

Rains County Leader

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EMORY, TEXAS - THURSDAY, JULY 23, 2026

PRICE 75¢

RAINS ISD

Trustees discuss budget deficit, preliminary numbers for next year

By **CHUCK FITTS**
Rains County Leader staff

The Rains ISD Board of Trustees discussed the district budget, heard preliminary numbers and tabled a plan for new buses during the regular meeting on Monday, July 20.

Trustees were updated on the status of the district's 2025-2026 budget which showed that the district was in a deficit of around \$900,000.

"It's a very red number," Chief Finan-

cial Officer Shannon Freeman said. "I want you all to keep that in mind. Keep in mind our enrollment numbers have gone down. When average daily attendance goes down, the state is going to give less money."

"We hope that it is going to be a little bit better," Superintendent Joe Nicks said. "We'll have a little bit more information when we do get settled up with the state, but we won't have the final number until we get the audit."

Nicks noted that the primary driver of

the projected deficit was over projection of revenue and a sharp decline in enrollment.

Freeman stated that last year, the district lost 67 students to homeschooling. When asked for a rough estimate of revenue lost per kid, Nicks said that it was about \$10,000 per student.

Freeman said that while working with and talking to the Region 7 Education Service Center, they stated that "65 percent of districts in the state are in the same situation. They are in the red be-

cause the funding is not there."

As the item was informational, the board moved to the next item which was a preliminary budget for the 2026-2027 school year.

With a preliminary tax rate calculated from state templates, the budget is projected to be in the positive by about \$7,000.

"We don't know what our actual compressed rate is going to be from the

see **RISD** on page 2

Tiny bubbles



Leader photo by **CHUCK FITTS**

Rains County kids beat the summer heat with foam as they celebrate the conclusion of the Summer Readathon at the Rains County Library. According to the Library's Facebook page, the family-friendly event included a foam party, food trucks, cotton candy, door prizes, popcorn and more to reward the participants of the reading challenge over the summer.

POINT

Sign up for Point City Council election under way

By **CHUCK FITTS**
Rains County Leader staff

The City of Point is accepting applications from citizens who wish to be placed on the ballot for a seat on the Point City Council. The registration deadline is August 17 by 5:30 p.m.

Election packets are available at Point City Hall, located at 320 N. Locust Street, during regular business hours of Monday through Thursday from 6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Seats up for election in November are Seat 1, currently held by Douglas House, and Seat 3, currently held by Tammy Hooten.

Hooten will be finishing her four year term, while House was elected to the seat in the special election in May.

For more information about the Point City Council election, contact Point City Hall at 903-598-3296.

CITY OF EMORY

City staff announce plans to seek \$21M water grant

From **Staff Reports**
Rains County Leader staff

The Emory City Council voted unanimously to seek a \$21 million state grant for water system upgrades and heard a resident's formal objection over a drainage complaint during its meeting Tuesday, July 14.

The council also approved a final plat for a Rhodes Drive property and authorized new cemetery equipment during the session, which began at 7:07

p.m. Members opened by moving into executive session at 7:08 p.m. to consult with the city attorney on pending litigation, returning to open session at 8:09 p.m.

Resident Aaron Cichy told the council he was formally objecting to its denial of his request to place a land drainage matter on the agenda, saying a city report on the issue contained mischaracterizations and left his questions

see **EMORY** on page 2

RAINS COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT

ESD board approves proposed budget, tax rate in regular monthly meeting

From **Staff Reports**
Rains County Leader staff

The Rains County Emergency Services District No. 1 board unanimously approved a proposed budget and tax rate for the 2026-27 fiscal year and set public hearing dates on the matter for September 14 and September 21 during its regular meeting Monday night. Board members noted the figures are preliminary and could still change before final adoption.

In related business, the board also approved the Rains County Appraisal District's proposed 2027 budget without changes.

Board members tabled action on volunteer fire department budget requests for a second straight month, saying they wanted more time to review the figures before committing to them. Officials noted East Tawakoni's requested budget amount had increased since the last

see **ESD** on page 2

SPOTLIGHT

Library makes great headway under leadership of Bernadette Thompson

By **JUDY KRAMER**
Rains County Leader contributor

The Rains County Public Library has been operating since 1982 according to the library's website. It just keeps getting better and has made many positive developments under the direction of Bernadette Thompson who stepped into the director's position on June 12, 2025. She saw the need for handicapped access doors, resulting in a grant for \$10,000 to cover the costs. Rains County Friends of the Library are contributing two new computers, making a total of four available for public access. That group has also provided a new library shelf, and a second shelf was obtained through gifts given in memory of Lyn Baldwin who

started the Dolly Parton Imagination Library (DPIL) in Rains County.

"We have seen a lot of new things and updates recently," said Thompson. "Our summer reading program has been very successful with awesome participation including more sponsors than last year. We opened our summer reading program to adults this year and have 237 registered adult and child readers. So far, 104 have completed the reading challenge, with 131,610 minutes having been read as of July 10. A grant has also allowed us to have an online program that tracks these numbers."

The popular summer reading program allows participants to read books that

see **SPOTLIGHT** on page 3



(Left to right) Renee Seitzler, Michelle Graham, Bernadette Thompson and Christi Pless.



City Girl:
Surgery is not what...

Page 3

Jody Dyer:
Coffee - The Beverage ...

page 3

Texas Rural Reporter:
Gina Hinojosa...

page 4

Rain Report

Wed., Jul. 15 0.01 in.
Thu., Jul. 16 0.10 in.
Total for July 1.26 in.
Year to date 23.00 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

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.

FOL Book Sale Is Here!

The next Friends of Rains County Library Big Book Sale begins tomorrow! The sale will be in the Meadows Room of the Rains County Public Library, 150 Doris Briggs Parkway, Emory. Dates are Friday, July 24 and Saturday, July 25, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. both days. The best selections are available early Friday, and Saturday is Bargain Day – fill a bag for \$4 or a box for \$8! Don't miss it!

FOL Hosts a Youth Writing Challenge!

Attention: all Rains County writers 18 years old and younger. Write an essay beginning with "My magical summer..." Writers ages 9 and under should submit two paragraphs, ages 10-13 should write one page, and writers 14-18 should submit

two pages. Entries may be typed or legibly handwritten. Submit your essay during the July 24-25 book sale, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., at the Library, 150 Doris Briggs Parkway, Emory. Prizes for each essay that meets all the requirements.

St. John rummage sale

St. John Catholic Church-Emory (551 E FM 2795) is preparing for their annual rummage sale to be held July 30-August 1. They will be accepting donations of gently used clothing, housewares, small kitchen appliances, books, toys, baby items, etc., July 16-24, (Mon., Wed., Fri., 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Tues. and Thurs., 4:00 -7:00 p.m.) No furniture, large appliances, TVs or printers.

Elm Cemetery Memorial Day

The Elm Cemetery Memorial Day service will be held on Sunday, August 2, at 10:00 a.m. There will be a business meeting and lunch will follow. Bring a covered dish.

Rains Co. Fair pageant applications

Rains County Fair Pageant applications may be downloaded from the Rains County Fair Website at www.https://rainscountyfair.com/pageants/ Deadline to enter is August 7, 2026.

THE PUBLIC FORUM

Stop funding AI Data Centers...

Dear Editor

Governor Abbott, stop Texas funding toward AI Data Center and Renewable Energy projects, impose a moratorium and call a special legislative session immediately.

This is not a political issue. AI Data Centers and Renewable Energy projects pose dangers and risks to the well-being and prosperity of Texas and its citizens. These technologies have been shown to present dangers and risks to people, farm animals, birds, the environment including air, water, noise and light pollution. They consume inordinate amounts of water, electricity and farmland. The dangers include fire, harmful effects on people and animals' health and overconsumption of water and electricity. There is also a lack of enforcement of Texas laws and statutes. The short and long-term effects of these technologies on Texas are not known. In addition, the power from Solar and BESS does not benefit Texas citizens because it is sold to AI Data Centers. Many of these installations do not meet the fire codes applicable in Texas nor comply with the Lone Star Critical Infrastructure Protection Act. On social media's X (accessed July 2, 2026), the screen name of "Old Salty Marine" reported, "A farmer in Texas

says he hasn't seen a single live calf born since a data center was built next to his property. Only stillbirths since. If that's happening to livestock, what effects will it have with the people around it?" Credible data shows Solar Farms will catch fire and possibly there will be multiple fires. Just last week, there was a fire at the Barrett Solar farm in Rains county near Point. BESS fires, when they occur, cannot be easily extinguished; Firefighters use hundreds of thousands of gallons (and more) of water to contain such BESS fires. Firefighters have said that Rains County does not have enough water to fight a BESS fire. BESS fires can last multiple days. The smoke plume from BESS fires is laden with toxic gases, chemicals, metals and debris, it can travel some 50 miles injuring people and animals in their wake. Water used to fight BESS fires becomes laden with the same toxic chemicals, metals and debris, it drains in nearby ditches, creeks, the ground, and in Rains County, into Lake Fork. People come before profits. Contact Governor Gregg Abbott's office at 512-463-2000 and urge him to impose a moratorium until these dangers are eliminated to benefit of Texas residents.

Raymond Frappier
Point, Tx 75472

ESD

Continued from page 1

meeting. The item is expected to come back for a vote in September.

Grant-funded equipment on track

The board discussed continued spending under a state grant covering new radios and brush trucks for the district's three fire departments. Officials said the district plans to borrow roughly \$924,000 to cover the purchases upfront, with a grant expected to reimburse about half that amount. Board members said several invoices, one totaling more than \$300,000, were due within days.

