Rains County Leader

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Vol. 140, Issue 21 – 1 Section, 10 pages EMORY, TEXAS – THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2026 **PRICE 75¢**

GENERAL ELECTION

Early voting ends Friday, General Election Day Tuesday

By CHUCK FITTS
Rains County Leader staff

Early voting in Rains County for the November 3 General Election continues until Friday, October 30 at the Rains County Courthouse Annex.

As of Tuesday, October 27, 2,660 registered voters in the county have cast a ballot early. The official number of registered voters in Rains County is 9,772 putting the turnout so far at 27.22 percent.

Early voting totals as of the Tuesday before election day in 2024 were 4,129 while the 2022 election total had 2,543 voters cast a ballot seven days out. The turnout of 9,404 registered voters in 2024 and 8,775 registered voters in 2022 was 43.91 percent and 28.98 percent, respectively.

Early voting continues in the election office at 220 W. Quitman St. in Emory. Polls will be open for voting from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m each weekday through Friday, October 30.

The national election will be held on Tuesday, November 3, from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Locally, Rains County residents look to choose their U.S. Congressional Candidate for District 32 between Republican Jace Yarbrough or Democrat Dan Barrios. In the election for state house, the race has incumbent Republican Cole Hefner facing challenger Democrat Hector Garza.

Uncontested races in the county include Rains County Judge Brent Hilliard, Rains County Clerk Mandy Sawyer, Rains County Treasurer Maria Cook, Rains County Tax Assessor-Collector Nicole York, Rains County Justice of the Peace Tony Ingram and Rains County Commissioners Jim Jones and Lori Northcutt.

Rains County residents in the Miller Grove ISD will vote for three seats on the school board with Bret Garrett, Ray Sparks, Dusty Davis and Brandon Darrow vying for the positions.

Additional candidate information can be found on page four.

On Tuesday, November 3, eight polling locations throughout Rains County will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m for registered voters to cast a ballot in the general election.

see **ELECTION** *on page 2*

First Responder's Banquet Held



Leader Photo by CHUCK FITTS

Emory Volunteer Fire Chief Darren Renshaw presents a Molsect knife set to the Rains County Firefighter of the Year, Kelly Robbins, during the annual First Responders Banquet held at The Chapel on Thursday, October 22. The event was organized by the Rabb Brothers Memorial American Legion Post 156 to recognize the first responders in Rains County for their dedication and service.

RAINS COUNTY

Commissioners re-appoint temporary JP

By CHUCK FITTS
Rains County Leader staff

The Rains County Commissioners Court discussed the lease of a tractor with a boom mower, appointed a temporary Justice of the Peace and approved the installation of automatic doors at the library and courthouse annex during the regular meeting on Thursday, October 22.

During the meeting, the lease agreement for a John Deere 6M 105 cab tractor with a boom mower was brought back before the court. The agreement approved during the October 8 meeting listed a 2024 tractor and the county had agreed to a 2025 model.

Commissioners took the opportunity to continue discussion of a lease agreement for the tractor with a boom mower. The equipment would replace a tractor and boom mower that is 25 years old, but the department still has a

see **COURT** *on page 2*

POINT

Point City Council discusses proposed rate changes

By CHUCK FITTS
Rains County Leader staff

The City of Point held a regular meeting on Thursday, October 22, to read over proposed rate changes for city services.

Mayor Angela Nelson read a proposed ordinance that would adjust the city's service to the community. The rates had not been adjusted since 2020 even though the city has experienced a consistent increase in wholesale water price, cost to process the water and fees for trash service.

Proposed changes to the water rate would see the minimum rate of up to 2,000 gallons for residences in the city moved from $47 to $53 per month. Water customers outside the city limits would have a base rate of $58 for 2,000 gallons.

After the initial 2,000 gallons, the rate is proposed to be $10.40 per thousand gallons up to 5,000 gallons. At that point, the cost would be $10.80 per thousand gallons.

The city has seen the wholesale water rate from the Sabine River Authority increase from $0.145 per thousand gallons in 2020 to $0.185 per thousand gallons in 2026 without adjusting the

see **POINT** *on page 4*

EAST TAWAKONI

City eligible for $5.4M to upgrade water system

By CHUCK FITTS
Rains County Leader staff

The city council for East Tawakoni was informed that the city's water system grant application was eligible for $5.4 million in principal forgiveness from the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB). During the regular meeting on Tuesday, October 20, a representative from U.S. Capital Advisors appeared before the council to inform them that the grant application to upgrade the city's water system had been determined to be eligible for funding by the TWDB through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021.

The city would be eligible for $3,970,098 for being a disadvantaged community and $1,500,000 for being a small and rural disadvantaged community. They would have to pay an origination fee of $210,000.

Council members were informed that the application moved to technical review by the TWBD staff and that the amounts in the applications could change. No action was needed on the item at this time.

The council unanimously approved a building permit to construct an attached carport at 256 Tawakoni Trail.

see **ET** *on page 4*

EMORY

Karen Young, Country Flowers Celebrate 40 Years

By JENNIFER HILL
Rains County Leader staff

Country Flowers & Gifts is one of the oldest retail establishments in Emory, and owner Karen Young is happy to be celebrating 40 years of business next month.

When Young was 17 years old (in 1978), she and her best friend had just graduated high school. They had a garage sale and used the money raised to move out and get an apartment. Young did not have a job at the time. Her friend's mother worked for NETO and called Young one day and said, "The flower shop's hiring, Get your [self] down there and get a job." Obediently, Young did just that. "I walked into Sulphur Springs Floral, and they hired me. On the spot," she said.

Young was attending East Texas State University (Texas A&M-Commerce) at the time and studying to become a teacher. But the struggles of working full time and going to school full time were a bit much, and she believed God had different plans for her than she had for herself, so she dropped college.

She married Kenny Young in 1980. In July 1982, she gave birth to her first child, Kristen, then went back to work. Her second-born, Korey, came along in February 1986. At that point, she decided to try staying at home and babysitting for other people. When Homecoming rolled around that fall, she decided to make and sell homecoming mums from her home, while still caring for children. That turned out to be wildly successful.

Shortly thereafter, with her mother as a business partner, she opened Country Flowers & Gifts in the small shopping center that sits in front of the Rose Community Center. She chose the name because country decor was very popular at the time, and C would come before G in the phone book. (The competing florist in town was Gerry's.) They opened their doors on November 7, 1986.

