elsewhere.

None of this is meant to suggest that every decision belongs at the local level. Texas is too large and too complex for that. Some issues demand statewide leadership, and some chal-lenges are simply beyond the capacity of any one county or school district. But that doesn't mean we should stop asking where the balance belongs.

Years ago, former Comp-troller Carole Keeton Rylan-der Strayhorn often spoke about what she called the "phone book test." If you could find a service in the phone book, government probably didn't need to be doing it. The phone books have disappeared, but the principle still deserves con-sideration. It was never really about the phone book. It was about restraint. Before gov-ernment assumed another responsibility, conservatives first asked whether it was truly a function that belonged to government.

I'm not sure we ask that question as often anymore.

Instead, I suspect we've become more willing to use government to accomplish objectives we believe are worthwhile. Success has a way of changing movements. After governing for a genera-tion, it's easy to focus on what government can accomplish and spend less time asking what govern-ment should accomplish.

Education, economic development and even data center policy reveal the same tendency. Faced with com-plicated problems, we increasingly look to central-ized systems, statewide pro-grams and administrative agencies to produce the outcomes we want. Many of those goals are worthwhile. My concern isn't the goals. It's what happens to the structure of government while we're pursuing them.

Conservatism was never defined solely by the policies it supported. It was also defined by how government should be organized. Limited government wasn't simply about spending less money;

it was about limiting the concentration of power. Local control reflected the belief that government is most accountable when it remains close to the people. Transparency mattered because authority should always answer to citizens.

Those principles seem worth revisiting.

The institutions we build today will outlast today's officeholders and today's political victories. Programs created to solve one problem often become permanent. Authority, once centralized, rarely returns to the local level on its own.

Perhaps that's why this week's stories stayed with me. They weren't really about education, data cen-ters or rural development. They were reminders that every policy debate is also a debate about governance.

Every time we ask govern-ment to solve another problem, we should also ask where that authority belongs and how the people affected by those decisions will hold it accountable. That's not a Republican question or a Democratic question. It's an American question — and a Texas question.

As America celebrates its 250th birthday, perhaps there is no better time to revisit the first principles that shaped this Republic. Not simply what government should do, but where power should reside, how it should be exercised and to whom it should answer. Those ques-tions are as old as the nation itself, and they remain worth asking. Because if we stop asking them, we may eventu-ally find ourselves living under a government none of us intended to build.

About the Author

Suzanne Bellsnyder is editor and publisher of the *Hansford County Reporter-Statesman* and *Sherman County Gazette*. A former Capitol staffer with decades of experience in Texas poli-tics and policy, she now focuses on how state deci-sions shape rural life through her newspapers, including the *Texas Rural Reporter*. Subscribe at www.TexasRuralReporter.Substack.com.



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50-196
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Notice of Public Hearing on Rains County Appraisal District Budget

The Rains County Appraisal District will hold a public hearing on a proposed budget for the 2027 fiscal year.

The public hearing will be held on July 16 at 12:00 pm, located at 145 Doris Briggs Pkwy, Emory, Texas 75440. A summary of the appraisal district budget follows:

The total amount of the proposed budget.	<u>\$ 1,112,408.00</u>
The total amount of increase over the current year's budget.	<u>3%</u>
The number of employees compensated under the proposed budget.	<u>6</u>
The number of employees compensated under the current budget.	<u>6</u>

The appraisal district is supported solely by payments from the local taxing units served by the appraisal district. Since the district does not adopt a tax rate and does not impose taxes, adoption of the district's budget would have no direct impact on taxpayer property tax bill in the district.

If approved by the appraisal district board of directors at the public hearing, this proposed budget will take effect automatically unless disapproved by the governing bodies of the county, school districts, cities and towns served by the appraisal district.

A copy of the proposed budget is available for public inspection in the office of each of those governing bodies. A copy is also available for public inspection at the appraisal district office located at 145 Doris Briggs Pkwy, Emory, Texas 75440.

The phone number of the Rains County Appraisal District is: 903-473-2391. The address is: 145 Doris Briggs Pkwy, Emory, Texas 75440.