Truck repairs approved

The board approved payment of a \$5,191.25 invoice for repairs to an East Tawakoni fire engine, including work on the truck's air brake and cab-tilt systems. Officials said the roughly 20-year-old truck has required more frequent upkeep, and that repair costs this year have pushed the department over its vehicle maintenance budget.

Activity reports

Fire chiefs from the district's coverage area gave monthly activity reports for June. The East Tawakoni Volunteer Fire Department reported 42 calls for the month of June. The report stated 20 medical calls, five downed trees calls, four fires, three lift assists, three public assists, two unauthorized burnings, one law enforcement, one fire assist, one brush fire, one motor vehicle accident and one vehicle fire.

The Emory Volunteer Fire Department reported

129 calls for the month of June. There were three fire, five hazardous situations. 100 medical calls, 15 public service calls and six non-emergency calls.

The Point Fire Department reported 38 total calls, including 23 medical calls, three fires, four hazardous situations, five public service calls and three non-emergency calls.

Hopkins County EMS said the department had a busy month but could not report exact figures because its data system was down, with hopes of catching up next month.

Finances

Treasurer Cody Beaver presented the district's financial report for the period ending June 30. The regular public funds checking account began the month with a balance of \$1,192,342.93, received two deposits totaling \$15,648.68, and paid out 14 checks totaling \$86,498.37, leaving an ending balance of \$1,121,493.24. A separate district capital fund held a reported ending balance of \$205,140.60 after a deposit and one withdrawal during the period.

Other business

During open forum, board members noted the district had received a \$2,000 check from East Tawakoni related to workers' compensation insurance.

Board members Ken Player, Kevin Douglas, Cody Beaver and Wes Rawles were among those present. The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance and an invocation before moving into regular business.

EMORY

Continued from page 1

about downstream water flow and maintenance unanswered. The city's written denial called the matter a private property issue requiring no action, a conclusion Cichy called unsupported. He asked the council to reconsider, schedule formal discussion in August, obtain a written legal opinion, and commission an independent engineering review.

The council later approved a resolution to apply for a \$21 million Texas Water Development Board grant, named the "City of Emory's Water Rehabilitation and Infrastructure, Multilocation Upgrades" project. If awarded, the money would fund a new water tower, a new water main from the water plant into town, and other plant improvements. Officials said the application should be submitted in about two weeks.

City finance officer Janice Nobles said the city is about 75 percent through the fiscal year and has begun preparing the 2026 budget, with a council workshop planned

for early August.

City administrator Leah Drown told the council that a contractor was expected to repair a roof leak at the storm shelter on Wednesday, though larger repairs — not covered by insurance — are still needed.

Drown reported that the city's police department had issued 315 citations in the past 30 days, compared with about 750 citations for all of 2024. She stated that code enforcement began making weekly Thursday rounds the previous week.

The council unanimously approved a final plat for 159 Rhodes Drive despite the lot falling about 1.5 feet short of the city's 75-foot width requirement, and nominated Jeremy Cook to the East Texas Council of Governments' executive committee. Members also approved buying cemetery equipment from Holland's Supply, saying the cemetery fund can cover the cost and that a formal cemetery budget is planned.

RISD

Continued from page 1

state," Freeman said. "That will not come out until our certified values, which will be in five days."

Freeman noted that the projected property values are expected to be up by \$300 million which will compress the tax rate that the school can ask for. She expects the district tax to be down five cents.

"The tax rate will not be set until next month," Nicks said. "We have calculated the maximum compressed rate ourselves based on the state template, but we'll get the real number in four or five days so we'll really know where we are."

Later in the meeting, Nicks stated to the board that the state template every school uses to project revenue was discovered to have an error in it.

"It was over projecting by half a million dollars," Nicks said. "Shannon had to go back in and make that correction to our template and reduce it by \$500,000."

The board took no action on any budget item stating that they would wait for the certified values and the tax rate.

Nicks asked for an item concerning the purchase of five new school buses to be tabled until the next meeting to allow final numbers to be projected. It was unanimously tabled.

Trustees approved a proposal to set the charge for a teacher to eat breakfast or

lunch at the district cafeterias at \$3 per meal. Nicks said that the district still qualifies for all students to eat for free and the teachers could eat on the reduced rate.

The school board was presented with a list of teacher certification recommendations for the District of Innovation. Assistant Superintendent John Portwood stated to the board that none of the DOI teachers teach a core subject. The list was unanimously approved.

Trustees considered an action on Texas Senate Bill 401 that allowed home school students to participate in UIL for the district. They followed the recommendation from Nicks and Athletic Director Bryan Oakes and approved a motion to not allow.

The board approved the employee pay plan for next year with no changes, the student code of conduct for next year, the employee and student handbook for the upcoming year and the board policy update 127.

Dr. Maggie Salem and Brandon Pitre were not present for the regular meeting.

The next regular meeting of the Rains ISD Board of Trustees is scheduled for Monday, August 10, at 6:30 p.m. in the Alexander Boardroom in the Rains ISD Administration building.

MEMBER 2026 TEXAS PRESS ASSOCIATION

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Kathleen Hill Becknell - 1962-1995
Earl Hill, Jr. - 1995-2019

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

CITY GIRL

Surgery is not what it used to be!

By Linda Brendle
You're just going to have to face the fact that I've reached the age where most of my conversations – begin with “back in the day” or some version of that. Today's topic – surgery – has been on my mind lately because I'm having his left knee replaced next week. And the hoops we've had to jump through in preparation for that surgery have blown my mind.

“Back in the day,” surgery usually meant a hospital stay of 3-10 days beginning the night before the scheduled procedure. Now, something that used to be considered major surgery – like a knee replacement – is day surgery. But the prerequisites – so far – have filled two folders and three typed pages.

Last week, we spent a day at Christus Mother Francis where we had three appointments. First, we attended a two-hour seminar that was interesting and informative enough to keep us awake – or maybe it was the temperature of the room which was just warmer than a meat locker. We learned a lot, though, and I'm glad we went. Here are some of the things we were told.

We need to have a walker – a plain one with no more than two wheels and no seat. We can add a carry-basket on the front if we like. Fawcynne helped us find a nice walker as well as a bath seat in the stash that Good Samaritan keeps to lend out, and I found a basket on sale at Amazon. We adjusted the walker to the proper height and checked to see if our

doors are wide enough to accommodate the walker. They are, so we're good to go on that point.

We learned a lot about showering. The patient – David in this case – is to shower the night before and the morning of surgery using a special antiseptic body wash. (If his MRSA test comes back positive, he has to use the special wash for five days pre-op.) After the evening shower, he is to clean the bum knee thoroughly (for three minutes) with two antiseptic wipes, allowing it to air dry between the two. He is to use a clean towel and wash cloth for every shower and sleep on clean sheets the night before the surgery. He was also given specific instructions on how to care for his incision during his daily showers the first week after the surgery. Again, he was instructed to use a clean towel and wash cloth every day. I'm going to be doing a lot of laundry.

He will leave the hospital with a wide ace bandage over the surgical dressing. It will be wrapped around his leg from toes to mid-thigh. He is to remove it when he showers and when he does Physical Therapy, which incidentally begins two days after surgery. We were given instructions on how to properly re-apply the wrap and how to wash and dry it. More laundry.

We were given a list of warning signs to watch for and a phone number to call in case one of the red flags popped up. We were told what meds to stop pre-op and which to add post-op, and how to do breathing exercises with the Spirometer that will be in our going home bag. We also received instructions on how to use the ice packs and ice sleeve we will take home with us as well as how and when to

elevate the leg and how often to walk the patient. The nurses used to take care of all that in the five-to-seven-day stay after the procedure was done, but I guess it will be up to Nurse Linda this time.

The most difficult thing we were told – and probably the least likely to happen – was to keep pets and children off the bed and/or sofa where the patient will be spending his time. We don't have to worry about the children, but if you've read my column for any length of time, you know that Kitty does what Kitty wants to do.

After the class, we wandered around until we found the building where David was to have his PASS Exam – Pre-Op Assessment. Once we were check in, they poked, prodded, tested, and x-rayed until yet another doctor pronounced him fit for surgery. Then, we had one more stop for a CT Scan they will use during surgery.

Including travel, learning, and testing, we were gone over eight hours, so we were glad to get home to some mindless TV. I am grateful that today's medical practitioners do their best to prevent staph infections and other complications, and I'm glad surgery has been simplified so recovery doesn't involve long hospital stays. I won't miss the long trips back and forth to the hospital and checking up on the staff to be sure they're taking care of my loved one the way he should be cared for. But in some ways, it was simpler when all we had to do was get them there on time and let the professionals take over.

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.

Coffee - The Beverage of Patriots

“I went out the kitchen to make coffee – yards of coffee. Rich, strong, bitter, boiling hot, ruthless, depraved. The lifeblood of tired men.”

Raymond Chandler
(The Long Goodbye – 1953)



JODY DYER
Typewriter Weekly

Coffee, that blessed beverage we so love, has rightfully earned a special place in American history. It might even be seen as a symbol of our rugged independence. For in the later part of the 18th century, during our civic awakening and national birth, we went from being tired tea-drinking subjects of the Crown to liberty-loving coffee-drinking free Americans. Coffee in America – it became the beverage of patriots, and it's an interesting story...