Young said the partnership with her mother did not last long, "because

see **SPOTLIGHT** *on page 3*



Karen Young

City Girl: *The Economics of Unrealistic...* Page 3

Jody Dyer: *The Santa Claus of Halloween* page 3

TRR: *Your Vote, Your Texas...* page 4

Rain Report

No rain recorded this week.

Total for Oct. . . . . 3.39 in.
Year to date . . . . . 28.88 in.

Community outreach & organizations

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

RAINS COUNTY REPUBLICANS – July 31 & Oct. 30, 6:30 p.m., House of Prayer, 1382 FM 515

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

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

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

GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Sam Fitzgerald - Before 1900
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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.

Angel Tree Applications open now

The 2026 Angel Tree applications are open and are only available online. Flyers with the link to apply available at each RISD campus and on the Rains County Angel Tree Facebook page. Children must live in Rains County and be 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*.

Toys For Tots Donation Boxes Available

Northeast Texas Toys For Tots now has 2026 donation boxes available. If your business or organization would like to host an official Toys For Tots donation box, apply today at *HuntCountytx.ToysForTots.org*.

Spooktacular Oct. 30

The City of Emory's annual Spooktacular event will be held on Friday, Oct. 30, at 5:30 p.m. in Sandy Creek Park. This is a free event with popcorn, candy, hayrides, and costume contests. Free 10x10 booth spaces are available for local businesses and organizations to set up to pass out candy or trinkets and participate in a decorating contest.

4th Annual Westyn's Run 5K Oct. 31

The 4th Annual Westyn's Run 5K – this year in Halloween Style, put on by the Westyn Mandrell Foundation, will be held on the square in Emory this Saturday, October 31, starting at 8:00 a.m. The event will feature vendor booths, food, costume contests and family fun. Check-in and vendor setup begin at 7:00 a.m. There will be a 5K run, a one-mile Fun Run, and new this year will be a Little Steps quarter-mile race for the wee little ones, with fun areas set up along their path.

Veterans Day Program Nov. 11

Rains ISD and Lake Country Neighbors will host the annual Veterans Day Program, Wednesday, Nov. 11, at Rains High School to honor all who served in a branch of the military. Registration will begin at 8:15 a.m. and the program begins at 9:00 a.m. A brunch for the Veterans will be served immediately following the program. RSVP by Nov. 1 to *lcnveterans@yahoo.com*. For questions, contact Pam Gilliard at 903-473-2222, ext. 4112.

LCN Fall into Fashion, Nov. 17

The Lake Country Neighbors will host a Fall into Fashion event Nov. 17, 11:30 a.m., at The Wildflower. The event will include a live fashion show, exclusive shopping with local boutiques and jewelry artisans, and lunch by Fusion in the Woods. Tickets are $30 each. Tables for eight are $250. Contact Denita Young to purchase tickets at *lakecountryneighbors@gmail.com*. The deadline to purchase is Monday, Oct. 26.

Thanksgiving Luncheon Nov. 17

The Women's Service Club will serve a Thanksgiving Luncheon at the Emory Senior Center on Tuesday, November 17, at 11:00 a.m. A total of 75 meals will be served, with the seniors receiving first priority. Any remaining meals will be served to community members on a first-come, first-served basis. There is no charge for the meal. Donations will be gratefully accepted.

Blood Drive in Yantis Nov. 23

The Carter BloodCare Bus will be set up at City National Bank in Yantis on Monday, November 23, from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. To sign up, visit *https//www.greatpartners.org/donor/schedules/drive_schedule/177150.*

RYSA Stew Cook-off Dec. 5

The Rains Youth Sports Association will host their First Annual Stew Cook-off competition on Saturday, December 5, at the RYSA park in Emory. Categories include beef entry, chicken entry, cornbread and cobbler. Entry deadline is Monday, November 30. Forms may be submitted at Sidekicks Bar & Grill, Your Favorite Place Sports Bar, or Country Flowers & Gifts. Gates will open to the public at 11:00 a.m. Tickets may be purchased for $10 each, which will get you a bowl and utensils and allows all you can eat.

Tai Chi Class Wednesdays in Nov & Dec.

The AgriLife Extension is offering a Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention class to Rains County residents. The 1-hour class will be held every Wednesday at 10:00 a.m. in November and December at the Rains County Fairgrounds Pavilion (they will move inside when the weather turns too cold). If you are interested in joining, please call 903-473-4580 or email *sarah.latham@ag.tamu.edu* to reserve your spot.

Advertising Works 903-473-2653

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

THE PUBLIC FORUM

Response to Savvy Senior – Lonely Seniors

Dear Editor

We do have a Senior Citizen Center in Emory, open Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., at 179 Doris Briggs Parkway. [Next to the library.] They serve lunch five (5) days a week, Monday through Friday except holidays, 11:00 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. It also provides a place for socializing and playing games. Some people play dominoes (Mexican Train) and others play Scrabble. Chinese checkers, Yahtzee, Uno, Trivial Pursuit and others are also available. They have bingo on Monday and Thursday mornings, no charge. Various prizes are awarded to winners.

For those who need transportation, East Texas Council of Governments (ETCOG) provides a GoBus on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Call (903)215-8870 to make reservations. You must call at least 24 hours ahead and may call up to two (2) weeks ahead. I recommend calling 2 weeks ahead at 6:30 a.m. If you wait any later it is apt to already be booked up. That has been my experience. The GoBus is handicap-equipped, so anyone can ride it.

More drivers are needed for the GoBus. Anyone who is interested in driving a GoBus can call the above number for more information. Training will be provided.

Virginia Northcutt,
Senior Citizen
Emory, Tx 75440

ELECTION

Continued from page 1

Rains County residents can cast a ballot at one of the eight voting precincts throughout the county including:

Voting precinct 101 in the Rocky Point Community Center at 2134 South Hwy 19.

Voting precinct 102 in the East Tawakoni Community Center at 288 Briggs Blvd in East Tawakoni.

Voting precinct 203 in the Bright Star Baptist Church Community Center at 1399 RS CR 3480.

Voting precinct 204 in the Rose Community Center at 109 Ravine in Emory.

Voting precinct 305 in the Della Blanton Memorial Hall at 200 RS CR 4370.

