

Rains County Leader

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EMORY, TEXAS - THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2026

PRICE 75¢

RAINS COUNTY

Commissioners hold several public hearings, adopt budget, tax rate

By **CHUCK FITTS**
Rains County Leader staff

The Rains County Commissioners Court adopted a property tax rate and budget for the 2026-2027 fiscal year following several public hearings and extensive resident feedback.

A public hearing was held during a called meeting on the evening of Tuesday, September 22, at the courthouse. The meeting was well attended and

discussion touched on many topics concerning the budget and tax rate. Many residents participated in the lively discussion and the hearing closed after three hours.

On Monday, September 28, the court held a final public hearing for residents to discuss the proposed budget and tax rate for the county.

Two people spoke to commissioners during the hearing. A gentleman commented

about tax increases and holding meetings in the evening for people to attend. A lady questioned funding for the county library. The hearing was closed after half an hour of discussion.

With all public hearings held, a roll-call vote was held on Monday to unanimously adopt the budget for the county for the 2026-2027 fiscal year. To fund the budget, a tax rate of 0.553664 per \$100 of property value was adopted with a

unanimous vote.

The court approved a motion to not allow early payment discounts and accepted the 2026 tax roll for Rains County into the minutes.

After a short break on Monday, commissioners heard a presentation on the financial audit for the county from Mike Ward. He stated that the audit had a clean and unmodified opinion, which is considered the best opinion on a county's

finances. The audit was unanimously accepted into the minutes of the meeting.

The court considered eliminating compensatory (comp) time for all Rains County employees and moving to overtime with prior approval by department heads. Rains County Auditor Tammi Byrd asked that they consider moving the deadline for the switchover to Janu-

see **COURT** on page 2

Crowning Moment



Leader photo by CHUCK FITTS

2026 Homecoming Queen Arianna Philson is congratulated by 2025 Homecoming Queen Kamara Ragsdale after her crowning at Wildcat Stadium on Friday, September 25, before the Homecoming game against the Eustace Bulldogs.

EMORY

Emory council adopts tax rate, budget; pauses yard-parking fines

From **Staff Reports**
Rains County Leader staff

The Emory City Council on Tuesday evening, September 22, adopted a property tax rate of \$0.271056 per \$100 of taxable value and approved its fiscal 2026-2027 budget. It also paused fines under a front-yard parking ordinance that has drawn complaints from residents.

The new rate will raise about \$4,491 more in total property tax revenue than last year. No residents spoke at the 7:00 p.m. public hearing on the rate and budget. The council

also voted to keep offering discounts for early tax payments. Officials said Emory is now the only taxing entity in the county that does so.

The budget passed without changes. Officials did correct one figure: a new police body and in-car camera system would cost about \$170,000 over five years, not the \$110,000 in the budget. That total is a \$75,000 first payment followed by about \$24,000 per year. The city hopes a grant will cover part of the cost.

Council members voted unanimously to suspend citations under the ordinance ban-

ning parking on unimproved front yards. The suspension holds until the ordinance committee and city attorney review the rule. Code enforcement will keep issuing warnings. Officials said the ordinance is unclear for older homes built with one-car driveways and for vehicles parked beside driveways.

In other business, the council:

- moved \$9,940 from police salaries to computer maintenance. The money will buy computers for three new patrol cars and replace an aging office

see **EMORY** on page 2

RAINS COUNTY

Rains County JP indicted on aggravated perjury charge

Franklin calls the prosecution “retaliatory” and ties it to his ruling on the Chronis death

Rains County Justice of the Peace Robert Jenkins Franklin has been indicted on a felony charge of aggravated perjury. He is accused of lying under oath about his role in family trust real estate deals while seeking to lower his child support.

A grand jury seated for the July term of the 8th Judicial District Court returned the indictment, which was filed September 21. Franklin appeared before a district judge in Longview on September 28,

and his bail was set at \$10,000, records show.

It is the second criminal case against Franklin, who was charged with official oppression in May 2025.

In a written statement, Franklin called the recent indictment “baseless and retaliatory.” He said it is part of a “continued vicious political attack” tied to his decision to reclassify the death of Dr. George Chronis as a homicide.

“We look forward to the court seeing right through this political charade, and to a quick dismissal,” he wrote.

Rains County Attorney Robert Vittow did not respond to a request for com-

see **FRANKLIN** on page 2

POINT

Council adopts budget, tax rate for the city

By **CHUCK FITTS**
Rains County Leader staff

The Point City Council adopted a tax rate and budget and replatted city property during a meeting on Thursday, September 24.

The meeting began with a public hearing for citizens to discuss the tax rate and proposed budget. Because no one was present who wanted to speak, the public hearing was closed after several minutes.

With the public hearing completed, the council adopted the 2026-2027 budget for the City of Point.

Council members unanimously adopted the no-new-revenue rate for the city to fund the budget. The tax rate

for the year will be 0.3301520 per \$100 of property value.

The council was presented with a re-plat of the city hall property to separate the library/storm shelter from the city hall, and it was unanimously approved.

Council members reviewed the contract with Cintas Corp. for uniforms and facility services and learned that it was signed through 2029. To cancel the contract meant that the city would owe the total amount for the three remaining years. They agreed to take no action on the contract.

The council unanimously approved a resolution to cancel the November 3 election

see **POINT** on page 2

SPOTLIGHT

Chad Parrish is new owner of Hometown Laundromat

By **JUDY KRAMER**
Rains County Leader contributor

Chad Parrish comes from a family of Rains County businessmen. His great-grandfather owned a feed store, and his grandfather owned a carpet store. Parrish has been a school photographer for 12 years and recently acquired ownership of the Hometown Laundromat at 312 West Lennon Drive.

“My wife (Leanne) and I just bought the laundromat that used to be called Wildcat Wash, with the premise behind it being to follow in the footsteps of three generations of my family members who owned businesses in town,” said Parrish. “We will eventually re-

place all things, paint, etcetera, and today (Sept. 2) we have an air conditioner guy working in the building. It is a self-service, coin operation, but I will hire someone to clean and look after the place daily after it is open. Now our home-schooled children are helping us get the building ready to open.”

Parrish’s long-time job has been doing school photographs and sports such as little league. He said the busiest time for his photo business is in August, September, March and April. He gained his experience when he was on the yearbook staff at Rains ISD, and at college.

Parrish graduated from Rains High School in 2001 and went to

Harding University, a Christian liberal arts university in Searcy, Arkansas. He met his wife there during his freshman year. She played college volleyball and basketball, and they both majored in education. He graduated with a bachelor’s degree and his wife earned her master’s degree.

“My wife was a teacher in the Alba-Golden School district for eight years, so we lived there during that time,” said Parrish. “When our oldest son was born my photo business started. We now live on 40 acres of land in Rains County, where my family has lived for over 100 years. Grandpa had a dairy and

see **SPOTLIGHT** on page 2



Chad and Leanne Parrish



Deadline to register to vote is Monday

National Night Out is Tuesday

Wildcat Sports page 10

Rain Report

No rain recorded this week.
Total for Sep. 0.64 in.
Year to date 25.12 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

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903-473-5099 or 5098

MEMBER 2026

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FORMER EDITORS AND PUBLISHERS OF THE RAINS COUNTY LEADER:

H.W. Martin - 1887

Sam Fitzgerald - Before 1900

W.O. Hebisen - Before 1900

A.S. Hornbeck - Before 1900

J.H. Bradford - 1901-1904

Tom W. Hill - 1904-1937

Earl Hill, Sr. - 1937-1960

Kathleen Hill Becknell - 1962-1995

Earl Hill, Jr. - 1995-2019

NEWS BRIEFS

Good Sam Clothes/ Thrift Shop Sales

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

Methodist Women Spaghetti Luncheon Oct. 9

The Emory Methodist Church Women will hold their Spaghetti Luncheon on Friday, October 9, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., in the fellowship hall. Tickets can be purchased in advance for \$10.00, or payment can be made at the door.

American Legion Breakfast Sat., Oct. 10

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

Rains 42

Everyone is welcome to play 42 and moon dominos Thursdays, 6:00-9:00 p.m. in the Meadows Room at the Rains County Library. New and experienced players are welcome. For more information, call Doug King at 903-268-4021.

Angel Tree Applications Open Oct. 5

The 2026 Angel Tree applications open Monday, October 5, and will only be available online. Flyers with the link to apply will be available at each RISD campus and on the Rains County Angel Tree Facebook page. Children must live in Rains County and under the age of 18 or enrolled in RISD. Proof of residency is required. One application per child. Applications must be received by 11:59 p.m. on November 6. Application help will be available at the Rains County Library on Saturday, October 31 from 10:00 a.m. to noon. For more information, call or text 903-662-8621 or email rainscountyangeltree@gmail.com.

Class of 1964 Reunion Oct. 10

The Class of 1964 will hold its reunion on Saturday, October 10, at 12:00 noon, at Sidekick’s Bar & Grill, located on Hwy. 69, in Emory. For more information, call 903-413-1243.

Hooker Cemetery Clean-up Oct. 11

The Hooker Cemetery Association will hold its annual clean-up day on Saturday, Oct. 11, beginning at 8:00 a.m., weather permitting. Bring tools and a sack lunch. Many volunteers are needed. For more information, call Donna Fletcher at 903-268-0412. Anyone unable to attend the meeting may send contributions to Hooker Cemetery Assoc., c/o Donna Fletcher, 819 RS CR 4470, Point, TX 75472.

National Night Out Tues. Oct. 6

The City of Emory and Emory Police Department will host a National Night Out event on October 6, from 5:00-8:00 p.m. at Sandy Creek Park, located on North Street in Emory. There with be a bounce house, gellyball obstacle course, touch-a-truck, and prizes. Free hot dogs, chips and water will be available. Government agencies and local businesses will have booths set up with information, safety materials and goodies to give away. The community event connects local residents with first responders to build police-community partnerships and increase awareness of programs and anti-crime efforts.

Veteran Photos Needed

The American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary, along with the *Rains County Leader*, will be honoring veterans whose photos are submitted by the community. The photos will be displayed during the week of Veterans Day in the *Rains County Leader*. If you submitted a picture last year you do NOT need to submit again. Please send photos by October 30, to ads@rainscountyleader.com or call Lana Carlisle at (214) 264-9149. Include the veteran’s name and branch of service. Photos of individuals in their uniforms are preferred.