Obituaries

Larry "Pop" Daily 1949 – 2026



Larry Daily, 77, died on June 17, 2026, in Watauga. He was born on January 10, 1949, in Greenville, to Orvin and Glydene Daily.

Mr. Daily grew up in the country with his siblings fishing, gardening and raising cows. He and his brother (and best friend) Wayne were always up to something. In high school he was very active in FFA winning several awards at the Texas State Fair with his cows, Tina and Kay.

He met the love of his life, Virginia "Lollee" in Garland, at Belt Line Baptist Church and they were married on February 29, 1968. They had three children. They loved and raised their children according to the Word, to love Jesus and in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord."

Mr. Daily worked in construction and remodeling in the Dallas area. He could build anything, especially if it was something his wife concocted for the kids. From ice cream sandwich benches, to make believe kitchens, doll houses and furniture...if his wife thought of it...he could build it.

He loved to fish, and a trip to his favorite store, Bass Pro, almost always ended in the purchase of a new pole, whether he needed it or not.

He was a man of God and lived his life that way. He wanted people to know that there is salvation through Jesus Christ. For most of his life, he was a song leader; picking, singing and leading hymns. He had a beautiful voice and taught his children to sing and found great joy in singing with his entire family, whether it was just "jamming" at the house, or for worship at a church.

Mr. Daily is survived by his son, Joel Daily and wife Kelley; daughter, Mandy Ausmus and husband Charles; grandchildren, Courtney Spence and husband Andrew, Hannah Dean and husband Jeremy, Nayeli, Kaden and Jack Ausmus, and Erin Michelle Caffey; and great-grandchildren, Emma, Addie Mae, Cullen, Asia and Lucy.

He was preceded in death by his parents; wife; daughter, Penny; grandsons, Matthew Ryan and Tyler Paul; and siblings, Carol, Wayne and Bill.

Leah Denise Davis 1953 – 2026



A Celebration of Life for Leah Denise Davis, 72, will be held on July 25, at 4:00 p.m., at The Diamond at Star E Ranch, 13342 FM 1567, Cumby, followed by a barbecue dinner.

Mrs. Davis died peacefully at her home on June 21, 2026, in Cumby, surrounded by her family. She was born on June 30, 1953, in Sweetwater, to Aston Buck and Opal Woodard Buck.

Family wasn't just part of her life, it was her entire life. She was happiest when her house was filled with laughter. She loved to travel, finding great joy in planning and taking family vacations every year. She cherished watching her children and grandchildren having fun, never missing an opportunity to attend their sporting events and activities. She was a wonderful cook and

enjoyed treating others to her delicious home-cooked meals and hosting family gatherings. Her proudest accomplishment was being a mother and Gran.

Mrs. Davis is survived by her husband of 53 years, Stanley Davis; daughter, Mandy Riley and husband Nolan; grandchildren, Phelan Davis, Lincoln Riley, Jackson Riley, Benjamin Riley, and Madison Riley; and sister, Barbara Hobbs.

She was preceded in death by her son, Wesley Davis; parents; and brother, Tommy Buck.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the South Plains Wild Life Rehabilitation Center in Lubbock, Texas or the American Cancer Society in her memory.

Bill Genson 1942 – 2026



Bill Genson, 84, died on June 15, 2026, at Christus Mother Frances Hospital in Sulphur Springs after a prolonged illness. He was born on February 16, 1942, in Spencer, Iowa.

He spent his childhood in Iowa. After attending school, he joined the US Marines. Following his recruitment at Fort Pendleton, CA, he was stationed aboard the USS Bon Homme Richard CVA-31 and served in many ports, including Tokyo, Hong Kong, Okinawa, Boom Bay, Singapore, India, and many others.

After his enlistment in the service, he worked as a salesperson and greenskeeper at the Scottsdale Golf Club. Golf became one of his favorite hobbies. He then returned to his hometown, where he worked at a local TV facility and later at Olivetti-Underwood, selling and repairing typewriters and computers. He married LaDonna in 1966 and continued his education at Emmetsburg Community College, where he studied drafting. Later, he attended Iowa State University. After studying and working for Morton Buildings, he established his own

company, Genson Construction, where he served as a master builder, specializing in remodeling homes in North Dallas. He and LaDonna moved to Plano, where he continued to run his business with his son, Shad, for the next 10 years.