During much of the 1700s, colonists in America, as obedient British subjects, expressed a fondness for tea. But with British and American tensions, and the resulting war and fight for independence, things changed. It began with the wig heads in the British Parliament and King George's affinity and need for colonial revenue. Heavily in debt from the costly French and Indian War, Britain needed money and thought it a good idea to tax the colonies. And with no colonial members in Parliament, the colonists were opposed to this taxation without representation. Among several measures imposed on the colonies were the Townshend Acts.

Passed by the British Parliament in 1767, the Townshend Acts taxed everyday goods, including tea, imported into the American colonies. Eventually repealed, the Townshend Acts paved the way for the Tea Act of 1773.

The dastardly British Tea Act granted the financially struggling British East India Company a monopoly on the American tea trade. It allowed the company to ship tea directly to America, undercutting colonial merchants, middlemen, and even smugglers. The resulting hostility triggered the Boston Tea Party, where patriots, with tomahawks in hand, dumped 342 busted chests of tea into Boston Harbor.

Britain responded to the Boston Tea Party by passing the Coercive Acts (or Intolerable Acts) as punishment for the colonies. The natural result of these shenanigans from the Crown was a colonial resistance to drinking tea. Tea drinkers were seen as Tories and Loyalists. Those supporting rebellion against Britain decided to change their habits and boycott British tea. Patriots chose to drink coffee instead, especially after Parliament labeled it a seditious beverage.

Coffee had arrived in the American colonies through a growing transatlantic trade network by the mid-1600s. Though widely available, coffee had not yet risen in popularity to the level of tea. But that changed when King George and Parliament started jerking the colonists around. The logical alternative for colonists boycotting their precious tea was coffee.

Coffee quickly became a revolutionary beverage signaling one's political inclinations. And these new coffee drinkers frequently and increasingly enjoyed their brew in taverns, inns, and coffee houses.

Colonial coffee houses became favored places for intellectual discussions and political debate. And many believe that coffee, with its ability to chemically fuel creativity, was responsible, in part, for sparking the Revolution.

Throughout history, coffee has famously nurtured artists, writers, and creative thinkers. When ingested, coffee gives the human brain a neurological boost and is widely praised for promoting both convergent and divergent thinking. Coffee houses in the colonies, while dispensing copious amounts of the freshly brewed black liquid, fostered the serious discussion of politics and became incubators of revolution.

One of the most famous coffee houses was Boston's Green Dragon Tavern. It became a key meeting place for patriots at the time and has been called the headquarters of the Revolution. Also in Boston was the London Coffee House on King Street, later renamed the American Coffee House during the Revolution. New York had the King's Arms Coffee House, a hotbed for Loyalist and Patriot political debates, and Merchant's

Coffee House on the corner of Wall and Water Streets. Philadelphia residents frequented the City Tavern and the Old London Coffee House. Williamsburg, Virginia sported two fine coffee establishments. Julian's Coffee House often saw George Washington visit. And R. Charlton's Coffee House was a popular political hot spot, offering coffee, chocolate, and tea for Tories.

Coffee symbolized a break with British tradition, embracing our new American identity. Among our Founding Fathers, we find a number of serious coffee lovers. For them, drinking coffee was an act of righteous rebellion.

George Washington enjoyed coffee every morning, and after the war during his presidency, he made sure it was served daily. John Adams proclaimed tea unpatriotic and publicly switched to coffee. Thomas Jefferson declared coffee “the favorite drink of the civilized world.” And his aversion to tea from across the pond fueled his love of coffee. He kept barrels of unroasted green coffee in his cellar, and it is said that over one pound of coffee was consumed each day at his home, Monticello.

Ben Franklin was fond of frequenting coffee houses, drank coffee every day, and when at sea even traveled with his own supply of beans for fear the ship might run out. Franklin had this to say about coffee:

“Among the numerous luxuries of the table...coffee may be considered as one of the most valuable. It excites cheerfulness without intoxication; and the pleasing flow of spirits which it occasions...is never followed by sadness, languor or debility.”

Coffee fueled our revolutionary fervor and shaped our American fight for freedom. And we never really went back to tea. As free Americans living today and launched towards another 250 years of liberty, let's continue drinking coffee. It's the best beverage for patriots. Happy Birthday America!

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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SPOTLIGHT

Continued from page 1

they like and it keeps children reading during the summer, so they don't backslide on their skills before returning to school. There are a lot of prizes including themed gift baskets with books or toys, and there is a door prize at each event for one adult and one child.

“At our summer Bash, we do drawings and have bigger prizes,” said Thompson. “A lot of prizes are for completing the reading challenge and others are given just for showing up at the event.”

Additional grants the library has received include a

Texas Book Festival grant for \$2,500, to allow collection of more books, a Summer at the Library HEB grant for summer programs, and a Community Literacy grant which pays 50 percent of the books sent to children up to 5 years of age at their home through the DPIL. The E-Read Texas program also supplies thousands of eBooks that are free for patrons.

“We have also updated our catalog system that streamlines viewing for patrons, and there is now text messaging that notifies patrons when books are

due,” said Thompson.

The librarian grew up in Leonard but has roots in Rains County. She was a third-grade teacher at Rains ISD before taking her present position. Her father grew up in Point, and her husband has lived in Rains County his whole life and is pastor of her church.

Library assistants are Renee Seitzler, Christi Pless and Michelle Graham. Thompson said that membership in the Rains Library is open to people in the county as well as the surrounding area.

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—Mark Twain

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Local eating options

For many Rains County residents local eating options after 2 pm are very limited.

Why is this happening in our growing community?

Lack of restaurant owners willingness to provide more services to their regular customers , many of whom are already having breakfast daily and often times lunch as well

Why would we not support their efforts to provide more local eating options?

Regular patrons are the main reason some restaurants are still open due to the fact that we continue to show up daily and spend our money keeping employees and waitresses busy and employed.

We have numerous restaurants and convenience food options available with very limited availability of home cooked foods.

How much Mexican food can you eat weekly?

Hamburgers and other items are the only foods available after 2 pm for people who want more set down eating options.

Why are restaurant owners not offering options for people to get a good meal after 2 pm?

Rains County is now home to many residents who are accustomed to being served a good meal after 2 pm prior to moving to Rains County

What options are available to them?

Driving into Greenville, Sulphur Springs or Mineola are the only options available

Most people do not take their kids into a bar for a set down family meal.

I have tried talking with several restaurant owners and they are not interested in providing set down meals for their regular customers and their families.

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ACROSS

1 a house sits on this
5 this McEntire was
“Ma Tex” in “North”
6 “null and ...”
7 a TX Gatlin (init.)
8 TXism: “he couldn’t
through a
barbed wire fence”
(bad eyesight)
9 ex-Cowboy light
end, Billie Jo
15 this Lionel was
Texas Commis-
sioner of Education
(1991-95)
16 Terrell County seat
19 TX Gary Morris’
“Is All
It Takes” (1991)
21 Orange ____ TX
22 how to test your
raft? (2 wds.)
27 TXism: “____ your
heels” (relax)
28 TX Lefty Frizzell’s
“Always Late With
Your ____”
29 this Emmylou
sang with TX Roy
Orbison
30 Astro/Ranger
“walk”: “bases ____”
32 TX Rip of “Men in
Black” films (init.)
33 Weatherford library
has “Peter ____”
in honor
of TX Mary Martin
TXism: “cold as an
outhouse ____ in
January”
37 TX Buck Owens
show: “____ Haw”
38 Joan Crawford was
born in Texas as
Lucille ____
39 hatless (2 wds.)

41 near El Paso:
“Ysleta del ____
Pueblo Museum”
42 15-month-old
Angelina Dickinson:
“____ the Alamo”
45 “R” of Boot Hill
acronym “RIP”
46 TXism: “take a look
____” (quick peek)
47 lavish social event
48 stats for Ranger
and Astro pitchers
Mesquite is on
the ____
of Dallas
52 safety agcy.
53 JFK assassin?
(init.)
54 late Texas actor
Joe ____ Baker
55 female sheep
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1 noted late guitarist,
TX Vaughan (init.)
2 Texan born tween
July 23 & Aug. 21
3 Taylor County seat
4 TX Audie starred
in Civil War film
“Red ____”
____ (1951)
8 TXism: “____ up
the river”
(imprisoned)

9 big marine event
in “Big D”
(3 wds.)
10 prefix meaning
“the reverse of”
“three-time Texas
governor, Price
(init.)
11 ready to vote
13 makes mistakes
14 TX Vikki Carr
1988 album:
“____ Hombres”
15 something West
Texas often
doesn’t have
enough of?
16 TXism: “a walkin’
talkin’ tub a lard”
17 takes in too much
grub
18 young birds at
home?

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TEXAS
CROSSWORD
by Charley & Guy Orbison
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P-1803

26 TXism: “snot paper”
28 Laredo AM radio
(Spanish language)
31 TXism: “shaking like
a ____” (scared)
34 a “right smart”
Albert (init.)
35 bath site
37 TXism: “if ____
rooster he’ll crow”
40 TXism: “skedaddle
out of ____”
(go quickly)
43 sheep sound
44 Spanish newspaper:
“____ Texas”
(The Sun of Texas)
50 emitted light
51 state where TX
Holly died (abbr.)

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Sheriff's Report

The Rains County Sheriff's Office took the following reports of activity during the week of July 13-19:

Arrests



MICHAEL HOPKINS
Rains County Sheriff

There were no arrests for the week.