EMORY

Continued from page 1

computer;

- ratified a burn ban the mayor issued September 2 and allowed him to lift it when conditions improve;
- renewed the city’s 911 addressing contract with the East Texas Council of Governments;
- approved a \$15,000 audit engagement with Mike Ward. The city will pay \$10,000 and the Emory Development Corp. \$5,000.

During the departmental updates, Finance Director Janice Nobles said revenue exceeded projections for the current year. She stated that sales tax receipts came in \$77,000 over estimates, and police revenue reached about \$64,000 against a projected \$28,500.

Mayor Earl Hill III proclaimed October 6 as National Night Out in Emory. National Night Out is scheduled to take place Tuesday, October 6, at 5:00 p.m. at Sandy Creek Park in Emory.

Council members Blake Cooper, Lori Honeycutt and Jake Roan were in attendance and Mayor Hill presided over the meeting. The next regular session of the Emory City Council is scheduled for Tuesday, October 13, at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber at Emory City Hall.

COURT

Continued from page 1

ary of 2027 to allow time for adjustments in the payroll module of the county’s financial system.

The delay would also give officials time to draft a policy to eliminate the comp time and set rules for overtime usage by departments. A motion to eliminate comp time and move to overtime in January was unanimously approved.

Commissioners unanimously approved a proclamation recognizing the Women in Need program for their continued service to survivors of family violence, sexual assault and other crimes. They approved continuing education units for Byrd, replatted a property to separate two acres from three.

The court held their regular meeting on Thursday, September 24, to take care of county business. They approved a motion to use grant funds to connect the sheriff’s department incinerator to electricity when the court orders evidence to be destroyed.

Commissioners accepted into minutes the County Road Inventory (CRI) from the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDoT), stating that there are 262.69 miles of road in the county.

The CRI is used by TxDoT to determine allotments for state money and materials.

The court approved a notice of intent for Maggie Ingram to serve as Rains County Treasurer without pay until December 31 and accepted Timothy Chisholm as an additional Environmental On-Site Sewage Facility Designee.

The court reviewed and unanimously approved a maintenance agreement for the two generators at the Rains County Sheriff’s office. They accepted the donation of 41 \$50 gift cards to the Lake Fork Fish House for Rains County deputies, jailers and dispatchers.

Commissioners unanimously approved a resolution to set the salaries of the Rains County auditor and assistant auditor, amended constable fees to be comparable with surrounding counties, approved two replats of properties in Steamboat Shores to combine lots, and transferred an employee from the judge’s office to the human resource department.

The next regular meeting of the Rains County Commissioners Court is scheduled for Thursday, October 8, at 10:00 a.m. in the courtroom of the Rains County Courthouse.

FRANKLIN

Continued from page 1

ment by press time.

Aggravated perjury is a third-degree felony punishable by two to 10 years in prison and a fine of up to \$10,000.

The charge stems from Franklin’s January 13 testimony in the 354th District Court at a hearing on his request to reduce his child support. According to the indictment, he was asked whether he had participated “in any capacity” in buying or selling property for the Franklin Family Trust in the previous 18 months, including as an agent or by signing paperwork.

Franklin answered, “No, sir,” and then, “Not that I can recall.”

Prosecutors allege that from June 2025 through January 2026, Franklin acted as the trust’s agent or contact in four deals: the sale of a Rains County house and acreage, the purchase of houses in Hunt and Galveston counties, and the purchase of a Lone Oak car wash. The indictment says he exchanged about 90 emails about the deals.

According to the indictment, Franklin electronically signed an amendment to a sale of trust property in October 2025, after being told he could not sign because he was not the trustee. Four days before he testified, the indictment alleges, he gave instructions on where to send about \$1.3 million in proceeds.

Franklin took office in March 2022 after the death of Justice of the Peace Paul Foley. He said he reviewed the Chronis case at the request of Chronis’ widow, Connie. After consulting investigators, Texas Rangers and the doctors who performed the autopsies, he concluded the death was a homicide.

He alleges that Vititow pressed him not to change the death certificate, and that the prosecutor’s office pursued him after he did.

“I’ve been targeted and subjected to retaliatory and politically motivated prosecution because I refused to do what I was being pressured to do and because I would not resign,” Franklin wrote.

He said he met his attorney in Gregg County and went before a judge there to keep “this unnecessary drama and waste of resources out of Rains County.” He said he expects the State Commission on Judicial Conduct to suspend him in the coming days, which he called standard procedure.

An indictment is a formal accusation, not a finding of guilt.

POINT

Continued from page 1

for the city and declare the unopposed candidate elected to the Point City Council. They discussed placing remote cameras at the city’s two waste water lagoons, but took no action.

The next regular meeting of the Point City Council is scheduled for Thursday, October 8, at 6:00 p.m. in the council chambers of Point City Hall.

SPOTLIGHT

Continued from page 1

my parents lived on it when the dairy was older.”

Parrish and his family have two dogs and Parrish’s hobby, in addition to photography, includes travel and cruising. The family will spend time in the mountains of Colorado soon, looking forward to seeing the leaves change color, and later will spend time at the beach.



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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!

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

CITY GIRL

Grand Central - Sanctuary? Rerun!

By Linda Brendle
David is entering his ninth week since his knee replacement surgery, and life is slowly getting back to normal. We missed church for about a month immediately following his hospital visit, and we're still not back to all the activities, but we have attended Morning Worship the last four Sundays.

David is making great progress, but he still has a way to go before full recovery. For instance, it's still painful for him to sit still for long periods of time. Instead of our usual seats of choice near the front of the Sanctuary, we have been sitting as close to the back as we can. This makes it possible – and less disruptive – for him to go into the foyer for a little leg stretching while causing a minimum of disturbance. It also allows us to slip out while Pastor Jason is offering the closing prayer – before the rush to the door and the thunder of little feet from KIDZ Church and Nursery makes it hazardous to walk with a sore knee and a cane.

Another thing it allows is a ringside seat to all the extra activity that goes on during the service. There is an almost constant flow of people of all ages going in and out the doors from the beginning of the announcements to the final “Amen” of the benediction. At a recent gathering of BBC friends, I commented on this phenomenon and was surprised to hear quite a bit of reaction of others in the group. I mentioned that I had written a column about it in February of 2023, and several commented that I needed to run it again – so here it is. Notice the next to last paragraph in which I mention special cases, David being one of those until he's completely healed. I'm not pointing fingers but will hopefully raise a little awareness. And hoping that I'm following Peter's instructions to speak “with gentleness and respect.”

###

This month David has “the duty” at church on

Sunday morning. Two months a year he serves as usher captain which means he is in charge of making sure all his team members are present, filling any vacancies with alternates, and ensuring everyone knows his position when it's time to pass the offering or Communion plates. He also stands at the back of the Sanctuary or in the foyer to help open and close the doors quietly, to answer any questions about where to find the restrooms and other necessities, and to help with any other needs that might arise. It also means I'm on my own during both Sunday School and Morning Worship, and I have to dress with an extra layer since I don't have him to lean against if it gets chilly in the Sanctuary.

One of the things that surprises both of us is the large amount of activity that goes on during the time between the announcements to the final “Amen.” We usually sit within three or four rows of the front, so we're not aware of the comings and goings behind us, but most of the friends I sit with when I'm alone sit much further back where I can see what's happening. And, of course, David sees it up close and personal.

This week I couldn't help but think of how different Sunday morning expectations were when I was a kid. The conversation before entering the Sanctuary might sound something like this:

“Go to the restroom before we go in.”
“I don't need to.”
“Go anyway – and get a drink of water while you're at it.”
“But Moooooommm!”
“I mean it – you're not leaving during the service – and get rid of that gum.”

I was expected to stand and sing during the music portion of the service. This wasn't hard because I loved the music and I enjoyed harmonizing with my mother. During prayer I was to bow my head and sit or stand quietly, even if my mind wandered. While the preacher brought his message, I could get away with using the small eraserless pencil from the pocket on the back of the pew in front of me to doodle on an offering envelope or the

bulletin. But unless I was about to throw up in my mother's lap or go forward during the invitation, I stayed put.
This phenomenon of continual movement at a sit-down event is not exclusive to church. Etiquette once demanded that people remain seated at live performances like plays and concerts until the intermission, but times have changed. Maybe movies where it is acceptable to visit the concession stand or the facilities during the showing as well as raucous sports events where movement is not only acceptable but expected have caused this change in behavior. And we're all spoiled to having entertainment in our own living rooms where we can take a break by simply hitting “Pause.”

I do sometimes long for the good old days in church when it was easier to focus. When I'm struggling to understand Pastor Jason's exposition of a finer point of one of the Apostle Paul's page-long sentences, it's easy to get distracted when three people walk out within a minute of each other. I can't help but wonder if someone is serving refreshments in the Fellowship Hall and I missed the announcement.

Don't misunderstand. I know there are valid reasons for a trip to the back because I've been there myself. Brand new babies can be disruptive, throat lozenges and bottled water are not always enough to calm a coughing fit, and there are just times when you've got to go. But I can't help but wonder if a little forethought and planning might minimize the extra activity that is distracting not only to those in the congregation but also to the speaker.

Sunday morning on the way home for lunch David said, “It was like Grand Central Station out there this morning!” Maybe the next time we remodel or expand the Sanctuary, we need to include a revolving door.

Linda Brendle writes a weekly column for Believers' Baptist Church. She is a published author and also writes about caregiving, faith, and family on her blog at <http://www.LifeAfterCaregiving.WordPress.com>. You can e-mail her at LindaBrendle@yahoo.com.

The Perfect Pocket Knife

“There never was a good knife made of bad steel.”
Benjamin Franklin



JODY DYER
Typewriter Weekly

A pocket knife is the most practical of tools. I have carried one daily ever since Nixon was president. I grew up in a time when if you had X and Y chromosomes you were expected to carry a blade in your pocket. A pocket knife was like another bodily appendage, and a good one was a prized possession. Every boy worth his salt in school carried a pocket knife. And beginning in my early years, I acquired a varied collection.