Voting precinct 306 in the Emory VFD Fire Station at 1205 W. Lennon St. in Emory.

Voting precinct 407 and 408 in the fellowship hall for the First Baptist Church of Point at 985 Industrial Blvd in Point.

For more information about the general election, contact the Texas Secretary of State's office at 1-800-252-8683 or visit the website, *www.votetexas.gov*.

For information about local elections, contact the Election Administrator at 903-473-5009 or visit *www.co.rains.tx.us/page/rains.Elections*.

COURT

Continued from page 1

boom mower that was purchased three years ago.

A motion was made and approved on a 4-1 vote to proceed with a corrected agreement to lease the 2025 John Deere tractor with the boom mower. Commissioner Jeremy Cook voted against the motion as he wanted the department to see how much they could do with the current mower before getting the second tractor.

The court considered compensation for James Hershell Barnett to be the temporary Justice of the Peace for Rains County after the suspension of Justice of the Peace Jenkins Franklin. They unanimously approved a motion for Barnett to receive the same salary that Franklin had, with reimbursement for mileage.

Commissioners reviewed and unanimously approved a cost of $18,066 from matching grant funds to install automatic doors at the Rains County Library and the Rains County Courthouse Annex.

The court approved the transfer of money from the Rains County Tourism fund to the Women's Service Club for the lighting of the courthouse. Representatives from the board stated that they expected the courthouse lights to be installed before November 21.

Commissioners unanimously approved a Jury Selection Plan, a Preservation Plan and a Records Management Plan for the District Clerk's office. They accepted the resignations of two members of the Rains County Tourism board and authorized commissioners and officers with the Rains County Sheriff's office to attend a rabies training in Tyler in February of next year.

All commissioners were present for the regular meeting.

The next regular meeting of the Rains County Commissioners Court is scheduled for Thursday, November 12, at 10:00 a.m. in the courtroom of the Rains County Courthouse.

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ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
ALL NOVEMBER LONG
EXTENDED HOLIDAY HOURS
TO FIND THAT UNIQUE HOLIDAY GIFT
BLUE HERON EMPORIUM
A CONSIGNMENT STORE
2007 Hwy. 276 • East Tawakoni, TX
HOURS
WED & THU 1PM-7PM
FRI & SAT 10AM-5PM
SUN 1PM-5PM
LIMITED VENDOR SPACE AVAILABLE

CITY GIRL

The Economics of Unrealistic Expectations

By Linda Brendle



LINDA BRENDLE
Leader correspondent

When David and I first married, we attended a "Nearly and Newlyweds" class at our church. One of the first lessons was about what is the most common cause of trouble in a marriage – unrealistic expectations. It makes sense if you stop and think about it. We grow up on a steady diet of happily-ever-after books, TV shows, and movies and then are disappointed when our prince is less than charming and our princess is not so beautiful when she wakes up in the morning.

We hear a lot of this same disappointment from young people who are coming of age now when they talk about their prospects in life. They frequently complain that they feel like they will never get a good job and will never be able to afford a house, and the often unspoken phrase is "like my parents have." The thought that comes through, in attitude if not in words, is "I know what I want, and I want it NOW!" Those of us who have "been there and done that" have displayed the results of our labors while failing to teach the process required to get where we are today. The consequence of our failure is younger generations with unrealistic expectations of what real life is like.

Becoming an adult doesn't mean that a person immediately steps from the comfortable life they experienced with their parents into an equally comfortable life of their own. It means that they now have the opportunity to use the life skills and education provided to them by their parents to begin – at the beginning – to build a life of their own. And that building process can be quite a shock if they're not prepared to face the real facts of life.

One area of disillusionment is in the working world. They have been told that a degree will ensure a good job which, tinged by their unrealistic expectations, they think means six figures or more, a corner office, and a golden parachute. I know it was half a century ago, and I only had one year of college on my resume, but my first job was as a page in the Filing Section of the Commercial Credit Department of the First National Bank in Dallas. I filed documents, made copies, and delivered interoffice memos between my department and the others in the nine-floor bank – and I made $220 a month.

Other disappointing areas are housing, entertainment and transportation. Many young people want to move from their parents' home into something comparable, but they experience substantial sticker shock when they go shopping for their first house. I married young, and our first home was a one-bedroom furnished apartment in a reasonably respectable area of Dallas – if you didn't look too closely. The apartment was very basic, the TV was a tiny black and white portable with "rabbit-ears", and rotary-dial land-line phone that sat on the bar between the kitchen and the living room. Our first car was a VW bug with stick shift and no air-conditioning – and I rode the bus to work. We eventually bought a small townhome, became a two-car, one-child, two-cat family. We lived well but not extravagantly, shopping sales, using coupons, and taking advantage of matinee movies. What we didn't do was have $5 coffees several times a week, wear designer jeans, or frequent pricey restaurants.

There's nothing wrong with young people knowing what they want. The problem comes when they have unrealistic expectations of the when and the how of their dreams. They can have that nice home, those nice cars, the exciting trips – as long as they're willing to work hard, start small, set priorities, save up, and wait.

I bring all this up because of all the talk shows and YouTube videos that are so prevalent on the airways during the elections. I am amazed at the young people who have totally unrealistic expectations of what life should be like. Last night one young lady said that government should provide free food, free housing, free education, and free health care to name a few. And, by the way, she never said anything about having a job.

When asked where the government with a national debt $40.54 trillion that increases at an average pace of $22 billion each day would get that money, her answer was "tax the rich." Elon Musk is the world's first and only trillionaire, and the population of the United States is approximately 342.9 million. Based on his current net worth and the current population, he could give every person approximately $2,812. That's $7.69 a day, and he could only do it once because he would be bankrupt. His companies directly employ approximately 160,000 people globally, with an estimated 500,000 to nearly 800,000 indirect jobs supported through supply chains, subcontractors, and related industries. That's almost a million people who would be out of a job.

But there are other rich people you say? Yes. There are around 989 billionaires in the U.S. Altogether, they could give each person in America $47,000. That sounds pretty good until you figure it's about $3,900 a month. That doesn't go very far when you have a mortgage, a car loan, college loans, cell phones, computers, TVs, children, and all the other expenses of modern life. And it could only happen once – and then it would be gone.