Calls

7-13: Hwy. 19 Medical assist; Industrial Blvd. Medical assist; FM 514 Assault Sheriff's Office (SO) lobby Animal welfare concern; FM 515 Suspicious person; E Lennon Dr. Medical assist; SO lobby Meet complainant; W Lennon Dr. Pedestrian stop; Hwy. 69 Point Medical assist; FM 275 Accident; FM 515 Livestock on roadway; S Hwy. 19 Investigation; Skyline Dr. Medical assist; E Lennon Dr. Abandoned vehicle; FM 2737 Theft; Rabe Rd. Theft; CR 1621 Suicidal subject; CR 4250 Abandoned vehicle; CR 3445 Medical assist; SO Investigation; CR 1399 Medical assist; Oak Leaf Tr. East Tawakoni (ET) Disturbance; Oakleaf Tr. Medical assist;

7-14: Hwy. 69 Courtesy transport; CR 2570 Animal at large; Industrial Blvd. Medical assist; Duffey St. Matter civil; CR 1308 Medical assist; SO lobby Arrest; SO lobby Meet complainant; FM 779S Grass fire; CR 3030 Repossession; W Quitman St. Accident hit and run; CR 2210 Controlled burn; SO lobby Meet complaint; CR 2081 Abandoned vehicle; Hwy. 19N Domestic disturbance; S Dunbar Ln. Damaged property; Smith Cir. Animal at large; CR 1495 Medical assist; RC 1605 Welfare concern; Hwy. 69 Point Reckless driver; CR 1150 Welfare concern; CR 1275 Medical assist; FM 2737 Problems with a juvenile; Smith Cir. Mental subject; SO lobby Meet complainant.

7-15: PR 5425 Medical assist; CR 3346 Medical assist; Hwy. 19S Debris in roadway; Industrial Blvd. Point Criminal trespass; FM 513 Welfare concern; E Lennon Dr. Medical assist; CR 1640 Theft; CR 1153 Medical assist; E Hwy. 69 Agency assist; Hwy. 19 Reckless driver; E Lennon Dr. City ordinance violation; Duffey St. Medical assist; FM 515 Welfare concern; CR 1308 Medical assist; N Texas St. Medical assist; FM 515 Criminal trespass; Hwy.

19N Motorist assist; FM 2737 Disorderly conduct; N Texas St. Medical assist; Hwy. 19 Accident; Club Park Ct. ET Theft; CR 3319 Theft; FM 2946 Debris in roadway; CR 3345 Neighbor dispute.

7-16: CR 1308 Suicidal subject; CR 4510 Trespassing; FM 2737 Medical assist; FM 779 Medical assist; Hwy. 69 Reckless driver; W Quitman St. Meet complainant; Quitman St. Civil matter; Egret Cir. ET Civil matter; SO lobby Meet complainant; FM Stranded boater; N Texas St. Special assignment; SO lobby Special assignment; FM 2737 Livestock on roadway; Duffey St. Medical assist; SO lobby Follow up investigation; W Hwy. 69 Special assignment; Hwy. 69 at Smith Cir. Pursuit; SO lobby Meet complainant; Doris Briggs Pkwy. Motorist assist; E Lennon Dr. City ordinance violation; E Lennon Dr. Criminal trespass warning; E Lennon Dr. Reckless driver; SO lobby Follow up investigation; Hwy. 19N Medical assist; W North St. Suspicious activity; Hwy. 69E Livestock on the roadway; Hwy. 69 Point Special assignment; FM 515 Livestock on the roadway; CR 2245 Repossession; CR 1490 Problems with a juvenile; Hwy. 19S Reckless driver; CR 1402 Controlled burn; Robinson Rd. Livestock on the roadway; PR 7702 Medical assist; FM 515 Welfare concern.

7-17: FM 2101 Agency assist; SO lobby Meet complainant; FM 2795 Animal welfare concern; CR 3330 Abandoned vehicle; Hwy. 69 Medical assist; FM 514 Criminal assist; Hwy. 19N at FM 514 Illegal dumping; CR 1626 Lone Oak Medical assist; SO lobby Meet complainant; Hwy. 69W Reckless driver; FM 514 Disturbance; SO lobby Meet complainant; CR 2420 Welfare concern; CR 1402 Animal at large; CR 1640 Criminal trespass; FM 515 Medical assist; Hwy. 19N Motorist assist; N 1st St. Medical assist; Duffey St. Identity theft; Duffey St. Follow up investigation; SO lobby Meet complainant; Locust St. Point Warrant service; Hwy. 276 Motorist assist; E Lennon Dr. Welfare concern; CR 3367 Medical assist; CR 4250 Medical assist.

7-18: CR 2220 Medical assist; FM 515 Welfare concern; E Lennon Dr. Medical assist; Hwy. 69 Point Reckless driver; E Hwy. 69 at CR 2360 Livestock on the roadway; CR 1280 Medical assist; Hwy. 19N Welfare concern; CR 4250 Medical assist; FM 515 Welfare concern; CR 1402 Welfare concern; College St. Debris in the roadway; Hwy. 276 at CR 1190 Grass fire; Rhodes Dr. Controlled burn; Hwy. 69 Controlled burn; CR 3333 Drug activity; W Lennon Dr. Intoxicated individual; CR 3030 Drug activity; Hwy. 19S Pedestrian stop; CR 2324 at CR 1308 Motorist assist; Hwy. 19S Animal welfare concern; S Hwy. 19 Debris in the roadway; FM 515 at CR 3237 Debris roadway; Lake Fork Dr. Pedestrian stop; PR 7423 Noise complaint; PR 7423 Medical assist; E Lennon Dr. Gas leak; E Lennon Dr. Accident hit and run; CR 3160 Harassment; Rabe Rd. Point Suspicious activity.

7-19: Hwy. 19N Medical assist; Hwy. 69 Point Accident; Hwy. 69 Point Gas leak; Hwy. 69 Emory Accident; PR 7705 Animal welfare concern; Hwy. 69W Point Reckless driver; Rabe Rd. suspicious activity; SO lobby Meet complainant; Rabe Rd. Point Meet complainant; SO lobby Meet complainant; N Texas St. Suspicious person; FM 515 Welfare concern.

The Sheriff's Department reported 354 calls for the week. Among the calls were: 5 criminal trespass, 1 damaged property, 5 debris in the roadway; 1 disorderly conduct, 2 disturbance, 1 domestic disturbance, 2 drug activity, 10 extra patrols; 9 follow up investigation; 1 harassment; 1 identity theft, 1 intoxicated individual, 2 investigation, 2 gas leak, 7 livestock on roadway, 14 meet complainant, 1 mental subject, 1 neighbor dispute, 1 noise complaint, 1 illegal dumping, 2 grass fires, 2 problems with a juvenile, 18 public service calls, 1 pursuit, 8 reckless driving, 2 repossession, 5 special assignment, 2 stranded boaters, 2 suicidal subjects, 3 suspicious activity, 2 suspicious person, 5 thefts, 1 warrant service, 12 welfare concern, 1 trespassing, 4 accident, 4 controlled burn, 1 public assist, 1 arrest, 3 pedestrian stop, 4 abandoned vehicle, 2 accident hit and run, 2 agency assist, 1 business alarm, 3 animal at large, 4 animal welfare concern, 1 assault, 7 motorist assist, 2 city ordinance violation, 3 civil matter, 1 courtesy transport.

There were 140 traffic stops, 107 warnings, 25 citations, 37 medical calls, and 23 transports.

laws that protect Texas' natural resources. In 2025, investigators conducted 151 wildfire investigations and 78 timber theft investigations, recovering more than \$157,000 for landowners who were victims of timber theft.

Murnane said the department also emphasizes proactive law enforcement by working with landowners before they become victims of timber theft or arson.

Local fire departments, fire marshals and law enforcement agencies may request assistance from Texas A&M Forest Service Law Enforcement with wildfire origin and cause investigations.

To report suspected wildfire arson, call the Texas Arson Hotline at 1-800-364-3470.

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TEXAS RURAL REPORTER

Gina Hinojosa Makes Her Case to Rural Texas

By Suzanne Bellsnyder,
Texas Rural Reporter



SUZANNE BELLSNYDER
Texas Rural Reporter

Democratic state Rep. Gina Hinojosa is running for governor of Texas.

On paper, Hinojosa brings a trifecta of characteristics that have not historically translated into electoral success in rural red Texas: She is a woman. She is Hispanic. And she is a Democrat. That may be an uncomfortable acknowledgment of our own identity politics, but it is part of the political reality.

But she is making her case to rural Texas anyway.

Hinojosa was back in Amarillo this week for the second time, rallying voters and learning more about data centers, now high on the list of concerns for rural Texans. I was invited to join Hinojosa and her campaign team Sunday.

Full disclosure: I was one of the MAGA moms who joined Hinojosa in Austin last session to support her bill to DOGE the Texas Education Agency. I said then that it was a good-government bill and that a Republican should have filed it. Supporting a bill is not the same as endorsing a candidate. But that experience gave me an early look at the issues she has placed at the center of her campaign.

Hinojosa says her run for governor is built around two promises: save public education and put money back into Texans' pockets.

She carries a big stick on education. Hinojosa has served on the House Public Education Committee, helped lead opposition to vouchers and raised concerns about Texas schools facing closure. She is also known for asking hard questions of the Texas Education Agency and the conservative Texas Public Policy Foundation.