One favorite was a pearl-handled knife I earned by selling magazine subscriptions in a 5th-grade school fundraiser. Another was a red-bone handled Case Peanut pattern Dad gave me for my 12th birthday. It was later stolen out of my locker in junior high. After watching our neighbor Mr. Williams open dog food cans with the pen blade of his Barlow knife, I had to have one. I bought my Case Barlow at our local hardware store with money I earned building fence. In my tackle box I packed a handy lock-back knife, purchased through the mail from an ad in the back of *Sports Afield* magazine. I used it to cut bait and line while fishing every summer at 4-H camp. In adulthood, navigating my dangerous 20s and back-packing through Europe, my constant companion was my trusty Swiss Army knife, used as everything from handy eating utensil (enjoying baguettes and brie overlooking the Seine) to a last option self-defense weapon (prowling the streets of Rotterdam after dark). I have always been most comfortable with a knife in my pocket.

For an every day pocket knife, I think the old-school vintage knives are the best. While high-tech design and manufacturing along with

the marvels of modern metallurgy have wrought a bounty of sparkling cutlery to the knife world, I think polished and perfect contemporary knives lack character (with one exception – Swiss Army knives – they are wonderful and perhaps a topic for another column alone). Vintage knives, with pocket worn handles, smooth nickel bolsters, and patina showing on their carbon steel blades, have real character. If you find yourself shopping for a vintage pocket knife, brand names to look for include Case (my personal favorite), Camillus, Queen, Buck, Schrade, Boker, Remington, Keen Kutter, & German Eye Brand.

And the different knife patterns from yesteryear have personality. Here is a short list:

STOCKMAN – The always popular Stockman pattern pocket knife has been traditionally favored by farmers and ranchers. These carry three blades (clip point, sheepsfoot, and spey blade for castrating stock). I have my dad's old Case Stockman with broken bone handles and a clip blade sharpened down to a nub.

TRAPPER – The Trapper pattern has two large blades (clip and spey), and was designed for skinning hides. These are great knives.

BARLOW – Barlow knives became popular in the 19th century. They were inexpensive workingman's knives with one or two blades, oval handles, and a long bolster. The Barlow knife was a favorite of Mark Twain and is mentioned more than once in his writing (in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, Tom's cousin Mary gives him a “sure-enough Barlow knife” for learning his Bible verses before church).

CONGRESS – Congress pattern knives have an unusual convex curved handle, and can carry from two to six blades. Originally favored by cotton and tobacco farmers, the blades pivot from both ends and meet in the middle, like Congress is supposed to do.

The Congress pattern knife was a favorite of Abraham Lincoln. He had one in his pocket the night he was shot at Ford's Theater. It is now housed in the Library of Congress.

PEN KNIFE – One of the most common and popular patterns is the Pen knife, small in size and typically produced with a blade at each end. It is rumored that Dwight Eisenhower gifted pen knives to White House visitors and dignitaries often.

WHITLER – Related to the Pen knife, the Whittler adds a coping blade making it a handy tool for wood carvers and front porch sitters.

I will add one more pattern to our list, one which has become my personal favorite (and the one I carry now in my advancing age and ripening temperament). It is the HALF-WHITLER. Half-Whittler's carry only two blades, one at each end. My vintage Half-Whittler is a Case model #6208. It is the perfect size I think for a pocket knife at just over three inches. My little knife is small enough to ride easily in my pocket (it doesn't feel like a mini brick), while still being large enough to fit well in my hand and be useful. It sports nice red-bone handles (or scales as they are sometimes called), has smooth rounded nickel bolsters, and the carbon steel blades (Case's wonderful chrome vanadium) take a wicked edge. My little knife is a joy to handle and use, and has become my perfect pocket knife.

Pocket knives are wonderful tools. And if you are old enough to know what it was like to grow up with a knife in your pocket, they can bring back memories. It is good to remember...

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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MY TAKE ON TECH

Today, AI (Artificial Intelligence) systems can do incredible things, but important results should be independently verified because AI systems can and do hallucinate—that means they may get facts wrong or just make them up out of thin air. That could endanger lives in some cases if not independently validated.



JOHN KELLY
Certified Information Systems Security Professional

We are promised that AI, combined with our smartphone, can soon be our AI agent, which is an entity that can take care of countless little tasks that we must do these days on our own. The AI agent will act on your behalf.

When it comes to important items such as air travel, purchasing items online, executing stock trades, and many other money-involved tasks, there is always the chance that an AI agent could make mistakes—expensive mistakes.

Using your credit card information, an AI agent could do things in your name (I call that your AI Wallet) that could be expensive and not what you had in mind. Key to the problem is that the legal system in the US has not caught up with the capability of AI spending your money—especially when something goes wrong. Who is responsible for the mess, and who will pay to get it resolved? I suspect it won't be the AI systems.

AI Wallet Risks

Credit card usage has over 50 years of experience by millions, and responsibilities and protections are defined in the user agreements, the legal system, and case law. But as far as I know, those one-meter-long fine-print end-user agreements you must sign to get and use the card don't deal with AI agents who may do undesired things with the credit card you shared with them.

For example, you instruct your AI agent to use your credit card to buy two widgets online to be shipped to you. Instead of two, it buys 10. So now you have five times as many on their way to you at a lot more cost than you budgeted for the purchase. If the seller does not want to fix the error for free or take back the excess or wrong items, it can be a real dilemma. You are the unfortunate entity caught right in the unhappy middle of that.

In another example, you tell your AI agent to make and pay for a round-trip flight from Dallas to New York City, including hotel. Sounds simple. Being on a tight budget, you instruct it to keep everything as cheap as possible. It comes back later that day with an airline ticket for you to NYC that is cheap. That sounds good, but unfortunately, you find that it's via Toronto, Canada! But because it is very cheap, you can't claim it didn't follow your instructions.

Oh, and the “budget hotel” in NYC turns out to be in a very high-crime area where even the police usually don't travel. But at least

it is quite cheap, as you requested. What a mess!

The AI agent technically did what you instructed—but neither choice is acceptable to you, and now you must try and back everything out yourself and hope that is possible. At about this time, you are lamenting, “If only I had done this myself, none of this hassle or grief would have resulted!”

These are just a few examples of where AI can go wrong in terrible ways when you give it access to your credit cards or checkbook. Don't even think about what could go wrong if you used an AI agent to execute stock trades in your portfolio, and it went off track. Imagine trying to explain that your AI agent bought 1000 shares of MSFT (Microsoft stock) at \$510 per share when you planned for it to buy 10 shares. Instead of settling a \$5100 bill, you now have \$510,000 due and don't have the funds to cover that! And all the AI agent has to say is, “Oops, my bad!”

I am sure that eventually the legal system and legislation will address responsibilities and protections when we trust our finances to an AI agent and something goes wrong. Then I may revisit the whole process. But until then, no thanks. I love AI agents as researchers and advisers. But I do not trust them with my checkbook or credit cards yet—at least until the rules of AI agents and our finances are established and settled.

John can be reached at john2645@mytakeontechnet.net.

“The spider looks for a merchant who doesn't advertise so he can spin a web across his door and lead a life of undisturbed peace!”
-Mark Twain

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TEXAS CROSSWORD
by Charley & Guy Orbison
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ACROSS

- this Nicklaus won Texas' Byron Nelson Classic twice
- TXism: “mean ___ old range cow”
- TXism: “suit ___ company” (relatives)
- Wichita Falls TV (Fox aff late)
- one of the first black legislators in Texas (2 wds.)
- “one” in Mexico
- 1924 slogan: “Me for ___ Got a dern Thing Against Pa”
- TX Joan Crawford: Lucille ___ Sueur
- military branch of TX Chester Nimitz
- Texas-only fsh: “Fountain ___”
- TXism: “tame ___ dog”
- this Geraldine starred in TX Horton Foote's 1985 “The Trip to Bountiful”
- TXism: “sidekicks”
- Dallas has a ___ Medical Center
- body of water on the Texas-Louisiana boundary (2 wds.)
- “sweet taters”
- Texas rock 'n' roller: “The ___ Bopper”
- TXism: “it's a ___ cinch”
- TX Larry McMurry novel: “Dead ___ Walk” (1995)
- Plainview is the seat of this county
- TXism: “___ a hot horseshoe”
- TX Jim Reeves hit: “Welcome to My ___” (1962)
- Grand ___ Opry
- train tracks
- Lake La Sal ___ (“the King's Salt”)
- U.S. president at 1936 Texas Centennial (init.)
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Sheriff's Report

The Rains County Sheriff's Office took the following reports of activity during the week of September 21-27:

Arrests



MICHAEL HOPKINS
Rains County Sheriff

9 - 2 2 : Timothy Allen Blaylock. Cruelty to a non-livestock animal, \$2,000 bond.
9-23: Stevie Leon Mayberry.

Criminal trespass of a habitation, shelter center, superfund site or critical infrastructure facility, \$1,500 bond.

9-25: Steven Wade Samples. Assault causing bodily injury to a family member, \$3,000 bond.

9-26: Lisa Jeanette Deaton. Driving with license invalid, with previous conviction or suspension, without financial responsibility; Hunt County, \$2,500 bond.

Calls

9-21: CR 1275 Medical assist; CR 3220 Death; Hwy. 19S Reckless driver; Hwy. 69W Business alarm; CR 3040 Accident; Alexander Dr. Animal at large; E Lennon Dr. Suspicious activity; FM 2946 Medical assist; Hwy. 69 Reckless driver; CR 4020 Medical assist; CR 2245 Smoke investigation; Kansas St. Domestic disturbance; Kansas St. Domestic disturbance; Doris Briggs Pkwy. East Tawakoni (ET) Open door; FM 47 Livestock on roadway; S Texas St. Accident; FM 47 Grass fire; CR 3391 Medical assist; FM 514 Grass fire; W Quitman Suspicious vehicle; FM 275 Debris in roadway; FM 47S Damaged property; CR 3328 Medical assist; Hwy. 19N at the bridge Brush fire; S Texas St. Welfare concern; Hwy. 276 Medical assist.