He was married to LaDonna for 60 years while raising their children and traveling all over the

world. Mr. Genson is survived by his wife, LaDonna of Point; daughter, LaRena Phillips and husband David; son, Shad Genson and wife Kailey; four grandchildren, LaKayla, Kylee, Lucas and Pheonix; sister-in-law, Dee Olsen; brother-in-law, John Olsen; and numerous nieces, nephews, and extended family.

He was preceded in death by his mother, Nina Genson; brother, Jack Genson; sister, Barbara Goodwin and brother-in-law, Jack Goodwin; nephew, Tim Goodwin; father-in-law, Lyle Hedge, mother-in-law, Lenora Hedge; in-laws, Gary and Mary Hedge; and several nieces, nephews, cousins, and extended family and friends.

creating YouTube videos and TikToks, or planning his next adventure, he found joy in experiencing life to its fullest. His enthusiasm, sense of humor, and love of sharing those experiences with others will be remembered by everyone who knew him.

Mr. Hamm is survived by his wife of 39 years, Lisa Fretwell Hamm; three daughters, Michelle Hamm Bacon and husband Ryan, Jennifer Hamm Watson and husband Colby, and Kaitlin Hamm; grandchildren, Kason, Brentley and Madelyn; sister, Debbie Gilbreath and husband Audie; nephew, Aaron Gilbreath; niece, Melissa Warren; special friend, Lori Gibson; and numerous beloved family members and friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents.

Emma Jane Harman 1932 – 2026



A memorial service for Emma Jane Harman, 94, will be held on Saturday, July 11, at 11:00 a.m., at Point Church of Christ.

Mrs. Harman died peacefully at home on May 19, 2026. She was born on January 19, 1932, in Paris, Texas, to John and Agnes Gifford.

Mrs. Harman had her master's degree from East Texas State University and worked as an art teacher for the Dallas Independent School District until her retirement. She loved spending time with family and friends. She enjoyed sewing, painting, crafts, cooking, and traveling, especially going to the beach. She was a godly woman and a member of Point Church of Christ.

Mrs. Harman is survived by children

Claudia Wilk, Terri Melancon and husband Charles, Tim Blaylock and wife Marlene, Karl Harman, and Marsha Harman; grandchildren, Jeff Wilk and wife Tasha, Robert Blaylock, Karen Fowler and husband Jess, Christine Wolfe and husband Jimmy, Matthew Melancon and wife Rachel, Harman Melancon and wife Lauren, Derek Harman and wife Kendra, and Bryce Harman and wife Shannon; sister, Wonda Banks; 18 great-grandchildren; and six great-great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband, Jack Harman; sister, Priscilla Martin; and brother, Bud Gifford.

Thurman Dale Simmons 1933 – 2026



Funeral services for Thurman Dale Simmons, 93, were held on June 29, at Wilson - Orwosky Funeral Home. Interment followed at Lynch Cemetery.

Mr. Simmons died at his home in Alba, on June 16, 2026. He was born on March 29, 1933, in Honey Grove.

Mr. Simmons served in the Texas Army National Guard from 1956 to 1962. Following his military service, he worked for many years for the City of Dallas, where he retired as a Lead Man.

In 1953, he married Virginia Taber. Together they built a family and shared many years of love, devotion, and treasured memories.

Mr. Simmons enjoyed fishing, drinking a cold beer, and especially playing dominoes—particularly the game of 42. He had a wonderful sense of humor, loved to tell

stories, and never met a stranger. Music was one of his greatest joys. He loved singing "Hey, Good Lookin'" and especially "You Are My Sunshine."

Mr. Simmons is survived by sons, Kenneth Simmons and wife Debbie, Bobby Simmons, and Danny Simmons; daughter, Laura Mares; sister, Helen Sanders and husband William; 16 grandchildren, 51 great-grandchildren, 32 great-great-grandchildren, four great-great-great-grandchildren; and numerous nieces, nephews, and extended family members.