This column will be published just before early voting ends, before the mid-term election on November 3. It may be too late to have much effect this year, but if it makes one person stop and think seriously about some of the unrealistic expectations offered by some candidates, it will have accomplished its purpose. And for those who have already voted, maybe these thoughts have "put a pebble in your shoe" that will make you be a little more skeptical in a couple of years when all those campaign ads begin to flood the airways again.

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 Santa Claus of Halloween

"Tis now the very witching time of night, when churchyards yawn and hell itself breathes out contagion to this world."

William Shakespeare (Hamlet / Act 3 / Scene 2)



JODY DYER
Typewriter Weekly

Many years ago, traveling the country on a baseball adventure with my buddy Chris, I had reason to prowl through the haunted woods of upstate New York. We were navigating our way to Cooperstown to visit the Baseball Hall of Fame. Passing through the scenic countryside we would sometimes see old cemeteries. While Chris was less than enthusiastic about visiting the dead, I always had to stop and walk among the graves.

Visiting old cemeteries makes me feel like I'm stepping back in time. These sacred spots where we bury our dead are like living history books. Strolling among the graves, every passing tombstone reads like a page from the past. In this part of the country, many of these old graves hold the bones of Revolutionary War veterans.

In a Halloween mood this week, I found myself reading again one of my favorite October stories – *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, by Washington Irving. I was reminded of those few days spent prowling among the weathered cemeteries in New York's rural countryside. One of the Revolutionary War soldiers buried there was the Headless Horseman in Irving's tale. The Headless Horseman was a real guy, and Washington Irving immortalized him in story.

Washing Irving (1783-1859) was an American writer, historian and diplomat of the early 19th century. He is most famous for writing the short stories *Rip Van Winkle* and *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, published in his 1820 collection *The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon* (Crayon was a pseudonym used by Irving).

Sometimes called America's first ghost story, *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* is set in the year 1790. It takes place in a secluded hollow in the Hudson River Valley near Tarrytown. The protagonist in our tale is the local schoolmaster, the scarecrow-like Ichabod Crane. Irving describes him as: "…tall, but exceedingly lank, with narrow shoulders, long arms and legs, with hands that dangled a mile out of his sleeves, feet that might have served for shovels, and his whole frame most loosely hung together. His head was small, and flat at top, with huge ears, large green glassy eyes, and a long snipe nose, so that it looked like a weather-cock perched upon his spindle neck to tell which way the wind blew."

In the story Ichabod courts the wealthy farmer's daughter, lovely Katrina Van Tassel, competing with the local town ruffian Brom Bones for her affection. On his ride home after a party and "quilting frolic" at the Van Tassel farm, Ichabod is chased, knocked from his horse, and almost killed. The culprit is apparently the horrible and terrifying phantom Headless Horseman, the ghost of a Hessian soldier who lost his head to a cannonball in battle during the Revolutionary War.

Hessian soldiers were German troops hired by Great Britain to fight alongside the British against the American forces during the Revolutionary War. The Hessians were highly trained professional soldiers seen as bloodthirsty mercenaries by the Americans. And they were scary.

It is interesting to note that Irving was fond of using real-life people and places for inspiration in his stories. He lived in the village of Sleepy Hollow. It was a real place. Sleepy Hollow was part of Tarrytown, later renamed North Tarrytown, until 1996 when it reclaimed the name Sleepy Hollow. The Old North Church and graveyard, where the Headless Horseman was said to tether his horse every night, still exists today. In the story, it is believed that Ichabod Crane is named after a military officer named Colonel Ichabod B. Crane. The personality and mannerisms of Ichabod were modeled after Jesse Merwin, a local schoolmaster that Irving knew. The Van Tassels were a prominent Dutch farm family living in the Hudson Valley. The formidable Brom Bones was inspired by a local village blacksmith named Abraham Martling. And the character of the Headless Horseman was based on a real-life Hessian soldier, name unknown, who did apparently lose his head in combat at the Battle of White Plains.

The Battle of White Plains took place over several days in late October of 1776. George Washington's troops were engaged with British and Hessian forces under the command of General Wm. Howe near White Plains, New York. After the initial battle on Halloween eve, as the opposing armies continued to clash, Lieutenant Ephraim Fenno assumed command of a lone hilltop artillery battery. In an attempt to stop an advancing line of Hessian troops, Lieutenant Fenno fired a single cannonball, decapitating one of the Hessian soldiers and ending the assault. So began the legend of the Headless Horseman. His ghost is reported to ride each night in search of his head. Today a small marker stands at the spot where the Hessian lost his head, near the town of Sleepy Hollow.

I like the way words live on, penned by persons in years past and preserved on paper for the living to discover. Words and the stories they tell are a blessing for those who like to read and think. If you find yourself in a Halloween mood this week, consider reading *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*. It's a good story. And remember the Headless Horseman. We don't know his name, but he was a real person. More than just a cartoon corpse used to sell beer and candy each October, he has become part of our American folklore. He has become the Santa Claus of Halloween…

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

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SPOTLIGHT

Continued from page 1

she's...not a florist," and Betty Potts soon bought out her mom's share. They were partners for many years.

About a year-and-a-half in, they found out Gerry, located on the square, was wanting to sell. They were able to take over the lease of that space and made the move. When the space next to them became available, the landlord, Lawrence Terry, asked if they wanted to knock out some walls and expand. They did.

Being on the square and only one or two doors down from the *Leader* office, she recalls the then-publisher and editor, Kathleen Hill Becknell. "I used to be terrified of Kat," she said. "She'd come in and she wanted things the way she wanted them. And you NEVER abbreviated county. She would get fighting mad if you put Rains Co Leader. I still to this day won't abbreviate it...for anything."

Young's third and final child, Klay, came along in August 1991. She said it takes a village. Vickie Cason and her daughter, Kim, helped watch the kids early on. After Klay was born, Maye Shedd began watching him at 3 weeks of age. Young said Maye and husband, Jimmy, became another set of grandparents and watched him until he started school.

After about 20 years on the square, Kenny and Karen purchased Chris' Cafe on Highway 19 N. It included the land next door where the flower shop sits today. Young's dad supervised the build and pretty much handled the contracting. The location was especially ideal, being located right next to the funeral home.

These days, Young also rents out vendor space for a venture she calls Picken Petals Vintage & Antiques. She has roughly 13 booths inside the flower shop. Some crafty items are included, but it is mostly for vintage and antique items.