9-22: FM 2795 Livestock on roadway; CR 4320 Repossession; CR 1532 Domestic disturbance; CR 4480 Medical assist; Sheriff's Office (SO) lobby Investigation; FM 275 Illegal dumping; N Texas St. Medical assist; Planters St. Business alarm;

SO lobby Meet complainant; PR 8515 Neighbor dispute; Hwy. 19 Animal welfare concern; CR 3345 Medical assist; CR 4453 Mental subject; Hwy. 19S Suspicious vehicle; FM 275 Illegal dumping; S Texas St. Welfare concern; SO lobby Meet complainant; CR 1140 Medical assist; S Texas St. Medical assist; Hwy. 19S Debris in roadway; CR 3400 Medical assist; N 1st St. Point Medical assist; E Lennon Dr. Drug activity; W Tawakoni Dr. Consensual contact; SO lobby Warrant service; Kansas St. Meet complainant; Hwy. 276 Reckless driver; CR 4510 Trespassing.

9-23: CR 4452 Disturbance; Oak Leaf Tr. ET Medical assist; SO lobby Suspicious vehicle; E Lennon Dr. Suspicious person; Industrial Park Rd. Business alarm; Industrial Blvd. Point Medical assist; FM 514 Brush fire; FM 514 Medical assist; PR 5517 Meet complainant; CR 1250 Public assist; Hwy. 276 Medical assist; CR 4254 Medical assist; Hwy. 276 & FM 2737 Debris in roadway; FM 2946 & PR 5929 Medical assist; SO lobby Meet complainant; E Lennon Dr. Medical assist; FM 515 Meet complainant; Hwy. 276 at RYSA Motorist assist; Hwy. 514 Medical assist; FM 2946 Medical assist; CR 3319 Animal welfare concern; FM 2737 Controlled burn; CR 3120 Medical assist; CR 3335 Medical assist; Hwy. 19 Vehicle fire; CR 3330 Reckless driver; CR 2460 Medical assist.

9-24: Hwy. 19N Debris in roadway; 19N South Bound Pursuit; CR 3503 Medical assist; PR 7700 Suspicious vehicle; CR 3025 Meet complainant; Hwy. 69E Reckless driver; SO lobby Meet complainant; SO lobby Meet complainant; FM 2946 Medical assist; CR 3330 Harassment; CR 3388 Controlled burn; CR 3325 Medical assist; E Lennon Dr. Accident; Hwy. 69 at CR 2415 Livestock on roadway; Hwy. 69 at CR 2250 Motorist assist; FM 2795 Environmental; FM 47 Livestock on roadway; E Lennon Dr. Abandoned vehicle; PR 7332 Reckless driver; SO lobby

Meet complainant; PR 5451 Medical assist; CR 3315 Medical assist; E Lennon Dr. Consensual contact; PR 5451 Medical assist; Wood St. Suspicious vehicle; E Lennon Dr. Suspicious activity; E Lennon Dr. City ordinance violation.

9-25: E Lennon Dr. Accident; Hwy. 69 Suspicious person; N Texas St. Medical assist; S Dunbar Ln. Fight in progress; CR 3381 Livestock on roadway; Hwy. 69W Gas leak; FM 2946 Stolen vehicle; Hwy. 19N Traffic hazard; W North St. Meet complainant; FM 2737 at Hwy. 276 Funeral escort; SO lobby Meet complainant; CR 4480 Livestock on roadway; SO lobby Warrant service; CR 1402 Animal welfare concern; SO lobby Meet complainant; N 2nd St. Point Trespassing; CR 1140 Disturbance; CR 3130 Terroristic threats; W Lennon Dr. Medical assist; FM 3299 Medical assist; Hwy. 276 ET Reckless driver; FM 2737 Livestock on roadway.

9-26: CR 3333 Suspicious activity; FM 515 Consensual contact; Hwy. 69 Livestock on roadway; CR 3317 Medical assist; Tawakoni Dr. Intoxicated individual; Hwy. 19N Reckless driver; Hwy. 69W at Fairgrounds Suspicious activity; Hwy. 276 at CR 2737 Motorist assist; PR 5450 Medical assist; Hwy. 19 at Hwy. 69 Reckless driver; Bethel St. at Wells St. Consensual contact; CR 1626 Medical assist; Hwy. 69 at Hwy. 19 Debris in roadway; CR 3370 Welfare concern; FM 514 Suspicious activity; FM 47 and CR 1410 Livestock on roadway; FM 514 Meet complainant; CR 2340 Vehicle in roadway; Clower Ct. ET Welfare concern; SO lobby Meet complainant; W Lennon Dr. Business alarm; Hwy. 69E Traffic hazard; 2nd St. Point Disturbance; FM 2946 Stolen vehicle; Meadowview Ln. Point Reckless driver; SO lobby Meet complainant; FM 2946 Warrant service; CR 1532 Animal welfare concern; FM 275 Livestock on roadway; PR 5501 Medical assist; CR 2324 at Hwy. 19 Animal welfare concern.

9-27: E Lennon Dr. Suspi-

cious person; W Quitman City ordinance violation; W Quitman St. Consensual contact; Lake Fork Dr. Suspicious vehicle; E Lennon Dr. Business alarm; S Texas St. Medical assist; Hwy. 19S Medical assist; N 1st St. Point Suspicious person; FM 2795 Medical assist; FM 514 Suspicious activity; CR 1491 Medical assist; Hwy. 276 ET Disturbance; Hwy. 69E Livestock on roadway; CR 1307 Medical assist.

The Sheriff's Department reported 417 calls for the week. Among the calls were: 4 paper services, 1 damaged property, 5 debris in roadway

calls, 4 disturbances, 3 domestic disturbances, 1 drug activity, 37 extra patrols, 1 fight in progress, 2 brush fires, 1 vehicle fire, 12 follow up investigations, 1 environmental, 1 funeral escort, 1 harassment, 1 intoxicated individual, 1 investigation, 1 gas leak, 11 livestock on roadway calls, 16 meet complainant calls, 1 mental subject, 1 neighbor dispute, 1 open door, 2 illegal dumping calls, 2 grass fires, 26 public service calls, 1 pursuit, 10 reckless drivers, 1 repossession, 1 smoke investigation, 2 stolen vehicles, 6 suspicious activity calls, 4

suspicious persons, 6 suspicious vehicles, 1 terroristic threats, 2 traffic hazards, 1 vehicle in roadway, 3 warrant services, 4 welfare concerns, 2 trespassing, 4 accidents, 2 controlled burns, 1 death, 1 public assist, 51 area checks, 5 consensual contacts, 1 building check, 1 abandoned vehicle, 5 business alarms, 1 animal at large, 5 animal welfare concerns, 3 motorist assists, 2 city ordinance violations.

There were 111 traffic stops, 97 warnings, 14 citations, 43 medical calls, and 28 transports.

TEXAS RURAL REPORTER

Who Is the Texas Tax Man?

By Suzanne Bellsnyder,
Texas Rural Reporter

If you ask who collects property taxes in Texas, the answer is simple. It is not the State of Texas. School districts, cities, counties, and other local taxing entities collect property taxes.



SUZANNE BELLSNYDER
Texas Rural Reporter

But if the question is who controls the property tax system, the answer gets more complicated.

That question has been on my mind as a newspaper editor running local tax notices, and it's back in the statewide political conversation. We talk about property taxes as though there is one tax man, and the argument becomes whether he lives at city hall or at the Capitol. Let's break it down.

Who Sets the Value?

Your property tax bill starts with your property's value. Your local appraisal district determines what it is worth and certifies the values local taxing entities use when setting tax rates.

Appraisal districts operate under state law, which generally requires appraising property at market value. The state also checks local values through the Comptroller's School District Property Value Study.

We have seen that pressure close to home. At a Stratford town hall, an appraisal district board member said local values had to rise because of the state value study. If local values stay too low for too long, the appraisal district can face a state review, and the school district can face funding consequences. That gives appraisal districts a strong reason to move values up when the state says they are too low.

When Appraisals Rise

This matters in rural communities because a growing tax base does not always mean a growing econ-

omy.

A town can show millions of dollars more in property value without adding a new business, new homes, or new jobs. The same houses and buildings are appraised at higher values. On paper, the community looks wealthier, but no new money may be moving through the local economy. Instead, growth comes from appraisals.

Those higher appraisals also mean local governments can collect more money without raising the tax rate. A city can keep the same rate and bring in more, or lower the rate and still collect more than the year before.

Who Decides What Gets Taxed?

The folks sitting in the chairs with the state seals on them down in Austin also decide through state policy what stays on the tax rolls.

Beginning this year, Texas increased the exemption for qualifying business personal property from \$2,500 to \$125,000. That is meaningful tax relief for many small businesses, but it also removes taxable value from local communities.

In Hansford County, appraisal district figures show the new exemption removed more than \$7 million from the City of Spearman tax base and more than \$18 million from the county tax base.

Texas also increased the school homestead exemption to \$140,000, and state law and the Texas Education Agency heavily shape school tax rates.

So often, by the time local officials sit down to set a tax rate, the math has already changed. Property has been taken off the tax rolls, leaving a smaller tax base to support local services and making it harder to build a budget.

There Are Limits, Too

The state also imposes "caps" which limit a local government's ability to increase property tax revenue without voter approval. For most cities and counties, that calculation generally

allows about 3.5 percent more revenue for day-to-day operations.

But the cost of running a community does not always stay under 3.5 percent. Insurance, equipment, wages, fuel, streets, and water systems can all cost more. Small towns do not get a discount on a fire truck or water line just because fewer people live there.

So Who Is the Texas Tax Man?

None of this gives local officials a pass. When a city collects more property tax, the council owns that decision. When a county increases spending, commissioners should explain why.

Local conversations about taxes and spending are healthy. Voters should expect their local governments to provide the services they need and to use tax dollars wisely. Asking those questions — and holding local officials accountable for the answers — is one of the purest forms of local control.

But it is also important to understand that the State of Texas is not simply a spectator because it does not send the property tax bill. Austin sets the appraisal rules, checks local values, determines exemptions, controls much of the school tax structure, and sets the limits local governments must work within.

So who is the Texas tax man? I would argue both. Austin controls much more of the property tax system than most taxpayers realize. At the same time, local elected officials make the final decisions about budgets, tax rates, and how much property tax to collect.

If we want an honest conversation about property taxes in Texas, both sides belong in it.

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.