She first ran for the Austin school board—and won—after the state tried to shut

down her son's school. Hinojosa says she would revamp the state's accountability system with less reliance on STAAR testing and A-F ratings. She wants higher teacher pay, smaller classes, more money in classrooms, an end to state takeovers and a return to local control. She opposes vouchers, wants to replace Education Commissioner Mike Morath and says she would cut TEA bureaucracy and outside contracts.

Those issues should sound familiar here. Rural schools are often the largest employer in town, the center of community life and one of the last institutions holding a shrinking community together.

Hinojosa's economic proposal would use part of the Texas Rainy Day Fund to send \$1,500 payments to Texas families. She says the fund has about \$17 billion and would leave \$10 billion in savings while returning the rest to taxpayers.

A \$1,500 check will not permanently lower insurance, groceries, utilities or property taxes. Questions remain about who would qualify, what the proposal would cost and whether a Republican Legislature would agree.

But her point is clear: Why is the state sitting on billions while Texas families struggle to keep up? Hinojosa says Texas government has become too responsive to billionaires, mega-donors and corporate interests while ordinary Texans pay more and expect less. "Is this the billionaires' world, and are we just living in it?" she asked the folks at her rally on Sunday.

That question may land differently here than Republican leaders expect. We have spent years hearing about the Texas economic miracle while hospitals struggle, schools close, insurance rates climb and local governments have a harder time providing basic services.

Hinojosa also came to Amarillo to learn more about data centers.

She walked along the perimeter of the Fermi Matarador construction site and met

with residents who have been asking the tough questions about water, electricity, land and infrastructure. Later, she hosted a roundtable with residents from the Claude area who talked about what large-scale industrial development could mean for their land, community and future.

Listening is a start. Rural Texans will need to know whether Hinojosa would give counties real authority to evaluate these projects, require developers to pay infrastructure costs and allow communities to pause, condition or reject projects when the risks are too great. But she is showing up where the questions are being asked.

I am not suggesting rural Texas is suddenly going to vote Democratic. It is not.

I am saying Hinojosa is talking about issues that matter here—and, in some cases, more directly than the Republican leadership rural Texans have supported for years. Rural voters may disagree with her solutions, question how she would pay for them or never get past the "D" beside her name. But they ought to hear what she is proposing before they dismiss her.

As I've written before, Republicans have long counted on rural Texas without competing very hard for its votes. Democrats have too often treated rural communities as places to visit during election season rather than places to understand.

Hinojosa is testing both assumptions.

I am sharing Hinojosa's platform here not as an endorsement, but as a challenge to us as rural voters. We should not give either party our support automatically. Candidates from both parties should have to earn our votes—especially in rural Texas.

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 politics and policy, she now focuses on how state decisions shape rural life through her newspapers, including the *Texas Rural Reporter*. Subscribe at www.TexasRuralReporter.Substack.com.

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Mistakes Turn Deadly at High Speeds

AUSTIN – In Texas, getting there a few minutes faster isn't worth a lifetime of consequences. Choosing to slow down is one of the simplest ways to protect yourself—and everyone else on the road.

That's the message behind Drive Like a Texan: Kind. Courteous. Safe.—TxDOT's call for drivers to look out for one another and take pride in how we travel our roads.

While Texas is making progress, speeding remains a serious threat. It's still the leading factor in deadly crashes, accounting for roughly one-third of all traffic fatalities statewide.

To address this, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is partnering with law enforcement agencies across the state to remind drivers that real Texans don't rush—they drive with care, respect and responsibility.

Signs of progress, but more work to do

There is encouraging news. In 2025, the decline in speed related fatalities outpaced the significant decrease in overall fatalities.

But the danger hasn't disappeared. Speed continues to play a role in more than 150,000 crashes each year, proving that even small decisions behind the wheel can have serious consequences.

One moment can change everything

Stephenie Smallwood's 19-year-old son, Shaundi Kyree Smallwood, was killed in 2022 while riding home with friends after a trip to Six Flags. Their SUV was struck from behind on I-20 in Fort Worth by a driver traveling 157 mph.

"You can change people's lives just like that," Smallwood said. "And that driver changed our lives forever."

Driving like a Texan means slowing down

Through Drive Like a Texan, TxDOT is asking drivers to pause, think about the people around them and make safer choices.

"Excessive speed makes any crash more dangerous," said TxDOT Executive Director Marc Williams. "Higher speeds mean less time to react and a much greater risk of serious injury or death. We're asking Texans to slow down and drive with care."

This message is reinforced during Operation Slowdown, a statewide high-visibility enforcement effort running July 18 through Aug. 2. During this period, TxDOT partners with law enforcement by providing additional funding and resources to increase patrols and stop drivers who are speeding or driving too fast for conditions.

tions.

What it means to drive like a Texan

Safe driving goes beyond following the posted speed limit. It means staying alert, adjusting to conditions and respecting everyone on the road.

Drivers are encouraged to:

Match their speed to traffic, weather and road conditions

Increase following distance when traffic is heavy or roads are slick

Watch for changing speed limits, especially in work zones and school zones

Remember that fines double for speeding in active work zones and school zones

A shared responsibility

"Be Safe. Drive Smart" is an important part of TxDOT's Drive Like a Texan: Kind. Courteous. Safe. initiative. Drive like a Texan is about embracing the pride, camaraderie and responsibility of being a Texan on the road. By making thoughtful choices, we can all help keep each other safe. Learn more at DriveLikeATexan.com.

The Texas Department of Transportation is responsible for maintaining 80,000 miles of road and for supporting aviation, maritime, rail and public transportation across the state. Connecting You with Texas

TEXAS A&M FOREST SERVICE

Texas A&M Forest Service swears in new law enforcement investigator

COLLEGE STATION, Texas—Texas A&M Forest Service commissioned Tyler Sanders as its newest law enforcement investigator during a swearing-in ceremony Thursday at agency headquarters in College Station.

Sanders joined Texas A&M Forest Service in 2022 as a resource specialist, serving first in Commerce before transferring to Mineral Wells. After being selected for the agency's Law Enforcement Department in November 2025, Sanders completed the requirements to become a licensed Texas peace officer through the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement after graduating from the Weatherford College Law Enforcement Academy in June 2026.

Sanders will be stationed in Amarillo, where he will serve the Texas Panhandle as the region's newest law enforcement investigator.

"Investigator Sanders fills a critical law enforcement

role in the Texas Panhandle," said Connor Murnane, chief law enforcement officer for Texas A&M Forest Service. "In an area prone to wildfires, the Law Enforcement Department works with local cooperators, stakeholders and landowners in the Panhandle to identify the origin and cause of these fires."

The swearing-in ceremony formally recognized Sanders as a commissioned Texas peace officer with Texas A&M Forest Service. During the ceremony, he took the oath of office and received his badge.

Over the next several months, Sanders will complete a field training program, working alongside experienced investigators before assuming full investigative responsibilities.

Sanders becomes the 13th law enforcement investigator with Texas A&M Forest Service. The department investigates wildfire origin and cause and enforces state

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STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

Flooding batters Hill Country once again

A massive amount of rain once again engulfed the Hill Country, causing widespread flooding in several counties, including Uvalde, Kerr, Kendall and Gillespie. At least two fatalities were reported near Com-

fort and Uvalde. More than 270 people were rescued. Damage was widespread from rains bringing as much as 25 inches to parts of Kerr County and 10 to 15 inches in other counties. That is much lower than the toll from last summer's flooding, which killed more than 130 statewide, the San Antonio Express-News reported.

Officials and residents credit improved warning systems, including text alerts and flood sirens, and fewer people clustering on riverbanks, since it was not a holiday weekend — unlike the July 4, 2025, flood.

Law enforcement officials fanned out to campgrounds, hotels and RV parks as the floodwaters began to raise, though this time the flooding built up over a few days.

"We weren't caught off guard by something nobody expected," state Rep. Wes Virdell, R-Brady, said at a news conference Friday. "We had a lot of critical, key people that were in the proper locations that were very instrumental in helping us. Residents were very aware of the possibility of what's going to happen when that river floods."

Gov. Greg Abbott signed a major disaster declaration seeking federal assistance for rebuilding efforts in 28 affected counties.

State agencies asked to cut spending by 3 percent in next budget cycle

Abbott, Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick, and House Speaker Dustin Burrows announced their top four priorities for the 2028-2029 budget cycle last week, including requiring state agencies to reduce base spending requests by 3 percent. Other priorities include addressing afford-

ability concerns, fully funding public education, supporting teachers, and advancing property tax reform. In a news release, Abbott said the budget guidance "protects our historic investments in public education and teachers, delivers even more property tax relief, and makes the cost of living more manageable for Texas families through strict standards of efficiency and accountability from every state agency."

The 90th legislative session begins in January.

Mortgage delinquencies up among first-time homeowners

First-time homeowners in Texas are increasingly failing to make their mortgage payments on time, the Houston Chronicle reported. Increasing homeowner insurance costs are the primary culprit, according to data from the Federal Housing Administration.

Most FHA borrowers are first-time homebuyers and typically have lower credit ratings and less money for a down payment, making them more vulnerable to rising monthly costs. Roughly 6 percent of FHA loans in Texas were at least 90 days past due, up from 3.7 percent a year earlier.

"This unfortunately positions Texas at the epicenter of the national affordability squeeze," Scott Norman, CEO of the Texas Mortgage Bankers Association, told state lawmakers in June.