She is extremely grateful for all of her customers and for friends in the community who have stepped up over the years to help during busy times and in tragedy. She spoke about a specific tragedy that came to mind during an already busy time and was practically speechless with gratitude.

"My 40th anniversary...I really want...it's about God, not about me. Because I couldn't do this without God," she said. "You can't stay in business 40 years without customers," she continues. "...how much I appreciate the customers that have trusted me over 40 years through all of their life events."

Young loves working with and helping customers through the death of a loved one and ministering through flowers. She truly feels the shop is a ministry and opportunity to love on people. She has loved every minute of being a florist, but after a few decades, it takes its toll on the body. Young would actually like to sell the flower shop, and hopes someone community-minded will come along to buy it. She would not mind a second, part-time career – or retirement job, if you will – working for the funeral home, where she can continue to love on and minister to individuals and families experiencing loss.

Young will be celebrating the milestone anniversary the whole month of November, giving away 40 free gifts per week, and a grand prize at the end of the month of a year of flowers. The winner will receive one flower arrangement of seasonal flowers of the florist's choosing every month for 12 months.

Everyone is invited to attend a Customer Appreciation Day, Open House, and Parking Lot Sale on Saturday, November 7, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. There will be snacks and special sales. Picken Petals vendors will be participating in the parking lot sale, as well.

The flower shop, affectionately known to locals as Karen's, is located at 883 N. Texas St. in Emory. Stop by and see what is new, and check out their facebook page for challenges related to her month-long giveaways.

Know of any interesting Rains County tales? Interesting people or events? How about anyone over 100?

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Daylight Savings Time, which began on March 8 this year, will end at 2 a.m. on November 1.

Don't forget to set all your clocks back one hour, especially the alarm that wakes you for work or school!

TEXAS CROSSWORD
by Charley & Guy Orbison
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ACROSS
1 TXism: "blaze the trail"
5 TXism: "got as much to do as a hibernating bear"
6 f lmed in Texas: "____ Zapata!" (1952)
7 donut order: "make __ __ even dozen"
8 TXism: "couldn't f nd hide ___ hair of him"
9 a Cherokee chief _____ Sam Houston
16 Port Arthur is reviving its "Mardi ____" gala
18 outward appearances
21 elected county prosecutor (abbr.)
22 country singer, TX Thompson
23 famous Texas square dance caller, Golden
24 its distilled from the agave plant
30 Dr Pepper started at Waco's "___ _____ Drug Store"
34 "that is" abbr.
35 TXism: "f ts like hide on _ _____"
36 ____ Park, TX
37 Dallas newspaper: "El ___ __ Texas"
39 popular Texas fruits
43 "take _ ____ breath"
44 accidentally leave the tracks
45 __ Paso, TX
46 TX actor, Busey
47 in Fannin County on U.S. 69
49 two-steppers
52 Texas Tarzan, Ron
53 TXism: "let '__ rip!"
54 TX Freddie Fender's "Before the Next ____drop Falls"
55 TXism: "_____ __ summer squash"
58 detaches from mom

DOWN
1 TXism: "_____ high off the hog" (rich)
2 VIP at the Polk County Enterprise
3 in Johnson County on U.S. 67
4 Texas sausage maker, singer, and actor, Jimmy
9 it could be class- if ed in newspapers
10 TXism: "the meanest bull can be _____"
11 this Sharif starred in 1969 f lm "Mackenna's Gold" with UT grad Eli Wallach
12 TX Robin Wright's ex-hubby, Sean
13 TXism: "it _____ _ big loop to rope him" (large man)
14 Ranger broadcaster, Nadel (init.)
15 this Holliday worked as a dentist in Dallas
17 Lake La ___ __ ___ ("The King's Salt")
19 Texas Tech mascot: "The Red _____"
20 drowsy
24 LBJ line: "__ fella Murkins"
25 past UH BB star, Elvin (init.)
26 TXism: "useless as a saddle on a ___"
27 Nacogdoches: "The _____ of Texas"
28 TXism: "got a mind like _ _____ trap"
29 Cowboy "Doomsday Defense" LB ___ ___ Jordan
31 ___ Rio, TX
32 TXism: "big biscuit in the pan" (abbr.)
33 Dallas mayor in the 1940s, Woodall
38 Shakespearean tragedy "King ____"
40 TXism: "burned some boot leather"
41 1984 f lm starring late Texas rancher, Chuck Norris (abbr.)
42 person from Lubbock County town on U.S. 84
48 Col. William B. Travis ____ a line in the dirt at Alamo
50 Andrews County ____ (newspaper)
51 Chester, TX was named for this president (init.)
56 tilts, as in the Pisa tower
57 divisions of a highway marked by painted lines

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Sheriff's Report

The Rains County Sheriff's Office took the following reports of activity during the week of October 19-25:

Arrests


MICHAEL HOPKINS
Rains County Sheriff

10-20: Justin Dale Davis. Driving while intoxicated, second offense, $25,000 bond.

10-20: Stevie Leon Mayberry. Criminal trespass of a habitation, shelter center, superfund site or critical infrastructure facility; public intoxication; violation of bond conditions. $1,700 bond.

10-23: Lindsey Nicole Hobbs. Class C traffic offense, City of Emory warrant, $75 bond.

10-25: Johnathan Robert Young. Driving while intoxicated, second offense; possession of marijuana, less than two ounces, $35,000 bond.

Calls

10-19: Hwy. 19S Vehicle in roadway; Hwy. 19N Animal welfare concern; Hwy. 276 Abandoned vehicle; Hwy. 69W Controlled burn; FM 779 Animal welfare concern; CR 2410 Environmental; PR 8515 Terroristic threats; Sheriff's Office (SO) Lobby Meet complainant; CR 1605 Medical assist; Hwy. 69W Medical assist; CR 2570 Environmental; CR 2460 Medical assist; Ravine St. Animal at large; Hwy. 69 Motorist assist; CR 1470 Medical assist; FM 2795 Medical assist; N Dunbar Ln. Medical assist; FM 2737 Medical assist; CR 3411 Meet complainant.