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Add-On Buyer Name, Amount; 3DW Designs LLC (Dennis and Cori Wilmoth), \$30.00; 6+ Ranch, \$1,000.00; A&R Collision, \$1,400.00; Ads 4Scale (Vlad Alexander), \$500.00; Austin Bank, \$3,700.00; Big Country Farm Center, \$800.00; Black Optix Tint, \$100.00; Brad and Becky Potts, \$500.00; Brandon and Kylie Bell, \$500.00; Brandon Roberts - Edward Jones, \$300.00; Brian and Melani Robbins, \$300.00; Bright Star Farm, \$1,000.00; Brookshire's, \$2,000.00; Buddy and Tonia Brimer, \$300.00; By-Line Surveying, \$1,675.00; Carol and Freddie Dale, \$200.00; Casey Phillips Insurance Agency LLC, \$200.00; City National Bank (Mikaela Williams), \$2,250.00; Clint and Alicia Traylor (Traylor Farm), \$200.00; Commercial Bank of Texas, \$1,900.00; Cory and Lyndsay Tubb, \$400.00; Country Flowers & Gifts, \$1,700.00; D&S Cattle, \$500.00; Dairy Queen - Emory, \$100.00; Daniel Prinz, \$100.00; David Gowin, \$500.00; Double 7 Ranch (Carla and Charlie Brookins), \$100.00; Duko Oil and D&D Lube, \$2,925.00; Emory Automotive, \$500.00; Emory Chiroprac-



SARAH LATHAM
Rains County
AgriLife Agent

tic, \$500.00; Emory Livestock Auction, \$5,500.00; Emory Veterinary Clinic, \$350.00; Farmers Electric Co-Op, \$900.00; First National Bank of ET (Chris Gibbins), \$750.00; First National Bank of ET (David Gowin), \$1,600.00; Forbes Farm, \$200.00; Fort Smith Horse & Mule Sale, \$50.00; Freedom Flood & Fire, \$50.00; Grocery Supply Company, \$200.00; Hilliard Ranch (Brent Hilliard), \$3,150.00; Hocutt Construction, \$100.00; Holly Wasson - Edward Jones, \$50.00; Holt Custom Stoneworks LLC, \$60.00; Hooten's Cattle Company, \$2,000.00; Hopkins/Rains County Farm Bureau, \$2,400.00; Ironwood Practice Range, \$450.00; J&R Auto Supply-Parts Plus, \$1,350.00; Jamie's Restaurant (Jamie McGowan), \$600.00; Jordan's Place Pediatrics, \$975.00; Kearney Trailers, \$3,200.00; Kelly and Donna Robbins, \$200.00; Kelly and Joyce Barrett, \$300.00; King Air & Electrical, \$300.00; Lake Fork Pre-School, \$200.00; Laningham Consulting (Levi and Kalee Laningham), \$1,025.00; Legacy Ag Credit, \$400.00; Leisa Pennebaker, \$440.00; LS3 Construction, \$900.00; Markus Groves, \$200.00; Marty and Candace Mooring, \$175.00; Max's Package Store/Taylor Bail Bonds, \$1,000.00; MB Cattle Services, \$200.00; MK Pallet, \$1,800.00; Moody Sand &

Gravel LLC, \$150.00; Christine McAllister, \$950.00. Nana and Grampa Herbst, \$200.00; Nate and Amanda Carista, \$500.00; Northeast Texas Farmers Co-op, \$800.00; Quirkie Candle Company, \$15.00; Rains Pharmacy (Meredith Chavez), \$900.00; Roadrunner Fabrications, \$1,000.00; Roest Construction (Casey Roest), \$1,600.00; Ross Hollon, \$1,500.00; Seth's Lake Fork Creek, \$1,000.00; Sisk Boring & Tunneling, \$2,175.00; Spencer Real Estate, \$125.00; Stephanie and Jimmy Herring, \$100.00; Stephen and Keri Gowin, \$400.00. The Knuckles Family, \$125.00; The Nest (Joanna Kestler), \$200.00; Todd and Deanna Moore, \$2,275.00; Toliver Ford, \$1,400.00; Tommy and Tonna Mooring, \$200.00; Toni Threadgill State Farm, \$3,150.00; Tri-County Vet Services, \$600.00; Triple E Electric, \$450.00; Tucker and Aubrey Peacock, \$250.00; TWT Farm, LLC (Doug and Sherree Latham), \$1,100.00; Vickie and James Pickel Trucking, \$350.00; Whit and LaCresha Dale, \$250.00; Wilson Heat & Air, \$1,700.00; Wilson-Orwosky Funeral Home, \$60.00. Total: \$80,330.00.

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STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

Voter registration deadline nearing

The deadline to register to vote in the Nov. 3 general election is Oct. 5. Early voting starts Oct. 19 and runs through Oct. 30, according to the Texas Secretary of State's office. The last day for an application to vote by mail must be received by Friday, Oct. 23. Voters can visit votetexas.gov to confirm they are registered to vote, see what is on the ballot where they live, and get other election-related information. That site is maintained by the Texas Secretary of State. Meanwhile, The Texas Tribune reported that an unknown number of voter registration applications were delayed because of an error by the Texas Department of Public Safety. The agency failed to forward the applications, submitted online through its driver's license portal, to county voter registrars. Texas Democrats have called on Gov. Greg Abbott to investigate the problem. With the Oct. 5 deadline approaching, the delayed registrations from DPS could add to processing backlogs at affected counties. A spokesperson for the secretary of state's office said affected voters can still have their ballots counted as long as they submitted their registration before Oct. 5. The DPS portal accounted for about 6 million voter registrations from 2020 to 2024. Texas has more than 18 million registered voters.



GARY BORDERS
Texas Press Association

Judge: Texas must air-condition all prisons by end of 2029
A federal judge has ordered the state to air-condition its entire prison system by the end of 2029, the Austin American-Statesman reported. The Texas Department of Criminal Justice has estimated that could cost the state \$1.5 billion. Nearly two-thirds of the 143,000 prisoners now held in Texas prisons do not have air-conditioning. In his ruling, U.S. District Judge Robert Pittman said the prison agency had "minimized and misled" the court about the seriousness of the heat problem. "The data that TDCJ does not collect also paints a picture of an agency that is not attempting to meaningfully understand or document the dangers and impacts of heat," Pitman wrote. A TDCJ spokesperson took issue with the judge's characterization. "TDCJ has robust heat mitigation efforts in place to protect the safety of its population and staff," Amanda Hernandez said in an email. The state will appeal the ruling. **Camp Mystic under criminal investigation**
Camp Mystic, the Hill Country girls' summer camp where 28 people died in the July 2025 floods, is under criminal investigation by the Texas Rangers, kut.org reported. Fourteen search warrants were executed against family and staff members who ran the camp. KUT News obtained a copy of the affidavit filed against Tweety Eastland, whose husband, Dick, was one of the 28 who died. The affidavit states the Rangers have probable cause to believe the camp's leaders committed a number of criminal offenses, including manslaughter, criminally negligent homicide, injury to a child, deadly conduct, and abandoning or endangering a child. "These offenses were committed against child campers - including both deceased victims and surviving campers of the flood event," Brant Johnston, an investigator with the Texas Rangers, wrote in the document. The affidavits are intended to allow the Rangers to obtain electronic data from Tweety and other members of the Eastland family that owns the camp, as well as camp staff members. A Kerr County state district judge approved it earlier this month. Camp Mystic's owners are being sued in civil court by more than a dozen families.

Land commissioner backs virtual border wall
Texas Land Commissioner Dawn Buckingham told the Houston Chronicle that a virtual border wall makes "the most sense" for much of West Texas, where plans to build a physical wall have drawn considerable opposition. "The bottom line is there are places where physical barriers make sense, and there are places where they don't. And we just want the solution that's best for Texas," Buckingham said in an interview with the Chronicle's editorial board. "I think especially when you get to West Texas, a virtual wall, in my opinion, makes the most sense for most of that area." The Trump administration is moving to build a border wall across the more than 13 million acres the state agency controls, most of which is in West Texas. Gov. Greg Abbott has previously questioned the logic of building a physical wall in "rugged, isolated areas like Big Bend." Buckingham sent a cease-and-desist letter in July to U.S. Customs and Border Protection after a contractor for the agency was discovered clearing state-controlled land without permission. Buckingham is running for reelection against Democrat Ben Flores, a former Bay City council member.

Red tide reported off the coast of Galveston
Biologists with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department have begun receiving reports of a red tide bloom off the coast of Galveston. They are monitoring fish kills and taking water samples around Crystal Beach and southern Galveston Island. "Water samples indicate moderate to high concentrations of red tide cells, and beachgoers are reporting mild to severe respiratory irritation resulting from the bloom," the news release said. Red tide is a naturally occurring concentration of a microscopic alga that produces a toxin. Dense concentrations are known as "blooms" and kill fish by paralyzing their central nervous systems. This can result in dead fish washing up on Gulf beaches. 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.

Congratulations



PETITE MISS RAINS COUNTY WINNERS – Petite Miss Rains County 2026 and Petite Miss Sportswear is Charlie Hollon (center-right); first runner-up and Miss Personality is Isla Pitre (center-left); second runner-up is Blakelyn Banta (right); Petite Miss Photogenic is Piper Young (left).

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LITTLE MISS RAINS COUNTY WINNERS – Little Miss Rains County 2026 is Finley Northcutt (center); first runner-up, Little Miss Photogenic, Little Miss Sportswear and Little Miss Personality is Berkleigh Dockery (left); second runner-up is Aryia Justice (right).

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RAINS COUNTY LEADER

THIS WEEK IN TEXAS HISTORY

British Break Promise to Texans

by Bartee Haile
The British foreign secretary went back on his pledge to the trusting envoy from Texas on Sep. 30, 1839 by refusing to recognize the Lone Star Republic. The fact that the former Mexican province had remained independent for three years did not impress Lord Palmerston, who stubbornly stuck to the wait-and-see attitude he adopted four months after the Battle of San Jacinto. As far as the custodian of the British Empire was concerned, Texas had the life expectancy of a mayfly. Though only 29 years old, James Pinckney Henderson was President Sam Houston's choice for emissary to Europe. The North Carolinian's assignment was to persuade Old World politicians to establish diplomatic and commercial ties with the newest nation in the New World.