Home insurance rates have increased by an average of 80 percent since 2020, according to the Texas Department of Insurance. Compounding the situation, homeowners with low credit scores are paying almost \$3,000 more annually for home insurance than those with high credit scores.

Late payments on conventional mortgages have remained flat, with less than 1 percent of borrowers seriously behind on their payments.

Talarico holds fundraising edge over Paxton

With less than four months before the Novem-

ber general election, Democratic nominee James Talarico has vastly out-raised his GOP rival Ken Paxton in the U.S. Senate race, the Chronicle reported.

The Austin-area state legislator ended June with a bank balance of \$21.5 million, according to newly filed documents with the Federal Election Commission. After factoring in expenses, incumbent senator Paxton's campaign was left with a balance of just \$1.7 million.

Both candidates are heavily backed by so-called super PACs. The Talarico-aligned PAC has \$21.6 million in the bank, including \$10 million from LinkedIn co-founder Reid Hoffman. The Paxton-aligned PAC, which spent heavily in his successful runoff against incumbent U.S. Sen. John Cornyn, was left with just \$35,000 to start July.

Talarico hopes to break Texas Democrats' 32-year losing streak in statewide elections. He has raised more than \$68 million thus far, the most for any non-incumbent in a U.S. Senate race.

Howden named Texas secretary of state

Abbott has named Robert S. Howden to succeed Jane Nelson as Texas secretary of state, according to the Texas Standard. Nelson left office on July 17.

Howden has served as Abbott's legislative director since September 2024. He will serve as interim secretary until the legislative session begins in January, when he will need to be confirmed by the Texas Senate.

"His experience in the legislative process and extensive public service have prepared him to protect the integrity of Texas elections and represent our state with strength on the global stage," Abbott said in announcing Howden's appointment.

The office's primary responsibility is overseeing elections and voter rolls. It also oversees business filings, such as limited liability corporations and other entities.

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.

THIS WEEK IN TEXAS HISTORY

Texans survived sinking of "Indianapolis"

by Bartee Haile

Puzzled crew members watched from the deck of the "Indianapolis" on Jul. 26, 1945 as the top secret cargo that had taken them to the



BARTEE HAILE
Historical Columnist

island of Tinian in the Marianas was wrestled ashore. What could a large wooden crate possibly contain that was of such interest to so many high ranking naval and army officers?

No one on-board the heavy cruiser had any idea they had delivered the components for "Little Boy," the world's first atomic bomb that would be dropped on the Japanese city of Hiroshima in 11 days.

Maintaining the strict radio silence that had been the order of the day since leaving San Diego, the "Indianapolis" set a course for the Philippines after a short stopover at Guam. At midnight on Jul. 30, Loel Dene "L.D." Cox reported to the bridge to stand watch until dawn.

Like so many young men from West Texas and the Panhandle, the 19-year-old native of Comanche chose the navy over the army for his wartime service. During the year since his enlistment, Cox had been a crow's nest lookout, gunner and mess hall hand prior to his latest promotion.

Fifteen minutes into the new day, two torpedoes from a Japanese submarine struck the "Indianapolis" mere seconds apart. The first blew the bow off the ship and the second hit amidships near the powder magazine. The ensuing explosion split the cruiser in half causing her to sink swiftly by the bow.

"In 12 minutes, the thing sank," Cox recalled in a 2005 interview with the *Houston*

Chronicle. "We didn't have much time to do anything but put our life preservers on and follow the captain down to the next deck. The second time the fire control man came back and said, 'We've got to abandon ship. The ship is sinking.'" Capt. Charles B. McVay III then said, "Pass the word to abandon ship."

Cox grabbed life vests for himself and three buddies, and each went his own way. As the ship began to roll, Cox scrambled to the highest point he could reach. Finding a gaff hook, he swung out only to crash into the side of the ship and plunge into the oil-covered water.

"I went under, came back up and drank about half the ocean along with a lot of fuel oil and immediately started vomiting. I started swimming as fast as I could to get away from the ship because the downdraft on those things can take you under."

Taking one last look at the "Indianapolis," Cox saw "the stern sticking straight up and the propellers still churning in the moonlight. You could still see men jumping off of it."

In a matter of seconds, the crippled cruiser disappeared from sight taking 300 men to the bottom of the sea. The 900 that succeeded in getting off the stricken ship had very little water and even less food. Their chances of survival were somewhere between slim and none.

Curtis Lebow was home on leave in Memphis, another Panhandle town, when he received a telegram ordering him to rejoin the "Indianapolis" for the quick trip to Tinian. He confessed his fear to his mother, who told him she wished she could go in his place and promised to pray for his safe return.

The impact of the first torpedo knocked Lebow out of his bunk. He ran up to the next deck and lent a hand in

a vain attempt to push a whaleboat over the side. No one had heard the order to abandon ship, but with the propellers sticking up in the air that seemed like the best course of action.

The young Texan was "scared half to death" as he dove into the water and started swimming toward the sound of familiar voices. "He reached four life rafts that had been tied together and filled with wounded and held onto the side. The next morning, a cork floater net from the ship came within reach. The men stretched it out, and about 80 guys climbed on."

With each passing day, more and more of the wounded died from their injuries. Many of those that drank seawater experienced vivid hallucinations that caused them to swim to their death in search of imaginary islands and rescue ships.

And then there were the sharks. Attracted at first by the bodies of the dead, by the second day they were attacking the living. Estimates of the number of seamen slain by the ocean predators range from two or three dozen to as high as 150.

When rescue finally came on the fifth day, only 316 of the 900 sailors who survived the sinking of their ship were still alive. The "Indianapolis" tragedy remains to this day the worst in the history of the U. S. Navy.

Thinking back over the years to the moment the destroyer escort USS Bassett, the first rescue ship, arrived on the scene, L.D. Cox said, "We thought it was angels coming." Cox died at age 88 in 2015. When crewmate Cleatus Lebow passed away seven years later at 98, he was one of the last two "Indianapolis" survivors left alive.

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

TEXAS A&M HEALTH

Beyond the barn: What the return of New World screwworm means for human health

The following article is an excerpt from a press release from Texas A&M Health written by by Saddie Smith for Vital Record.

BRYAN-COLLEGE STATION — The New World screwworm, a flesh-eating parasite eradicated from the United States more than four decades ago, has returned after spreading north from Central America, and public health experts say people — not just livestock — need to pay attention.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture confirmed the pest's reemergence following a 44-year absence. It was wiped out in the early 1980s through the sterile insect technique, a method that released millions of sterile male flies to mate with wild females and collapse the population.

Despite its name, the screwworm is not a worm but the larval stage of a metallic blue-green blow fly. The larvae, not the adult flies, pose the danger: Females lay eggs in open wounds on living animals or people, and the eggs hatch within 12 to 24 hours. The larvae then burrow into tissue and feed, a condition known medically as wound myiasis.

Three experts at Texas A&M Health — Loni Taylor, an interdisciplinary veterinary epidemiologist; Anabel Rodriguez, an occupational epidemiologist; and Moriya Tsuji, an infectious disease researcher — say the parasite cannot be contracted by eating meat. Screwworms are external parasites that cannot survive the human digestive tract, do not spread through food and cannot infest dead hosts, according to the USDA. Federal inspection protocols also keep infested animals out of the food supply.

Humans can still be at risk, however, if they have any breach in the skin while outdoors in an infested area,

according to Cleveland Clinic. Taylor identified three groups facing the highest risk: agricultural and outdoor workers who sustain frequent minor cuts, people with chronic wounds tied to diabetes, vascular disease or neuropathy, and homeless or otherwise vulnerable individuals with limited access to health care.

Rodriguez said even a small scratch, blister or cut is enough to attract a fly and should not be brushed off. She urged workers to take a few minutes to wash and cover any wound, and said employers should stock first-aid kits in work vehicles and field sheds. Protective measures already common for sun and heat exposure — long sleeves, jeans, boots and neck gaiters — also help guard against the flies, she said.

Signs of an infestation differ from a typical infected cut, according to Tsuji. Warning signs include sharp pain beyond what a minor wound would cause, a deep burrowed cavity beneath a small surface opening, thin and foul-smelling discharge rather than yellowish pus, and a crawling or writhing sensation beneath the skin. Rodriguez said anyone who notices a non-healing wound with visible larvae should seek medical care immediately and report the symptoms.

Left untreated, myiasis can lead to secondary bacterial infection and, in rare cases, septic shock, a life-threatening condition.

Experts warned against home remedies such as smothering or pulling out larvae with tweezers, calling the practice dangerous. Because the screwworm is classified as a foreign animal disease pest, suspected cases must be handled by professionals. Removed larvae should be preserved — frozen or placed in rubbing alcohol — and submitted to

a local health department for identification.

Researchers are deploying new detection tools, including a portable DNA-based field test highlighted by the U.S. Geological Survey, while sterile fly releases and livestock treatments continue in an effort to keep the pest away from the Texas border.

Despite the concerns, the experts said there is no reason to panic. They recommended normalizing basic wound hygiene, treating cuts immediately, keeping injuries covered until healed, and reporting suspicious, worsening wounds in humans, pets or livestock to a health care provider or veterinarian. The USDA and the Texas Animal Health Commission are tracking confirmed cases.

"The biggest thing is to consider the risks, prevent exposure and treat or seek medical treatment for any suspect wounds immediately," Taylor said. "Our focus is empowering people to know that prevention is in their control."