He was preceded in death by his wife; parents, Logan Simmons and Susanna Perkins; brother, Larry Butler; son, Roger Dale Simmons; daughter-in-law, Patricia Simmons; and great-grandchildren, John, Logan, Steven, Tabitha and Richie.

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Believers' Baptist Church

By Linda Brendle

And he said to his disciples, "Temptations to sin are sure to come, but woe to the one through whom they come!"

Luke 17:1

Lane Garland filled the pulpit on Sunday and brought a message from Luke called "How We Care for Each Other." The command to care for each other comes from Christ. We should protect each other from temptations that come from us. Don't gossip, pray for patience, and don't post things on social media that might arouse jealousy and covetousness. Forgive each other, remembering that we are all sinners. How do we do

this? Through faith in Christ.

A new Sunday morning sermon series begins July 12 – *Sovereignty and Silence: A Study of the Book of Esther*.

Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m. – Adult Summer Bible Study, Psalm 119

July 20-22, 6:30-8:00 p.m., Family VBS – Sign up at www.bbcmemory.org

July 28-30, Preteen Camp (Grades third-fifth), See Pastor Jerod Haygood for information.

The Asking for a Friend Podcast will be on summer break for the next few months. Watch for it to return in the fall.

SAVVY SENIORS

What to do when medical bills pile up

Dear Savvy Senior, I'm 63 and recently had a hospital stay that left me with bills I can't afford to pay. I had Affordable Care Act health insurance, but after my premiums went up in January, I had to drop my coverage. Now I'm overwhelmed by medical bills. What can I do?



JIM MILLER
Savvy Senior

– Struggling Patient

Dear Struggling, You're definitely not alone. Medical debt is very common. About 1 in 12 Americans are dealing with it, and many had insurance when the bills started piling up. The good news is there are ways to reduce what you owe and make it more manageable. Here are some steps that can help.

Check your bills

Medical billing errors are more common than you might think, so start by taking a close look at every bill and explanation of benefits you receive. Watch for duplicate charges, services you did not receive or prices that seem off.

If something does not look

right, call your provider's billing office and ask for an itemized bill. Do not be shy about asking questions. Even small mistakes can add up.

Ask about help

Most hospitals, especially nonprofit ones, are required to offer financial assistance programs, often called charity care. Depending on your income, you may qualify to have part or even all of your bill forgiven.

Call the hospital billing office and ask specifically about financial assistance. You can also visit DollarFor.org, a nonprofit that helps patients apply for charity care programs at no cost.

Negotiate costs

If you do not qualify for assistance, you still have options. Many hospitals and doctors are willing to work with patients, especially if you reach out early.

Ask if they can lower the bill or offer a discount if you can pay something upfront. You can also request a no interest payment plan to spread the cost out over time. If this feels overwhelming, a medical billing advocate can help. The Alliance of Professional Health Advocates, at aphadvocates.org, can connect you with professionals who review bills and

negotiate on your behalf.

Find programs

Since you recently lost coverage, it is also worth checking whether you qualify for Medicaid, especially if your income has dropped. You can apply through Healthcare.gov or your state Medicaid office.

Another helpful tool is BenefitsCheckUp.org, from the National Council on Aging, which can point you to programs that help lower health care and prescription costs.

Get support

You do not have to handle this on your own. There are several trusted organizations that offer free or low-cost help. The Patient Advocate Foundation (patientadvocate.org) provides case management services and can help you find financial assistance. The National Foundation for Credit Counseling (nfcc.org) offers nonprofit credit counseling and guidance on managing debt. You can also visit NeedyMed.org to locate programs that can help lower the cost of prescriptions and other medical expenses.

The most important thing is to act sooner rather than later. Ignoring medical bills can lead to collections and added stress, but many providers are willing to work with you if you reach out.

Start by reviewing your bills, then explore assistance programs and payment options. With some persistence, you can often lower what you owe and set up a plan that fits your budget. Medical debt is common, even among people who had insurance, but it is often negotiable, and there are real resources available to help you through it.

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.

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Emory Methodist Church

By Mary White

Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus."