The first stop for Henderson in October 1837 was London, headquarters of the one true superpower of the age. Lord Palmerston tap-danced around the issue of diplomatic status but agreed to refer the matter to the cabinet. Henderson was hardly surprised to hear over the Christmas holidays that the collective leadership had decided against rushing into a relationship. According to Palmerston, such a move might upset the economic appcart with the Mexicans, valued trading partners, while antagonizing the Americans, who had expressed a desire to add the Lone Star to their flag. Off the record, the English Machiavelli confided that his government did not want to be the first in Europe to cozy up to the rebel republic. If, however, Henderson could win over the

French, recognition by Great Britain would be automatic. Nine months later, Palmerston complimented the novice on his success in Paris but played dumb when asked to honor his pledge. He apologized for the apparent "misunderstanding" and advised the agitated agent not to hold his breath while waiting for the British to imitate the French. Palmerston notified Henderson in mid-1840 of his willingness to forge the necessary links whenever the diplomat was in the neighborhood. The November signing of three treaties paved the way for trade between the two countries, but Palmerston again balked at giving Texas his official blessing. When diplomatic status was finally accorded in 1842, Lord Aberdeen had taken over as Great Britain's global guardian and Ashbel Smith had replaced Henderson as Lone Star lobbyist. Aberdeen blamed the delay on Mexican opposition, but Smith knew better. Arrogance had blinded the British to the tremendous tenacity of the people of Texas. Profiting from the mistakes of his short-sighted predecessor, the new foreign secretary formulated a fresh policy that redefined British objectives. By actively encouraging independence instead of passively accepting absorption by the United States, Aberdeen hoped to mold Texas into a second Canada. He also believed a buffer between the U.S. and Mexico would prevent the full-scale war that was bound to result from annexation. This strategy was sound and in tune with the mood in Texas, where the eagerness to join the Union had been replaced by a grim determination to go it alone. Having been snubbed once by Washington, which forced Sam Houston to withdraw the annexation application in 1838, few Texans cared to risk another insulting slap in

the face. By patching things up between Texas and Mexico, which still threatened to regain the land north of the Rio Grande by force of arms, Aberdeen could remove the overriding reason for statehood. But Santa Anna, who needed the Lone Star straw man to justify his huge standing army, sabotaged the peace initiative. The foreign secretary fared no better in a test of wills with his own shipbuilders. In response to an impassioned protest from Ashbel Smith, Aberdeen tried in vain to halt the sale of two warships to the Mexican navy. After the vessels were delivered right on schedule, Texans began to wonder which side Great Britain was really on. When Aberdeen complained about the resumption of U.S.-Texas talks in early 1844, secretary of state Anson Jones told him the fault lay entirely with the British. As long as Santa Anna was breathing down their necks, Texans had no choice but to turn to Washington for protection. But the December overthrow of the Mexican dictator coupled with the senate vote six months earlier against the annexation treaty gave Aberdeen a final opportunity. He pressured the Mexicans into coming to terms with their irretrievable loss and cut a deal with the French for a joint guarantee of Texas independence. Anson Jones, who had stepped up to the presidency, presented the British proposal along with the latest offer from the U.S. to a special session of the Republic congress. But Texans were emotionally primed and politically ready for a return to their roots, and the Aberdeen plan was trampled in the wild stampede toward statehood. Bartee Haile welcomes your comments and questions at barteehaile@gmail.com or by mail at P.O. Box 130011, Spring, TX 77393.

SAVVY SENIORS

Planning a Simple, Affordable Funeral

Dear Savvy Senior,
I'd like to make my end-of-life arrangements, but I want to keep things simple and affordable. What are my options?



– 86-Year-Old
Dear 86, Smart thinking! Planning ahead can save your loved ones a lot of stress, and money. With a traditional burial averaging around \$10,000 and a full-service cremation near \$6,500, it's easy to see why many seniors are looking for simpler, lower-cost ways to say goodbye. The good news is, there are plenty of options that are dignified, straightforward, and much easier on your wallet. Here's a look at some choices, depending on the kind of farewell you want.

Direct cremation

If cremation appeals to you, a direct cremation is the simplest – and usually the least expensive – option. It includes picking up the body, completing the required paperwork, the cremation itself, and returning the ashes to your family. There's no embalming, formal viewing, or casket; a simple cardboard box called an "alternative container" is used to hold the remains. Depending on where you live and which provider you choose, direct cremation typically costs \$700 to \$3,500. If you want extra

services, ask for an itemized price list so you know exactly what you're paying for. Funeral homes are required by law to provide this. Immediate or direct burial If burial is your preference, an immediate or direct burial is the most basic option. The body is buried in a simple container soon after death, skipping embalming, viewings, and the use of funeral facilities. Families can still hold a memorial service at the graveside, at home, or at a place of worship without the body present. These services usually run \$2,000 to \$3,000, not counting cemetery fees, which can add \$1,000 to \$3,000. Every funeral home offers direct burial. To find local providers, you can search online for "cremation" or "funeral" along with your city and state. You can also compare prices on sites like Funeralocity.com or Parting.com. Another handy approach is to use AI tools like ChatGPT or Gemini: you can ask them to pull together lists of nearby funeral homes or cremation providers, see which services they offer, check estimated costs, and even compare options side by side – all in a matter of minutes. It's a quick way to get a snapshot of what's available without making a bunch of phone calls. Green burial For the environmentally minded, green burial is a

simple, natural option. The body is buried in a biodegradable coffin or shroud, without embalming chemicals or a vault. Costs typically range from \$2,000 to \$5,000. The Green Burial Council (greenburialcouncil.org, 888-966-3330) maintains a state-by-state directory of cemeteries and funeral professionals who offer these services. Water cremation Also eco-friendly, water cremation (or alkaline hydrolysis) uses water, chemicals, and heat instead of fire. Costs usually range from \$2,000 to \$3,500, and it's legal in more than 20 states. Search "alkaline hydrolysis" to find a provider near you. Donate your body If you want the lowest-cost option, consider donating your body to science. Medical schools use donated bodies for teaching and research, then return the cremated remains to your family or bury them in a local cemetery – usually free. Some schools may charge a small transport fee. To find a program in your state, check the University of Florida's U.S. program directory at Anatbd.acb.med.ufl.edu/usprograms, or call the Whole-Body Donation Referral Service at 800-727-0700. Planning ahead gives you control, saves your family money, and ensures your final wishes are honored. With these options, you can choose a farewell that's simple, meaningful, and within your budget – and doing a little homework now makes it easier for everyone later.

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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50 years ago this week

Gleanings from the Rains County Leader archives

Thursday, September 30, 1976

Rains Garden Club's '76 Beautification Program

It was weeks ago when Hazel Cooper and Edith Varnon met with me to discuss the Rains Flower & Garden Club's beautification program for 1976 of which I am chairman. After several weeks of breakfast at different homes, consisting of some of the best food I have ever tasted, like cream gravy, ham, bacon, sausage and eggs, hot biscuits, pear preserves, apple butter and pots and pots of hot coffee, and discussing every phase of our project, we think, and we hope the people of our county will think so too, that the end result of our project is simply beautiful. The square around our courthouse is pretty and we are so proud. The containers were moved into place on Monday and Tuesday the committee planted the shrubs. The committee has worked hard deciding just what kind of containers to purchase, what shrubs would be suitable and where to place them, and we believe everyone will enjoy this project. Along with such a project there are so many people involved. Jimmie Varnon and Larry McKeown conceived the idea to raise money for this project by making pictures. We salute the city council and the mayor, along with Mr. Perry, Bobby Norris, Harold White and Randy Rabe for their splendid cooperation, and all other good citizens that have been interested in this project. I have worked with many people in our county on many worthwhile projects, and all of them were worthy, but this one gave me such a source of satisfaction because Hazel Cooper, Phillip Kerr and Edith Varnon are such worthy people who have worked very hard to make our county a good place to live, and because everyday, everybody that comes our way will enjoy the beauty of the planters and shrubs. The Garden Club is so fortunate to have Mrs. Rubye McKeown as president and she has led the club in doing many fine things for our county. So when you see a member of the club, please tell them you appreciate their efforts.

Condemnation Suit

The attorneys for the plaintiffs in the land condemnation proceedings presented their argument to the three commissioners appointed to assess the value of the 725 acres of land involved. The commissioners are Guy Sisk, W. W. (Son) Montgomery and Glen Rabe. Earl Roberts Jr. of Longview represented the Sabine River Authority and the landowners, Max Fletcher and Tommy Cook, were represented by Bascomb Perkins of Mt. Pleasant and L. M. Braziel of Emory.

Attorney Perkins & Braziel had the appraisal of L. L. Spencer, realtor, who said the land was worth \$550 per acre, and that the home of Max Fletcher would be around \$15,000. Also geologist Cullen of the firm, Hanks & Cullen, testified that there was an average of six feet of coal at a depth of 36 feet. Atty. Roberts has the appraisal figure of Mr. Burnett of Sulphur Springs. He stated that he had examined the property and would place the value at \$300 an acre and \$9,500 for the house and barn. Atty Perkins asked the commissioners to set the value at one million dollars that the Sabine River Authority would have to pay for the land. The commissioners retired to the jury room and came back with the judgement of \$700 per acre for everything. This would amount to over a half million dollars. The last report was that the Sabine River Authority would appeal. This will bring the case before a jury.

Annual Buck Watts Memorial Singing Oct. 2nd

The Annual Buck Watts Memorial Singing will be Sat. night, Oct. 2, beginning at 7:30 at the Point Community Center. Edward Toles, director, will be in charge of the program.

There is no admission charge but contributions for the maintenance of the Lone Star Cemetery will be accepted. Everyone is invited.