About Texas A&M Health

Texas A&M University Health Science Center (Texas A&M Health) comprises five colleges and schools (dentistry, medicine, nursing, pharmacy and public health), integrated University Health Services, several research centers and institutes, and numerous outpatient clinics with a shared mission of advancing health care for all. We serve the state and beyond with campuses and locations in Bryan-College Station, Dallas, Houston, Round Rock, Kingsville, Corpus Christi, McAllen and Navasota. Learn more at health.tamu.edu or follow @TAMUHealth on X (née Twitter).

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Believers' Baptist Church

By Linda Brendle

While he [Ahasuerus] showed the riches of his royal glory and the splendor and pomp of his greatness for many days, 180 days.

Esther 1:4

This week Pastor Jason Rolan began a special summer series from Esther with a message titled "The Glory of a Worldly Empire." The Bible is the story of two kingdoms – God's Redemptive Kingdom and Satan's kingdom. The people of God and of Satan will share the same pains and troubles in a Common Kingdom throughout history. We first see this in the dispute between Cain and Abel, and we see it again in Esther. Chapter 1 is about the riches. The power and

glory of a worldly empire:

God ordained the subsequent events to ultimately save Israel. God isn't mentioned by name but we see Him working through His providence. Esther's story is a lot like our lives and our culture.

August 2 is Promotion Sunday! Kids nursery thru fifth grade will move to their age/grade Sunday School class. All will continue the Generations of Grace curriculum.

August 5 through September 9, 6:00-7:00 p.m. – Kidz Club, a miniature version of IGNITE which begins September 23. Activities will include opening worship, games, new songs, and basic-level musical training.

Emory Methodist Church

By Mary White

Then Paul said: "I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city. Under Gamaliel I was thoroughly trained in the law of our fathers and was just as zealous for God as any of you are today."

Acts 22:3

Rev. David Banks' message was titled "Walking in the promise: Giving Your Story" with scripture text taken from Acts 22. On hearing Paul's story it helps us to tell our

story. He told who he was and what he did and how Jesus changed his life. So go and tell your story so others might encounter the Living Christ. Our closing hymn was "I Love to tell the story." It was very fitting.

Birthday wishes go to Betsy Neinast and Anniversary wishes go to David and Cheryl Traylor.

Pray for Miley Zachary, Juandell Weddle and Bill Manning.

Have a great week and be kind.

The LORD'S Chosen Servant

Behold my servant, whom I uphold,
my chosen, in whom my soul delights;
I have put my Spirit upon him;
he will bring forth justice to the nations.
He will not cry aloud or lift up his voice,
or make it heard in the street;
a bruised reed he will not break,
and a faintly burning wick he will not quench;
he will faithfully bring forth justice.
He will not grow faint or be discouraged
till he has established justice in the earth;
and the coastlands wait for his law.

Isaiah 42:1-4 (ESV)



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Obituaries

James Stanley McAree

1942 – 2026



James Stanley McAree, 84, was laid to rest on July 17 in Colony Cemetery after a small service attended by close friends and family.

Mr. McAree died peacefully at his home in Alba, surrounded by his family on July 15, 2026. He was born on June 13, 1942, in Alba, to Johnnie and Thelma Panter McAree.

He was a proud veteran of the United States Air Force and later retired from Raytheon in Greenville, where he served as a security guard for 34 years.

He was married to Elaine Davis McAree for 53 years and was a devoted husband, father and grandfather. He found joy in fishing, tending to his land and cattle, and spending time with family and friends. Known throughout the community for his

strong work ethic, friendly nature, and caring spirit, he touched the lives of many.

Mr. McAree is survived by sons, Clint McAree and wife Barbara, and Brett McAree and wife Melissa; daughter, Mandy O'Donnell and husband Pat; grandchildren, John McAree and wife Misty, Shay McAree, Rylan Lester and Rhett Lester; great-grandchildren, Madilynn McAree and Jase McAree; and brother, Gary McAree and wife Dolores.

He was preceded in death by his parents; his wife; and sister, Johnnye Easley.

Donations in his honor may be made for the maintenance of Colony Church of Christ, 985 Rains County Road 2460, Alba, Texas 75410 or Colony Cemetery Association, 819 FM 515, Emory, Texas 75440.

SAVVY SENIORS

How families can find lost money after a loved one dies

Dear Savvy Senior,
After my mom passed away, we discovered a few small accounts and an old insurance policy we didn't know she still had. It made me wonder how often families uncover forgotten or unclaimed money like this after a parent dies. Is it common, and where should I start looking?



JIM MILLER
Savvy Senior

– Searching Sarah

Dear Sarah,
It's actually quite common. After a parent or spouse dies, families often come across small, forgotten accounts, uncashed checks, or old insurance policies that slipped through the cracks over the years. In many cases, paperwork was misplaced, accounts were opened decades ago, or loved ones simply weren't aware the assets existed.

According to the National Association of Unclaimed Property Administrators, billions of dollars in unclaimed assets are currently being held by state governments and federal agencies, waiting to be claimed by rightful owners or heirs.

Unclaimed property usually comes from financial accounts or benefits that became inactive because the owner moved, changed names or died. In many cases, heirs were never aware the money existed or did not know where to look. These assets can include savings or checking accounts, uncashed dividend checks, utility security deposits, life

insurance proceeds, pension benefits, tax refunds, matured savings bonds and unpaid wages.

By law, banks, employers, insurance companies and other institutions must turn these assets over to the state if they cannot locate the owner or next of kin after a set period, usually two to five years. Once turned over, the money is held indefinitely, so there is no deadline for families to file a claim.

Where to start

A good place to begin is MissingMoney.com, a free site endorsed by the National Association of Unclaimed Property Administrators and the National Association of State Treasurers. It allows users to search for unclaimed property in 49 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico at once. Hawaii is not included but can be searched through a link on the site.

When searching, check every state where your mother lived, worked or did business. Be sure to search under maiden names, married names and common misspellings. Using just a first initial and last name can also uncover accounts that do not appear under a full name search. Each state's site will indicate whether property is listed and explain how to file a claim.

Other places to check

State treasuries are only part of the picture. Families should also check several other common sources of forgotten money.

Pensions and 401(k)s: To search for lost or forgotten retirement benefits your mom may have left behind with an old employer, use the U.S. Department of

Labor's Retirement Savings Lost & Found Database at lostandfound.dol.gov and the National Registry of Unclaimed Retirement Benefits at unclaimedretirementbenefits.com. Or to search for unclaimed retirement benefits from private-sector plans that have closed down, use the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation search tool at pbgc.gov/workers-retirees.

Savings bonds: It's very common for people to lose track of U.S. Saving Bonds because they are often given to children as gifts, then forgotten before the bonds reach maturity. To find out if your mom had a Savings Bond or other Treasury security visit your state's unclaimed property office using unclaimed.org. Search the state of residence at the time of the securities purchase or last known address.

Lost life insurance: To track down a lost or forgotten life insurance policy, the National Association of Insurance Commissioners, an insurance regulatory support organization, offers a free policy locator service at eapps.naic.org/life-policy-locator.

Other refunds: To search for money left at an FDIC insured bank or credit union that has gone out of business, visit closedbanks.fdic.gov/funds. Federal tax refunds can be checked at irs.gov/refunds or by calling 800-829-1954. FHA mortgage refunds can be checked at entp.hud.gov/dsrs/refunds. And unpaid wages are listed at dol.gov/agencies/whd/wow.

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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Shirley Water Supply Corp.
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UNKNOWN HEIRS AND KNOWN HEIRS WHOSE ADDRESSES CANNOT BE ASCERTAINED

CITATION BY PUBLICATION

STATE OF TEXAS

**TO THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF
RAYME JEAN HUSKEY,
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 TO DETERMINE HEIRSHIP AND FOR LETTERS OF INDEPENDENT ADMINISTRATION FILED BY HUSKEY, JIMMY LEE, ON 07/17/2026 IN CAUSE 3415 IN THE COUNTY COURT OF RAINS COUNTY, TEXAS AND BEING STYLED: IN THE ESTATE OF HUSKEY, RAYME JEAN, DECEASED ON OR BEFORE THE MONDAY NEXT FOLLOWING THE EXPIRATION OF 10 DAYS FROM THE DATE THIS CITATION WAS PUBLISHED. BY THE APPLICATION TO DETERMINE HEIRSHIP AND FOR LETTERS OF INDEPENDENT ADMINISTRATION APPLICANT SEEKS THE COURT TO DETERMINE AND DECLARE THE HEIRS OF RAYME JEAN HUSKEY, DECEASED AND THEIR INTERESTS IN SAID ESTATE.

ISSUED AND GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL OF SAID COURT AT OFFICE IN EMORY, TEXAS, THIS July 17, 2026.

**Mandy Sawyer, County Clerk
Rains County, Texas
By: Molly Lennon (Deputy)**

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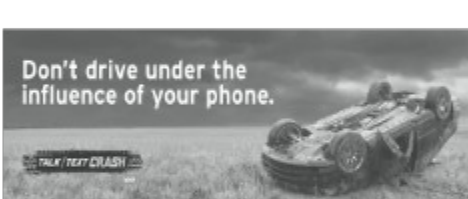
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LUKE CLAYTON

Summer doldrums



Contributed photo

Luke has been taking a cue from the fish and animals and venturing forth early and late. It's hot but there's still plenty to do during the summer doldrums. Here are some tasty channel catfish Luke and his friends caught during the cooler hours just after sunup.