Acts 8:35

Rev. David Banks' message was titled "The Promise in Practice: When Mission goes unexpectedly" with scripture text taken from Acts. David said mission begins with listening. As the angel of the Lord gave instructions to Philip he was led to a chariot on a desert road. There he found an unexpected occasion to tell the news of Jesus. Such opportunities are all around us, though we often let them pass unnoticed. We need to ask God to give us the vision and courage to act on such opportunities

Looking ahead, Game night will be held on Friday, July 10, at 5:00 p.m. We will go to Stacy's Fish Fry in Miller Grove at 3:30 p.m. before games. All are welcome to come and have fish and then play games. On Monday, July 13, the Widow/Widower's Meeting will meet in the Fellowship Hall at 10:00 a.m.

Birthday wishes go to Judith Rodes Johnson and Kenneth Neinast and anniversary wishes go to James and MayBeth McMahan.

Pray for Jimmy Bennett, the family of Lee Sikes, the family of Charles Edward Hunter, and Doris Wilson.

Have a peaceful week and give someone a smile.

THIS WEEK IN TEXAS HISTORY

One-eyed pilot set flying records

by Bartee Haile

Wiley Post and his Australian navigator landed in New York City on Jul. 1, 1931 completing an epic around-the-world flight in record-breaking time.



BARTEE HAILE
Historical Columnist

Two states claimed Wiley Hardeman Post as a native son. Texas had birth going for it since the intrepid aviator began his short life in Van Zandt County a couple of years shy of the twentieth century. Oklahoma, however, had residency on its side because the Posts relocated north of the Red River when Wiley was nine.

The simple pleasures of farm life never appealed to the youngster, whose head always seemed to be in the clouds. Wiley regularly skipped his chores to whittle model planes out of scrap wood and to dream of the day he would defy the law of gravity.

Post's first fling into the wild blue yonder came in 1919 courtesy of a gypsy barnstormer. Five years later at an Oklahoma air show, he did such a fine job of filling in for an injured parachutist that the dangerous job became his permanently.

During his two-year stint as a sky diver, Post made 99 jumps. His father objected so strongly to the hazardous occupation that he hid his son's parachute. Post finally found it and from then on kept his silks in a safety deposit box at the local bank.

In 1926 he turned personal tragedy into the opportunity of a lifetime. While working as a roughneck in the Oklahoma oilfields, a metal sliver destroyed the sight in his left eye. Paid \$2,000 in compensation for the accident, he bought a glass substitute and a used airplane.

A wealthy oilman soon hired Post as a test pilot and cloud-hopping chauffeur. When the Department of Commerce started licensing pilots in 1927, only his perfect flying record kept the one-eyed applicant from being grounded.

In the "Winnie Mae," a craft named after the boss' daughter, Post won a Los Angeles-Chicago air race against the best flyboys in the business. The jubilant sponsor gladly invested \$50,000 in their next joint venture -- a highly publicized challenge of the around-the-world record.

The best time belonged to the German dirigible "Graf Zeppelin" that in 1929 circled the globe in a breathtaking 21 days. Post and his traveling companion easily shattered that mark by returning to their point of departure in just eight days, 15 hours and 51 minutes.

The amazing feat made Post an instant hero. But the standing ovation for the modest daredevil detracted from the practical importance of his headline-grabbing odyssey. As one newspaper explained, if Wiley Post could conquer the world in eight days, "thousands of people at home will feel safer in venturing, say, from Boston to New York by air."

Post bought the "Winnie Mae" and began painstaking preparations for a solo jaunt. In the early hours of Jul. 15, 1933, he left Brooklyn's Floyd Bennett Field with only his private demons for company.

The adventure was no pleasure cruise. He rested by putting the plane on automatic pilot and holding a wrench attached to his finger by a string. If he dozed off, the falling wrench would wake him, or at least that was the idea.

Post not only achieved his goal of circumnavigating the planet but eclipsed his previous time by 21 hours. This record stood for five years until surpassed by another

high-flying Texan, Howard Hughes.

Post spent the next few months proving the feasibility of high-altitude flight. Wearing a special rubber suit fashioned by tire manufacturer B.F. Goodrich, he coaxed the remodeled "Winnie Mae" into the stratosphere reaching an unimaginable 40,000 feet on Sep. 5, 1934.