10-20: FM 514 W Suspicious activity; CR 4520 Repossession; SO Lobby Arrest; SO Lobby Meet complainant; FM 2324 Provided Suspicious vehicle; SO Lobby Meet complainant; CR 1495 Controlled burn; CR 1300 Panic alarm; CR 2340 Environmental; Hwy. 69W Environmental; FM 515 Consensual contact; Airport Rd. Warrant service; Ave. E Point Grass fire; CR 1275 Medical assist; CR 1330 Medical assist; Hwy. 276 East Tawakoni (ET) Pursuit; W Tawakoni Dr. Hit-and-run accident; Ave. D Point Suspicious activity; Ave. D Point Welfare concern.

10-21: Hwy. 69W Business alarm; Duffy St. Animal at large; CR 1495 Controlled burn; Lake Fork Dr. Controlled burn; SO Lobby Meet complainant; FM 3274 Grass fire; Quitman St. Downed power lines; Hwy. 19N at Robinson Rd. Debris in roadway; S Texas St. Welfare concern; SO Lobby Meet complainant; Hwy. 19N Medical assist; CR 4220 Medical assist; FM 3299 Meet complainant; Hwy. 19S Meet complainant; Scam reported to SO Lobby x2; CR 1629 Environmental; CR 4251 Medical assist; Hwy. 69E Welfare concern; PR 5451 Disturbance; FM 2324 Problems with a person; CR 3030 Medical assist; FM 779 Medical assist; Hwy. 19N at county line Reckless driver; S Texas St. Suspicious activity; N Texas St. Suspicious vehicle.

10-22: Hwy. 276 Animal welfare concern; CR 1220 Medical assist; Wright Way ET Medical assist; S 1st St. Point Animal welfare concern; FM 513 Medical assist; Hwy. 69 at CR 2795 Motorist assist; Hwy. 19N Reckless driver; FM 2795 Harassment; CR 1495 Controlled burn; FM 3299 Fire alarm; SO Lobby Welfare concern; FM 47 at CR 1430 Environmental; Hwy. 276 at FM 47 Environmental; FM 779 Medical assist; SO Lobby Welfare concern; Hwy. 276 at CR 1605 Environmental; W North St. Meet complainant; Fish Point ET Medical assist; Lee Ivie Ln. City ordinance violation; Hwy. 276 at CR 1190 Motorist assist; CR 2420 Livestock on roadway; Hwy. 69 at FM 47 Reckless driver; Skyline Dr. Hit-and-run accident; Hwy. 276 Theft; CR 3410 Environmental; CR 1399 Medical assist; Duffy St. Aggressive animal; CR 2130 Noise complaint; CR 4500 Medical assist; Clower Ct. ET City ordinance violation; Smith Cir. Point Trespassing; Smith Cir. Point Accident; FM 2737 ET Livestock on roadway; S Texas St. Medical assist; Rhodes Dr. Disturbance.

10-23: S Texas St. Medical assist; CR 3330 Medical assist; E Lennon Dr. Suspicious vehicle; CR 1495 Medical assist; Ave. D Point Welfare concern; Clark Dr. Medical assist; N Texas St. Accident; Hwy. 69E Controlled burn; W Quitman St. Medical assist; SO Lobby Meet complainant; E Lennon Dr. Medical assist; SO Lobby Noise complaint; Wood St. Medical assist; E Lennon Dr. Accident; Ravine St. Animal welfare concern; CR 1495 Controlled burn; SO Lobby Meet complainant; W Lennon Dr. Found property; Circle Dr. Point Livestock on roadway; Hwy. 69W Reckless driver; Hwy. 69W Medical assist; McMillan Dr. Domestic disturbance; FM 275 Noise complaint; CR 1315 Suspicious vehicle; N Texas St. Medical assist; CR 1412 Runaway; CR 1470 Controlled burn; E Lennon Dr. Consensual contact.

10-24: W Lennon Dr. Suspicious vehicle; Hwy. 276 Hit-and-run accident; E Lennon Dr. Suspicious vehicle; N Texas St. Medical assist; CR 1330 Medical assist; W Quitman St. Special assignment; FM 275 Trespassing; CR 3325 Controlled burn; S Dunbar Ln. Environmental; CR 1495 Controlled burn; S Texas St. Medical assist; CR 3381 Accident; PR 5450 Medical assist; Ave. D Point Investigation; SO Lobby Meet complainant; S Dunbar Ln. Motorist assist; SO Lobby Found property; CR 1219 Animal bite; Pierson St. Disturbance; E Lennon Dr. Welfare concern; Wisconsin Welfare concern; [Torama Agency assist]; FM 2324 Abandoned vehicle; E Lennon Dr. Agency assist; W Lennon Dr. Suspicious vehicle; S Texas St. Welfare concern; FM 2737 Animal at large; Alexander Dr. Suspicious vehicle; E Lennon Dr. Suspicious vehicle.

10-25: W Lennon Dr. Suspicious vehicle; FM 2946 Suspicious activity; FM 47 Suspicious vehicle; Planters St. Suspicious vehicle; Honeysuckle Ln. Suspicious person; Hwy. 276 Medical assist; CR 1235 Livestock on roadway; S Texas St. Medical assist; Emory Park Welfare concern; CR 3025 Consensual contact; 2795 at Hwy. 69 Consensual contact; W Lennon Dr. Consensual contact; CR 1460 Grass fire; CR 4253 Medical assist; Ave. B Point Stabbing; N Texas St. Medical assist; CR 2180 Grass fire; SO Lobby Meet complainant; CR 1533 Animal welfare concern; Hwy. 19 Motorist assist; Hwy. 19N Accident; CR 2430 Medical assist.

The Sheriff's Department reported 468 calls for the week. Among the calls were: 1 paper service, 1 debris in roadway, 3 disturbances, 1 domestic disturbance, 1 downed power lines, 15 extra patrols, 1 fire alarm, 12 follow up investigations, 2 found property, 10 environmental calls, 1 harassment, 1 investigation, 4 livestock on roadway calls, 13 meet complainant calls, 3 noise complaints, 4 grass fires, 1 problems with a person, 30 public service calls, 1 pursuit, 4 reckless drivers, 1 repossession, 1 runaway, 2 scams, 1 special assignment, 4 suspicious activity calls, 1 suspicious person, 12 suspicious vehicles, 1 terroristic threats, 1 theft, 1 vehicle in roadway, 1 warrant service, 10 welfare concerns, 2 trespassing, 5 accidents, 10 controlled burns, 1 aggressive animal, 1 arrest, 1 stabbing, 83 area checks, 5 consensual contacts, 2 abandoned vehicles, 3 hit-and-run accidents, 2 agency assists, 1 business alarm, 1 panic alarm, 3 animal at large calls, 1 animal bite, 6 animal welfare concerns, 5 motorist assists, 2 city ordinance violations.