Your outdoor scribe has been taking a cue from the fish and critters the past week. I am up well before daylight and enjoying the cooler hours of the morning and then seeking AC during the heat of the day when ever possible. Wildlife and fish do much the same, but they are smart enough to simply seek deeper water or look for shade in areas with a breeze when the summer sun bears down.

But even during the hottest period of the year, I still find ways to enjoy time in the outdoors. Let me share with you a few activities that I have found enjoyable, even when daytime temperatures are at or above the century mark. I have a good buddy with a covered boat dock and he keeps the water under the shaded portion baited with grain. Catfish, both channel cats and eater size blues are always plentiful this time of year thanks to the abundant food supply shade.

One of my favorite summer pastimes is arriving at the dock about the break of day and fishing cheese bait vertically under the dock. I bet the fishing would be good there even during midday but as mentioned, that is when ole' Luke has himself positioned around a cooling AC unit somewhere. The water is only about 5 feet deep under the dock and a coffee can full of grain tossed around the dock puts the fish into instant feeding mode. Fishing could not be easier, I have a big fish basket tethered to the dock for my catch and a cooler back in the truck full of ice that I picked up before daylight on my way to fish.

Rigging is simple, a #4 treble hook baited with cheese bait with a small split shot about six inches above. The weight serves two purposes; it helps get the bait down to about six inches above bottom where the catfish are and it makes the

sometime subtle strikes easier to detect. The bites usually occur the instant the bait gets near bottom and a quick hook set is necessary. The 'eater' size catfish I usually catch weighing between 1.5 and 3 pounds are notorious for hitting the baits on the run and the window for making a hook-set is short. I use a 6-foot lightweight spinning rig with a soft tip that makes 'feeling' the fish easier.

Bait is not all that important, they will hit anything from earthworms to liver but I use a cheese bait that I helped Magic Bait company develop years ago. It's called Stick-It and for years it's been my go to bait for catching channel catfish. Needle nose pliers are a must for removing the hooks and snipping off the end of the barbs. I learned long ago to take the time and break the ends of the barbs off to avoid getting stuck when the fish flop around and they always do when fresh out of the water. It usually only takes less than two hours to catch my limit and before the sun begins beating down I have the fish on ice and heading back home to my little fish-cleaning station-situated under a big shady oak in front of the little cabin behind my house. By the time the sun starts heating things up outside, you know where I will be! Chances are pretty good you might know where there is a shady dock on a lake nearby to enjoy some of this earl morning fishing. Many public lakes have fishing piers that provide good fishing, you can always bring a bucket of cattle range cubes along for chum, the catching might not always be non-stop like around a baited hole but chances are good you can catch a nice mess of good eating catfish and...be back home before it gets hot.

I limit my hog hunts to the first couple hours after sunset this time of year and I am planning a pork procure-ment hunt this coming week. My good friend Larry Weishuhn, aka. "Mr. White-tail," and I have an event we're hosting at the Dallas

Safari Club office in September. We will be visiting with folks and telling a few camp-fire stories but also furnishing dinner. I will help Larry grill a bunch of buffalo burgers, made from meat from a buffalo Larry's friend Steven Hornady shot last winter at the Choctaw Hunting Lodge owned by the Choctaw Nation in south-east Oklahoma. My job is to supply the pulled pork.

My plan is to shoot a couple of fat younger pigs weighing from eighty to one hundred pounds and slow smoke the meat with several domestic pork butts and then chop it all into pulled pork sandwich meat. I absolutely loved wild pork from younger hogs but it is often a good bit more dry than domestic pork. The fat from the Hormel pork butts will blend well with the lean wild pork. I smoke pork at about 200 degrees for 12 hours usually. To keep it from drying out I use large aluminum pans to retain the moisture. I like my pulled pork sandwiches to be well seasoned and punch holes in the meat and load it with bits of jalapeno and then when the meat is fall-off-the-bone tender, chop the garlic and jalapeno in with the meat and season with black pepper, salt and usually more garlic powder. A good dose of Bullseye barbecue sauce puts the finishing touches on the sandwiches. I caught the pork on sale last week and have about 40 pounds of meat in the freezer. I have a sounder of 'just right' pigs hitting one of my corn feeders every night and plan to be in the bed of my old GMC with my CVA .223 Cascade rifle topped with an ATN Thor 6 Mini thermal scope. Of course, I will have a big cooler half full of ice with me-have to keep that meat chilled in this heat you know!

Listen to Luke's weekly podcast "Catfish Radio with Luke Clayton and Friends" just about everywhere podcasts are found. Email Luke through his website www.catfishradio.org.

50 years ago this week

Gleanings from the Rains County Leader archives

Thursday, July 22, 1976

Point Area Enthusiastic over New Industry Coming

Point will soon have another industry, Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Rinks of Edgewood completed the plans for the beginning of a ladies manufacturing plant. Here in the Point Shopping Center will be the plant, which calls for 30 employees in the beginning with more to be added, and will be making dresses, slacks, suits, sport coats.

Applications will be taken in the next few days in Point. Plans call for opening by Sept. 1, 1976.

Bicentennial Dress Contest

The Bicentennial Dress Contest for the Rains Fair, with Mrs. Dollie Sisk, chairperson, promises to be one of the interesting events of the fair, August 19 through 21, and many of the ladies have already started on the dress designing and making. Watch the Leader for more information.

Categories will be girls out of high school to ages of 45 and over, If you are interested in entering the dress contest, please contact Dollie Sisk, phone 473-2428, before Aug. 10th. The contest will be on Friday, August 20th.

And, if you can sing, dance, whistle, play a musical instrument or perform special in any way, the Saturday night amateur is going to be exciting and entertaining, according to Mrs. Linda Moody, all are invited to enter the Talent Contest for Saturday night. You do not have to live in Rains County to enter. Tell your friends. Cash prizes will be given.

Watch the Leader for details and entry blanks from Mrs. Dollie Sisk and Linda Moody will be forthcoming.

School Board Chooses President & Vice-President

The Rains ISD Board of Trustees met in regular session on July 12th with the following members present: W.W. Montgomery, Bill Potts, Carl Taylor, Jack Bell, Donald Pinson and James Ivy. (None absent) Others present: Jodie Hill, Ernest Holman, Mary Davis, Hughlene Hays, Nan Kerr, A.C. McMillan, Mike Trussell and Ronald Mays. The Board

performed the following business:

Approved the minutes as read and corrected for the month of June 1976.

The oath of office was administered to newly-appointed board member Donald Pinson to serve out the unexpired term of Roy Don Shipp.

Approved the financial statement for the month of June 1976.

Elected James Ivy as President of the Board and elected Bill Potts as Vice-President.

Motion carried to table list of tax adjustments as submitted by the school tax office for additional explanation.

Approved the insurance policies on the bus garage, remedial reading building, and two utility buildings in the amount of \$305 and the two driver's education cars in the amount of \$669.

Accepted the bid submitted by Foremost for milk for 1976-77 school year providing Foremost furnish the school with a cooler for storage.

Accepted the bid submitted by Lilly for ice cream for 1976-77 school year.

Accepted the bid submitted by Mrs. Baird's Bread Co. for bread for 1976-77 school year.

Accepted the bid submitted by Gulf Oil for gas and oil for 1976-77 school year.

Accepted the resignation of Dianne Willis effective 7-12-76.

Accepted the resignation of Mellisa Crump effective 7-11-76 providing she will sign letters of resignation.

Voted to employ Vaughn Branom as junior high language arts teacher for 1976-77 school year.

Voted to purchase a new projector from athletic fund in the amount of \$625.

Approved budget for band dept. in the amount of \$4,757 for the 1976-77 school year.

Approved the purchase of 25 student desks and 30 student chairs in the amount of \$1,062 for 1976-77 school year.

Adjourned the meeting at 1:30 a.m.

Two Named to First Lady's Volunteer Prog.

Mrs. Dolph Briscoe has appointed Mrs. Marguerite Braziel and Miss Cay Frances Braziel as voluntary coordinates persons for the First

Lady's Volunteer Program, Office of the Governor. Mrs. Braziel and Miss Braziel will be responsible for coordinating volunteer activities in Rains County, working with Mrs. H. L. Long of Kilgore who coordinates volunteer activities in the 14-county areas covered by the East Texas Council of Governments.

The First Lady's Volunteers Program is co-sponsoring the upcoming swine flu effort with state and local health officials. The Volunteer Program will recruit and place the estimated 30,000 volunteers needed to help inoculate 10 million Texans from the deadly influenza.

Court Calls for Election

By George T. Becknell

For years the county taxes have been in a mess, as everyone knows. There would be no objection if each paid his fair share. Also everyone knows that the office of sheriff is a full-time job and allows no time for the assessment of taxes.

But in my estimation, the Commissioners' Court was in a dwindling mood to not hire Rains School Tax Assessor Houston Collins for the purpose of bringing the tax rolls up to date. If the office is split, the tax rolls will be in a better shape for the officer to take over and handle them. Mr. Collins has accomplished this for the school, and offered to do this for the county at the rate of \$5.00 per hour.

Commissioner J.T. Kirkpatrick made the motion to hire Mr. Collins and the motion died for lack of a second.

The Court voted to transfer \$10,000 from the General Fund to the Salary Fund.

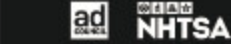
A motion was made and passed for a public hearing on the budget the 28th of July.

A motion was made by E.L. Daugherty and seconded by Tab Northcutt to call an election for August 14th for the purpose of dividing the sheriff's office from the tax assessor-collector's office. It passed.



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