Selling the "Winnie Mae" to the Smithsonian Museum, Post purchased a new plane and made new plans. His destination was Siberia, and humorist Will Rogers, a close friend, decided to go along for the ride.

Rogers wanted to visit an acquaintance at Point Barrow, Alaska, but Post was disoriented by the snow-covered terrain and had to stop at an Eskimo village to ask for directions. Told they had missed Point Barrow by 16 miles, the internationally renowned Okies shared a meal with the hospitable natives, who nicknamed the visitors "Man with Rag over Sore Eye" and "Big Man with Boots."

Always in a hurry, Post refused to wait for the right pontoons and instead bought a set that made the airplane nose heavy. He reasoned that the stocky Rogers, who sat behind him, would balance the craft. Experts later deduced that the weight problem prevented him from making a safe emergency landing.

On the evening of Aug. 15, 1935, the pilot who twice flew around the world failed to finish a 16-mile hop. Wiley Post and Will Rogers were barely airborne when the engine sputtered and quit. The Eskimo eyewitnesses watched in horror, as the plane crashed killing both pilot and passenger on impact.

Bartee Haile welcomes your comments and questions at barteehaile@gmail.com or by mail at P.O. Box 130011, Spring, TX 77393.

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Church Directory

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METHODIST CHURCH

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One Block from the Square
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Worship Time 10:30 a.m.
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.

"Reaching Out Because We Care"

Pastor Keith Prather
www.pilgrimsrestbaptistchurch.org

Point Church of Christ

Bible Classes 9:00 a.m.
Worship Service 10:00 a.m.
Evening Worship 6:00 p.m.
Wed. Eve. Service 7:00 p.m.

Everyone welcome!

Richard Kellam
www.pointchurchofchrist.org

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 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.
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Sunday Morning Worship 10:00 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship 6:00 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study 7:00 p.m.
emorychurchofchrist.org

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Point, TX

9:45 a.m. Sunday School
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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.
Morning Worship 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
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903-473-2653 to have your church placed in this directory

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The Rains County Good Samaritan Thrift/Clothes store will be open Saturdays in June 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/LEGAL NOTICE

PUBLIC/LEGAL NOTICE

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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

BUY IT! SELL IT! FIND IT! IN THE CLASSIFIEDS! For information, call 903-473-2653

NOTICE TO CREDITORS IN THE ESTATE OF JOHNNY OLAN DOLAN

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of Johnny Olan Dolan, Deceased, were issued on April 28, 2026, under Docket No. 3394, pending in the County Court of Rains County, Texas, to Vicki Lynn Dolan.

Claims may be presented as follows:

Representative, Estate of Johnny Olan Dolan, Deceased c/o Philip D. Alexander Number One Planters Street P.O. Box 38 Emory, Texas 75440

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

DATED June 24, 2026

CURTIS & ALEXANDER P.C.

Attorneys at Law Number One Planters Street P.O. Box 38 Emory, Texas 75440

Telephone: 903-473-2297 Facsimile: 903-473-3069

E-Mail: philip@curtisalexander.net /s/ Philip D. Alexander State Bar No. 00786967

ATTORNEYS FOR APPLICANT

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

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

UNKNOWN HEIRS AND KNOWN HEIRS WHOSE ADDRESSES CANNOT BE ASCERTAINED CITATION BY PUBLICATION

STATE OF TEXAS

TO THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF KATHY SUZANN STEPHENS, DECEASED - GREETINGS:

YOU ARE HEREBY COMMANDED TO APPEAR BEFORE THE COUNTY COURT OF RAINS COUNTY, TEXAS AT THE RAINS COUNTY COURTHOUSE ANNEX LOCATED AT 220 W. QUITMAN ST., EMORY, TEXAS 75440. BY FILING A WRITTEN CONTEST OR ANSWER TO THE APPLICATION FOR LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION AND FOR DETERMINATION OF HEIRSHIP FILED BY KRISTI LYNN KREUZER, ON 06/25/2026 IN CAUSE 3413 IN THE COUNTY COURT OF RAINS COUNTY, TEXAS AND BEING STYLED: IN THE ESTATE OF KATHY SUZANN STEPHENS, DECEASED ON OR BEFORE THE MONDAY NEXT FOLLOWING THE EXPIRATION OF 10 DAYS FROM THE DATE THIS CITATION WAS PUBLISHED. BY THE APPLICATION FOR LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION AND FOR DETERMINATION OF HEIRSHIP APPLICANT SEEKS THE COURT TO DETERMINE AND DECLARE THE HEIRS OF KATHY SUZANN STEPHENS, DECEASED AND THEIR INTERESTS IN SAID ESTATE.