Rains Girls Volleyball Teams Win

The Rains Wildcat Varsity Girls Volleyball team won their first district game against Rivercrest Rebels. The Wildcats took the first game in a great comeback 15-13. The girls ran away with the second game 15-5 with our consistent server Jerri Ratliff, who was high pointer with 11 points in both games. Kara Moody was nominated defensive player and Jerri Ratliff received offensive player in the game. Other players who played a great game were Rexine Williams, Anita Potts, Melinda Howard, Laura Melton, Kara Moody, Vicki Ingram, Rhonda Pinson, Carla Taylor. We appreciate the fans who attended the game but would like to have more support by everyone. The Junior Varsity won their first district game with their consistent server Karen Ramsey with 11 points, who was offensive player. The J.V. took the first game 15-12 and second game 16-14. --Reporter, Melinda Howard

Woosley Cemetery Association Meet

The annual meeting of the Woosley Cemetery Association held Sept. 25th was a

success. Several were here from out of the county. Work on trimming shrubs, removing vines and straightening grave stones improved the appearance of the well-mowed grounds. Dale Otto, with the help of Bro. Clyde Passons, has done a good job through the year mowing. Lunch was enjoyed by all. In the business meeting conducted by Mickey Cooper, president, George Stuart was elected trustee to replace Buster Tatum whose term expired. Nana Callaway and Marye Fuster were re-elected. Generous donations during the day helped us pass the half-way mark toward our goal. Further contributions made to the Woosley Cemetery Assoc. will be appreciated.

Emory Assembly of God to Have "Kids Crusade"

The Emory Assembly of God Church has announced it will begin a "Kids Crusade" on Sun. evening, Oct. 3rd, at 7 p.m. Services will continue nightly through Friday night. Refreshments will be served each night for the children and transportation will be provided for those desiring it. Evangelist Louis & Mary Smith from Marshall will be conducting the "Crusade." Included in the nightly programs will be puppets, ventriloquism, two ventriloquist dummies (Randy & Charlie), cartoon talks, flannel dramas, evangelistic stories, prizes, contests, a fun-filled week designed especially for the young and the young at heart. Anyone desiring to know more about the "Kids Crusade" is urged to call 473-2371 anytime. Transportation will be provided for all who desire it. This special event is open to the public and everyone is invited and welcome. --Reported

Special Session Tuesday, 21st

The Rains County Commissioners' Court met in special session Tuesday the 21st. The agenda was short and the first thing was to discuss and take action on the services of B. L. Nelson & Assoc., engineers, and the legal services of Ivan Alexander Jr. It was discovered at last week's court session that there were some preliminary work that the county would be liable for until the application of Rains County to the Public Works Act was accepted. B. L. Nelson told the court that his services probably would not exceed \$7,000, and Atty Alexander said he probably would be under the \$1,500 amount. But both stated they could not accurately say what the cost would be. It was voted on and passed by the court limiting them to this amount. All commissioners voted aye. It was voted to accept the cost of a bond for Brenda Gaby for work in the tax office and notary.

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LET'S KEEP OUR ECONOMY GROWING.

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NHTSA.gov/TheRightSeat

Believers’ Baptist Church

By Linda Brendle
Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.
Luke 18:17
Sunday’s sermon from Luke was called “How to Enter the Kingdom of God.” Parents brought their children to Jesus, and He welcomed them. He taught that no one comes into the Kingdom of God under their own merit. If you come with childlike faith, God covers you with the righteousness of Christ. Later, a rich young ruler asked Jesus what he needed to do to inherit eternal life. Jesus said to keep all the commandments, and he replied that he had always done that. Jesus said he needed to sell his earthly goods and follow Him. The man left, sad because he was very rich. Jesus said it was very hard for the rich to enter the Kingdom of God because they love this world. No one can be saved without God. Jesus said anyone who gives up this world will receive spiritual gifts

now and in eternity. The service ended with the Lord’s Supper, thanking God for His spiritual gifts.
Prospective Members Class meets each Sunday in October. This is not a commitment to membership, but will help in your decision.
Christmas Choir rehearsal begins next Sunday immediately following morning worship. It will be a brief rehearsal of listening and information.
October Home Group Fellowship is next week at 5:00 p.m. Watch for information from your host. If you don’t know which group you are in, contact the church office.
Continuing Activities:
• Bibles & Biscuits Men’s Study, Tuesday, 7:00 a.m.
• Women’s Bible Study, Wednesday, 9:30 a.m.
• Ignite, students ages 4 years to fifth grade, Wednesday, 6:00-7:30 p.m.
• Adult Bible Study, Wednesday, 6:00 p.m.

Emory Methodist Church

By Mary White
But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. He told them how Saul on his journey had seen the Lord and that the Lord had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had preached fearlessly in the name of Jesus.
Acts 9:27
The Rev. David Banks continued his series “The Promise to the World” with a message titled “Partners in the Promise,” with scripture text taken from Acts. He spoke about puzzles and what a mystery they can be and that one piece that you just can’t seem to place. On our journey in this life we may not know where the pieces go, but God does. God does not call us to follow Him alone. He gives us gifts we can share with one another, hearts willing to make room for one another and courage to follow wherever He sends us.

We get to go to Emory Health & Rehab again on Thursday, October 1, to fellowship with our friends there. We have such a fun time singing all the old songs and doing uplifting devotionals.
Don’t forget the Methodist Women Spaghetti Luncheon to be held on Friday, October 9, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Tickets can be purchased for \$10.00 but you can also just come to the fellowship hall and pay at the door. Everyone is welcome to come and fellowship with us.
Birthday wishes go to Liam Doherty and Gigi Griffin. Anniversary wishes go to Asa and Brandy Calhoun.
Pray for Andrew, Amanda, Audrey and Alan Goodwin, Jim Oldham, Ann Smith Brown, and Tom Kenchel.
Have a great fall week and just remember to be kind.

Obituaries

Vernon Duane Van Asperen “Andy”
1934 – 2026

Vernon Duane Van Asperen (always known as Andy) 92, died on August 27, 2026, in East Tawakoni. He was born on July 7, 1934, in rural Springfield, South Dakota in Bon Homme County.
Mr. Van Asperen learned how to deal with horses and crops. He joined the Air Force on September 15, 1962, and served for 9 years and 8 months. While in the Air Force, he came to love flying planes, and up to his death bed, he dreamed about flying. He became an air carrier maintenance



inspector and air carrier electronics inspector for GS-9, to GS-11 and GS-12.
He was a law officer in Quinlan and Rains County. He was a disabled veteran. He was married to Bonnie Lee Hurn on January 29, 1966 until her death on May 10, 2005. He knew the Lord Jesus Christ personally. The nurses who came to help him daily were Kimberly Crocker, Amy Landers, Jose Franco, Jenny Cauthon, and Taylor Stewart, all registered nurses.

William “Bill” Reeves Baldwin
1943 – 2026

A Celebration of Life for William “Bill” Reeves Baldwin, 82, of Yantis, will be held on October 2, 2026, at 11:00 a.m., at Wilson-Orwosky Funeral Home Chapel, in Emory.
Mr. Baldwin died on September 21, 2026, in Winnsboro. He was born on October 26, 1943, to Leroy and Clara (Reeves) Baldwin, in Louisville, Kentucky.
Mr. Baldwin graduated from Waggener High School in Louisville, Kentucky, and went on to attend Georgetown College, where he earned a Bachelor of Science in Biology and Plant Science in 1961. He first worked as a butcher at Winn Dixie and continued to excel in the field until he retired as a sales manager. After retirement, he continued working at Burnett Construction.
He served his country as a Staff Sergeant



in the Army Reserves from 1968 to 1973.
His 57-year marriage to Lyn, and his fishing lure business, Bubba Baits, meant the most to him.
Mr. Baldwin is survived by his granddaughter, Kaitlyn Sauza and Zach; brother, Bobby Baldwin; sisters and brothers-in-law, Ron and Lori Fallon, and Kevin and Amy Oreilly; nieces and nephews, Erin Slaby and Bob, Katie Taylor and Janson, Jonathon Slaby, Addison Taylor, Maggie Oreilly and Keegan Oreilly.
He was preceded in death by his wife, Lyn Baldwin; son, Jeremy Baldwin; and his parents.
Please consider making a donation to Enhabit Hospice in Mr. Baldwin’s honor, <https://encompasscares.org/>.

Wayne Garner
1946 – 2026

A celebration of life for Wayne Garner, 80, of Point, will be held on Saturday, October 24, at 11:00 a.m., at Point Church of Christ.
Mr. Garner died on September 23, 2026, at home surrounded by his family. He was born on July 4, 1946, in Frederick, Oklahoma, to James Calvin Garner and Ester



Swaim Garner.
He is survived by his loving wife, Stephanie Garner; son, Christopher Wayne Garner (Courtney); grandchildren, Ethan, Aryanne, Raylee and Collin.
He was preceded in death by his parents; and his sister, Louise Smith.

Carolyn Renee Reyna
1965 – 2026

Carolyn Renee Reyna, 60, of Emory, died on September 27, 2026. She was born on October 11, 1965, in Los Angeles, California, to Bill and Arline McBride.
She was a graduate of Apache High School in Oklahoma, Class of 1984. She was the owner of Road Angel Pilot, an over-the-road escort service for oversized loads, and her work gave her the opportunity to travel all over America for 20 years.
She found joy in restoring old furniture, traveling, and simply going places. She had a lively spirit and a way of making everyday moments brighter. She kept the family laughing, and that gift of humor will remain one of the many treasured memories she leaves behind. Her family was her proudest



accomplishment. She especially cherished her grandkids and looked forward to retiring so she could spend more time with them.
Mrs. Reyna is survived by her children, Cody Watts (Danielle Lesperance), Tiffany Peals (Terry), Kara Watts (Phillip Herrington), Mikaela Watts, Nicholas Reyna (Sissy), and Cecelia Reyna; grandchildren, Aliza Peals, Terrence Peals Jr., Leela Peals, Trip Herrington, and Jessie Reyna; siblings, Diana Hohman (Lonnice) and Robert McBride (Debbie); and numerous nieces and nephews.
She was preceded in death by her husband, John Reyna; parents; sister, Roxanna Davis; and nephew, Douglas Davis.