There were 149 traffic stops, 118 warnings, 15 citations, 40 medical calls, and 26 transports.

POINT

Continued from page 1

city's water rates.

Nelson noted that the new ordinance sets the rule that starting in 2027, the city will only allow extensions on payment of the bill three times per year. It would increase base sewer rates for residences and commercial businesses by $2 each.

The proposed ordinance would increase trash service to $26.82 for residences with one container. The council stated that the cost is the rate that the city is charged by the provider with no additional fees.

Other fee proposals include water and sewer taps for new construction moving to $2,300 while the new customer deposit will remain $250. The charge to have water service restored after hours moves from $50 to $75.

It was stated that the rates were determined after cost research and polling of seven surrounding cities.

Nelson announced that a public hearing on the proposed rate changes will be held on Thursday, November 12, at 6:00 p.m. in the council chambers of Point City Hall. All residents and water customers are invited to come and talk about the proposed changes.

At the conclusion of that November meeting, the council will consider adopting the new rates.

After the ordinance was read and discussed, no action was taken and the meeting adjourned.

The next regular meeting of the Point City Council will be held on Thursday, November 12, at the Point City Hall following the public hearing.



ET

Continued from page 1

They appointed Clifann McCarley as the East Tawakoni Economic Development Corporation Secretary and Treasurer.

Mayor Harold Chandler was not present for the meeting.

The next regular meeting of the East Tawakoni City Council is scheduled for Tuesday, November 17, at 7:00 p.m. in the council chambers of East Tawakoni City Hall.

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Sports

RAINS LADY CAT VOLLEYBALL

Lady Cat season ends in Commerce



Leader photo by CHUCK FITTS

Lady Cat Arianna Philson bumps the ball over the block attempt during a match on October 9. The Lady Cat season ended with a 3-1 district loss to the Commerce Lady Tigers on October 23. They finish the year at 2-10 in District 14-3A and 13-23 for the season.

TEXAS RURAL REPORTER

Your Vote, Your Texas: A Guide to the 2026 Election

By Suzanne Bellsnyder,
Texas Rural Reporter


SUZANNE BELLSNYDER
Texas Rural Reporter

Election Day is next Tuesday, November 3, and Texans have some important decisions to make.

We've heard the campaign speeches, seen the ads, and watched the political arguments. But how much do we really know about the people asking for our votes? This week, instead of telling you what I think about the election, I want to introduce the candidates and explain the jobs they're asking us to give them.

A party label tells us something about a candidate. It doesn't tell us everything.

Here is a guide to the statewide races. It includes Republicans (R), Democrats (D), Libertarians (L), and Greens (G).

U.S. Senate

Texas elects one senator to a six-year term representing the state in Washington, D.C.

Ken Paxton (R): Texas attorney general since 2015 and former state legislator. Known for challenging federal policies in court and emphasizing immigration enforcement and conservative social policies.

James Talarico (D): State representative, former public school teacher and Presbyterian seminarian. Focuses on public education, healthcare affordability, and reducing political division.

Ted Brown (L): Libertarian candidate advocating smaller federal government, individual liberty, and reduced federal spending.

Governor

The governor signs or vetoes legislation, makes appointments, and sets legislative priorities.

Greg Abbott (R): Governor since 2015, previously attorney general and Supreme Court justice. Priorities include border security, school vouchers, tax relief, and economic development.

Gina Hinojosa (D): State representative, attorney, and former Austin school board president. Focuses on public education, affordability, healthcare and government accountability.

Pat Dixon (L): Former Libertarian Party of Texas chair advocating limited government, individual rights, and less government regulation.

Lieutenant Governor

The lieutenant governor presides over the Texas Senate and has considerable influence over legislation.

Dan Patrick (R): Incumbent since 2015, former senator and radio broadcaster. Priorities include property tax relief, conservative social policies, and education choice.

Vikki Goodwin (D): State representative with a background in real estate. Emphasizes public education, affordability, and healthcare.

Anthony Cristo (L): Libertarian candidate supporting limited government and individual freedoms.

Kevin McCormick (G): Green Party candidate offering an alternative to the two major parties.

Attorney General

Texas' chief lawyer represents the state in legal disputes and enforces certain consumer protection laws.

Mayes Middleton (R): State senator, former representative and businessman. Emphasizes conservative constitutional positions and challenges to federal authority.

Nathan Johnson (D): State senator and attorney whose legislative work includes healthcare, insurance, and government policy.

Tom Oxford (L): Libertarian candidate advocating individual rights and limits on government power.

Comptroller

The comptroller collects state taxes, estimates revenue, and administers the school voucher program.

Don Huffines (R): Former state senator, businessman, and current comptroller. Advocates tax reduction and fiscal conservatism.

Sarah Eckhardt (D): State senator and former Travis County judge. Focuses on public finance, government services, and accountability.

V. Alonzo Echavarria-Garza (L): Libertarian candidate seeking the state's chief financial officer.

Shehla Faizi (G): Green Party candidate seeking to oversee state revenue and financial administration.

Land Commissioner

The General Land Office manages state lands, mineral interests, veterans' programs, and disaster recovery responsibilities.

Dawn Buckingham (R): Incumbent commissioner, physician and former state senator.

Benjamin Flores (D): Democratic nominee challenging Buckingham for management of Texas public lands.

Neill Snider (L): Libertarian nominee seeking the land commissioner's office.

Agriculture Commissioner

The department oversees agricultural programs, consumer protections, weights and measures, and school nutrition programs.

Nate Sheets (R): Businessman and agricultural entrepreneur campaigning on agriculture and agency leadership.

Clayton Tucker (D): Rancher and organizer emphasizing family farms, rural communities, and agricultural policy.

Austin R. Kelly (L): Libertarian candidate seeking to lead the Agriculture Department.

Railroad Commissioner

Despite its name, the railroad commission regulates oil, natural gas, pipelines, and certain mining activities – not railroads.

Bo French (R): Former Tarrant County Republican Party chair campaigning on energy development and conservative regulatory policies.