ISSUED AND GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL OF SAID COURT AT OFFICE IN EMORY, TEXAS, THIS JUNE 26, 2026.

Mandy Sawyer, County Clerk Rains County, Texas By: Molly Lennon

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NOTICE TO CREDITORS IN THE ESTATE OF JOSEPH DAVID ORSBORN

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of Joseph David Orsborn, Deceased, were issued on April 28, 2026, under Docket No. 3392, pending in the County Court of Rains County, Texas, to Debra L. Orsborn.

Claims may be presented as follows:

Representative, Estate of Joseph David Orsborn, Deceased c/o Philip D. Alexander Number One Planters Street P.O. Box 38 Emory, Texas 75440

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

DATED June 24, 2026

CURTIS & ALEXANDER P.C.

Attorneys at Law Number One Planters Street P.O. Box 38 Emory, Texas 75440

Telephone: 903-473-2297 Facsimile: 903-473-3069

E-Mail: philip@curtisalexander.net /s/ Philip D. Alexander State Bar No. 00786967 ATTORNEYS FOR APPLICANT

NOTICE TO CREDITORS IN THE ESTATE OF TIM LEWIS NEWLAND

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of Tim Lewis Newland, Deceased, were issued on April 28, 2026, under Docket No. 3397, pending in the County Court of Rains County, Texas, to Rosemary Newland.

Claims may be presented as follows:

Representative, Estate of Tim Lewis Newland, Deceased c/o Philip D. Alexander Number One Planters Street P.O. Box 38 Emory, Texas 75440

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

DATED June 24, 2026

CURTIS & ALEXANDER P.C.

Attorneys at Law Number One Planters Street P.O. Box 38 Emory, Texas 75440

Telephone: 903-473-2297 Facsimile: 903-473-3069

E-Mail: philip@curtisalexander.net /s/ Philip D. Alexander State Bar No. 00786967 ATTORNEYS FOR APPLICANT

NOTICE TO CREDITORS IN THE ESTATE OF ROGER LEE KANODE

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of Roger Lee Kanode, Deceased, were issued on April 28, 2026, under Docket No. 3402, pending in the County Court of Rains County, Texas, to Karen Lee Kanode.

Claims may be presented as follows:

Representative, Estate of Roger Lee Kanode, Deceased c/o Philip D. Alexander Number One Planters Street P.O. Box 38 Emory, Texas 75440

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

DATED June 24, 2026

CURTIS & ALEXANDER P.C.

Attorneys at Law Number One Planters Street P.O. Box 38 Emory, Texas 75440

Telephone: 903-473-2297 Facsimile: 903-473-3069

E-Mail: philip@curtisalexander.net /s/ Philip D. Alexander State Bar No. 00786967 ATTORNEYS FOR APPLICANT

NOTICE TO CREDITORS IN THE ESTATE OF DANIEL CHARLES HAYNER

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of Daniel Charles Hayner, Deceased, were issued on April 28, 2026, under Docket No. 3398, pending in the County Court of Rains County, Texas, to Stefan Camille Hayner.

Claims may be presented as follows:

Representative, Estate of Daniel Charles Hayner, Deceased c/o Philip D. Alexander Number One Planters Street P.O. Box 38 Emory, Texas 75440

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

DATED June 24, 2026

CURTIS & ALEXANDER P.C.

Attorneys at Law Number One Planters Street P.O. Box 38 Emory, Texas 75440

Telephone: 903-473-2297 Facsimile: 903-473-3069

E-Mail: philip@curtisalexander.net /s/ Philip D. Alexander State Bar No. 00786967 ATTORNEYS FOR APPLICANT