A Living Stone and a Holy People

So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation— if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.
As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in Scripture:
“Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone,
a cornerstone chosen and precious,
and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”
1 Peter 2:1-6 (ESV)



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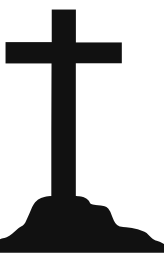
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Church Directory

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We invite you to study God’s word with us soon.
CHURCH OF CHRIST
Hwy. 69 N. • P.O. Box 68
Emory, TX 75440
903-473-2658
Sunday Bible Classes 9:00 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship 10:00 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship 6:00 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study 7:00 p.m.
emorychurchofchrist.org

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Point, TX
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11:00 a.m. ... Morning Worship
6:00 p.m. Evening Worship
6:00 p.m. .. Wednesday Service
Pastor Dan Wynn
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Chris Henderson Minister of Music & Senior Adults
Ronnie Witt Minister of Youth & Education
Sunday
Sunday Morning
Small Groups 9:15am
Morning Worship 10:30am
Evening Worship 6:30 pm
Wednesday
Wednesday Worship (Adults, Youth, Children) 6:30pm

Believers' Baptist Church
Sunday
Sunday School 9:15 a.m.
MorningWorship 10:30 a.m.
Wednesday
Adult Bible Study 6:00 p.m.
Student Ministry 6:00 p.m.
Dr. Jason Rolan – Pastor
Jerod Haygood – Student & Family Pastor
Duffey Henderson – Music & Media Minister
www.bbcmemory.org 903-474-0027
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Saturday Night Prayer 6pm
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903-500-7273
clarkschapelcogemorytx

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FOR SALE

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

HOOTEN'S HARDWARE, LLC Browse our wide selection of RV Parts and Accessories. Hwy. 69N in Emory. 903-473-8788.

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STORAGE UNITS

Emory Self Storage, Hwy. 69S, 410 E. Lennon. Now offering climate-controlled units. 903-474-9150, 903-348-5459.

SERVICES

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MCKENZIE LAKE WORKS. Building boathouses and docks since 2001. Steel/metal bldgs. & home remodeling. www.mckenzielakeworks.com. 903-269-6173.

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

DODSON AND SONS Painting, drywall, carpentry and more. 903-259-8541. For plumbing needs call Scott Trieb 903-474-4129.

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

LAWN/LANDSCAPE/MOWING

SMITH'S LAWN CARE Landscaping, fencing, hedge trimming, weekly/biweekly rates. 903-521-8506, free estimates.

HOOTEN'S LAWN & TREE SERVICE, LLC Tim Hooten Lawn maintenance, sodding, landscaping, tree trimming & removal, retaining walls, irrigation systems. LI0019094. 903-473-8706, 903-474-4402.

TREE SERVICES

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



TREE SERVICES

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

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PUBLIC/LEGAL NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE NOTICE TO ALL PERSONS BUYING PROPERTY IN THE VICINITY OF THE CITY OF POINT WATER SYSTEM City of Point Water urges all prospective land buyers to verify with the water operator or city secretary at City of Point at our office located at 320 N Locust Street Point, TX 75472 or by calling 903-598-3296 ext. 220 whether or not water service is available to the property in question.

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

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING The Emory 4B Emory Development Corporation (EDC) will conduct a public hearing to receive comments for the following proposed project and expenditure of funds: • The EDC will receive comments for proposed project incentives and the expenditure of funds for Emory Veterinary Clinic project, to promote new or existing business development. Proposed project incentives and the expenditure of funds may be used for building improvements interior and exterior, and other expenses related to the same. Total of all project incentives and the expenditure of funds not to exceed (\$6,000.00). The EDC will hold the public hearing in which all interested persons shall have the right to be heard regarding such proposed project incentives and expenditure of funds. The public hearing will be held at the City of Emory/EDC Conference Room, 329 N. Texas St., Emory, Texas, 75440 on Wednesday, October 7, 2026, at 11:30 a.m. Jessie Hicks, Executive Administrator, Emory Development Corporation

NOTICE TO CREDITORS Notice is hereby given that Letters Testamentary for the Estate of Sharrel Garner Norris, Deceased, were issued on September 23, 2026, in cause number 3419 pending in the County Court of Rains County, Texas to Douglas L. Rash, Jr., Independent Executor. Claims may be presented in care of the Estate, addressed as follows: Douglas L. Rash, c/o Downing Law Firm, 1176 W. Pioneer Parkway, Arlington, Texas 76013. All persons having claims against the Estate, which is currently being administered, are required to present them within the time and in the manner prescribed by law. Downing Law Firm 1176 W. Pioneer Parkway Arlington, Texas 76013 jack@downinglaw.net

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Sports

RAINS WILDCAT FOOTBALL

Wildcats celebrate Homecoming with district-opening win



Leader photo by CHUCK FITTS

Wildcat Devin Hamilton (16) tries to dislodge himself from the grip of the Bulldog on a run to the outside during the 57-29 Homecoming victory on Friday night, September 25.

By CHUCK FITTS
Rains County Leader staff

The Rains Wildcat varsity football team opened district play with a convincing Homecoming victory over the Eustace Bulldogs, 57-29, at Wildcat Stadium on Friday night, September 25.

The Wildcats and Bulldogs went back and forth on the scoreboard until a turnover in the second quarter allowed Rains to pull away for the lopsided victory in front of the Homecoming crowd.

Rains did most of its damage on the ground as the offense amassed 359 rushing yards while still gaining 178 yards through the air. The defense gave up a few big plays, but held Eustace to 296 total yards.

Senior Jabari Shields ran for 203 yards on nine carries while scoring four touch-

downs. Junior quarterback Major Wallace ran the ball four times for 68 yards.

In the passing game, Wallace completed 10 of 15 passes for 178 yards and four touchdowns. He was sacked once for eight yards.

Sophomore Cash Dale was his favorite target with five catches for 111 yards and two touchdowns, and junior Adam Colson caught two passes for 47 yards and a touchdown. Senior Samuel Haney caught a 10-yard touchdown pass during the game.

As for the Wildcat defense, it was a team effort as junior Eliazar Centeno, sophomore Derek Toliver and sophomore Chris Montano had six tackles each. Junior Triston Hurley and sophomore Cooper Combs made five tackles each for the team.

Eustace received the

opening kickoff and after one first down, they were forced to punt.

The Rains offense went to work on the ground as they had five double-digit runs to get inside the 10-yard line.

Shields would be denied on the first attempt, but punched it in on the second for a two-yard touchdown. The extra point kick was blocked. Rains 6, Eustace 0.

The Bulldogs decided to go toe-to-toe with the Wildcats as they proceeded to run the ball nine straight times to get in the red zone. They finished the drive with a 12-yard touchdown run. Rains 6, Eustace 7.

The Rains offense showed the many ways they could compete as they started with runs of six and 22 yards before Wallace completed an 11-yard pass and a 23-yard touchdown pass to Colson. Wallace ran the extra point



Leader photo by CHUCK FITTS

With his eyes on a scoop-and-score, Wildcat Zachary Drummond (3) runs for the end zone during the 57-29 district-opening win over Eustace on September 25 at Wildcat Stadium.

attempt into the end zone. Rains 14, Eustace 7.

The Wildcat defense held Eustace to a three-and-out, while Rains needed four plays for Wallace to connect with Dale on a 20-yard touchdown pass. Rains 21, Eustace 7.

The Bulldogs got a lucky bounce on their third play from scrimmage after the ball was stripped from one ball carrier only to land in the hands of the other ball carrier. He raced 42 yards for a touchdown. Rains 21, Eustace 14.

Rains started with a big run that was called back. They completed a big pass play that was called back. The drive stalled and ended in a punt.

Eustace was held to another three-and-out.

On the first play, Shields found a hole in the Bulldog defense and raced 67 yards for a touchdown. Rains 28, Eustace 14.

The Homecoming magic continued on the first play of the Bulldog drive. The ball was stripped from the ball carrier again, but this time it landed in the arms of junior Zachary Drummond. He ran the ball to the six-yard line before being brought down.

A dead-ball penalty after the play moved back the Wildcat offense, but Wallace gained 16 yards on the first play and then handed it to Shields for a five-yard touchdown run. Rains 35, Eustace 14.

The Bulldogs gained 26 yards in 10 plays and punted, while the Wildcats had two incompletions and a sack to end the first half.

Rains started the second half with all the momentum when Shields took the first handoff and raced for a 61-yard touchdown. Rains 42, Eustace 14.

Eustace managed to put together a seven-play drive that ended with a 20-yard touchdown pass. Rains 42, Eustace 21.

After a three-yard setback on the first play, Wallace connected with Colson for 24 yards, ran for 28 yards and threw a 10-yard touchdown pass to Haney.

The extra-point try got complicated as two penalties backed the Wildcats up, but Wallace ran the 13 yards to complete the conversion. Rains 50, Eustace 21.

The Bulldogs went back to the ground game as they moved the ball 41 yards in 10 plays. An incomplete pass on

fourth down turned the ball over to the Wildcats.

The air attack continued with a 30-yard completion and a 35-yard touchdown pass to Dale to finish scoring for Rains. Rains 57, Eustace 21.

The Rains defense held Eustace to six yards and forced a punt. Unfortunately, the first play saw a fumble by the Wildcat ball carrier that was returned 30 yards for a touchdown. Rains 57, Eustace 29.

Rains started an 11-play, 45-yard drive to finish off the game. On fourth down, they attempted a field goal, but it landed short.

The ball was picked up by a Bulldog and he attempted to return the kick. The ball was knocked from his hands and recovered by the Wildcats.

With the ball and a new set of downs, they ran out the clock. Rains 57, Eustace 29.

The Rains Wildcats improved to 2-3 for the season and 1-0 in District 7-3A-1 play.

They will travel to Malakoff on Friday night, October 2, to take on the Tigers with kickoff scheduled for 7:30 p.m.

RAINS LADY CAT VOLLEYBALL

Lady Cats continue to roll at home

By CHUCK FITTS
Rains County Leader staff

The Rains Lady Cat varsity volleyball team scored a straight-set victory and 3-1 win as they wrapped up the first half of District 14-3A play with back-to-back home matches.

The Lady Cats continued their long home stand when they hosted the Lady Patriots on Friday, September 25. They dominated the match for a straight-set victory over Prairiland, 3-0 (25-13, 25-22 and 25-18).

On Tuesday, September 29, Rains wrapped up the first half of district play with a 3-1 victory over the Commerce Lady Tigers.

The Rains Lady Cats improve to 5-1 in District 14-3A and 16-14 for the season.

They will have Friday, October 2, off before starting the second half of district play when they host the Chisum Lady Mustangs on Tuesday, October 6.

The team will continue district play against Mt. Vernon and Lone Oak at home on October 9 and 13.



Leader photo by CHUCK FITTS

Lady Cat Arianna Philson (10) bumps the ball back to the Tigers during the 3-1 win over Commerce on September 29.

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