Jon Rosenthal (D): State representative and engineer with experience in the energy industry.

Arthur DiBianca (L): Libertarian candidate advocating a limited-government approach to regulation.

Texas Supreme Court

This court decides the state's civil cases, not criminal appeals.

Chief Justice: Jimmy Blacklock (R), incumbent chief justice and former Abbott legal adviser; Maggie Ellis (D), attorney and former judicial candidate.

Place 2: James P. Sullivan (R), incumbent justice; Chari Kelly (D), attorney and former judicial candidate.

Place 7: Kyle Hawkins (R), incumbent justice and former solicitor general; Kristen Hawkins (D), district court judge.

Place 8: Brett Busby (R), incumbent justice and former appellate judge; Gisela D. Triana (D), former appellate justice.

Court of Criminal Appeals

Texas' highest criminal court reviews criminal convictions and other criminal law questions.

Place 3: Thomas Smith (R), Okey Anyiam (D) and Mark Ash (L).

Place 4: Kevin Patrick Yeary (R), incumbent judge; Audra Riley (D).

Place 9: John Messinger (R) and Holly Taylor (D).

15th Court of Appeals

This statewide court handles certain cases involving the state government and business disputes.

Chief Justice: Scott Brister (R), incumbent and former Texas Supreme Court justice; Jerry Zimmerer (D), appellate judge.

Place 2: Scott K. Field (R), incumbent appellate judge; Tom Baker (D), former appellate judge.

Place 3: April Farris (R), incumbent appellate judge; Marc M. Meyer (D).

Before You Vote

Texas also has certified write-in candidates. Their names do not appear among the printed ballot choices. Check the Secretary of State's official list for those candidates and their qualifications.

I've written before about following the jockey, not the horse. Political parties matter, but so do the people wearing their labels.

Before you vote, consider each candidate's experience, record, and understanding of the job. And remember, these people are applying to work for us.

Early voting ends October 30. Election Day is November 3.

Our voices and our votes belong to us.

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.*

RAINS WILDCATS VS. COMMERCE TIGERS

Friday Night • 7:30 p.m. • Wildcat Stadium



Wildcat Cooper Combs (2) runs away from the angry Yellowjacket defender for more yards during the 56-33 district loss to Mineola on October 16 at Meredith Stadium.

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THIS WEEK IN TEXAS HISTORY

Ghost stories from haunted texas town

by Bartee Haile

The main source for this special Halloween column is "Ghosts of East Texas and The Pineywoods" by Mitchel Whitington. Fourteen of the 40 or so short chapters and vignettes in this 2005 book come from Jefferson, the old riverport turned tourist magnet a short distance from the Louisiana line in the northeastern corner of Texas. That stands to reason since the town first made famous by the 1870's "Diamond Bessie" murder case (the subject of the opening chapter in my book Murder Most Texan) is where the author lived for a time.



BARTEE HAILE
Historical Columnist

Jefferson may well be "ghost central" for the Lone Star State. The historic hotels which date back to the nineteenth century, fairly teem with spirits that are kept alive – no pun intended! – by local folklore and imaginative word-of-mouth.

On his first trip to Jefferson in the 1990's, Whitington and his wife stayed at the famed Excelsior House. In preparation for the visit, he read a 20-year-old article in the Marshall newspaper that described a male apparition that materializes in the courtyard of The Excelsior and, on occasion, roams the halls of the hotel. He has been known to enter rooms uninvited and to give female guests quite a scare, when they awake to see him standing at the foot of their bed.

The then-president of the garden club ventured the opinion that the ghost could well be Abe Rothschild, the accused killer of "Diamond Bessie" who never paid for his alleged crime. Many believe to this day that his daddy, a wealthy Cincinnati jeweler, bought the jury that found his son not guilty.

The Whitingtons themselves claimed to have experienced a supernatural encounter during their long weekend at The Excelsior. Late one night, Mitchel exited their room on the second floor to retrieve restaurant leftovers from the car. "As I passed through the downstairs hallway the smell of sweet, floral perfume overwhelmed me. If was as if a lady had oversprayed herself with the scent right there in the hall."

On the return trip to his room from the parking lot, Whitington again walked through the cloud of perfume. "Not only was it as strong as it had been ten minutes ago, but it had also moved!" Then he remembered only one other room in the hotel was occupied, and those guests had turned in early.

Between bites from the to-go box, Whitington succeeded in piquing his wife's curiosity. After polishing off their midnight snack, the couple went on a perfume hunt through the hallways and stairwells of The Excelsior House. They picked up the scent in various locations during the course of the search leading Whitington to the conclusion "the unseen person wearing the perfume was definitely wandering around."

But the identity of "The Perfumed Lady" and whether she was dead or alive remain a mystery.

The Excelsior House is not the only haunted hotel in Jefferson – far from it. While researching his book, Whitington spent quite a few nights at The Jefferson Hotel, where the owner joked, "We have several non-paying guests."

As it turned out, the innkeeper was not kidding. Most rooms have a haunted past all their own. The Whitingtons personally added to the lore of Room 19 the night the missus awoke "to see a strange, gray shape at the foot of the bed." Her husband alertly tried to capture the image with his handy video camera but, in spite of an auto-focus that acted like it had zeroed in on something, he captured nothing on film.

Another couple had better luck in Room 21. Hoping to catch the spirits off-guard, they set up a camera to monitor the premises while they were out for the evening. The tape later "showed bright orbs of light following each of them around the room. After the couple left, the orbs continued to float around the room in front of the camera…."

Room 5 had a more traditional ghost story. It was bitterly cold the night this particular couple signed the register at The Jefferson. "The woman suddenly sensed a warm, heavy blanket being placed on the bed, and it felt wonderful.

"She opened her eyes and was surprised to see that it wasn't her husband taking care of her. Instead, an elderly lady dressed in a white, flowing dress with her hair in a bun was standing beside the bed. The old woman reached out and touched her hand softly."

The woman rolled over to wake up her husband, but "as she did the elderly woman faded away. But an extra blanket was indeed on the bed."

Every room in The Jefferson Hotel has an otherworldly story to tell, and Room 25 is no exception. A guest stepped out of the bathroom one night years ago "to find a young girl standing in the room with shoulder-length brown hair, dressed in a pink floral dress with 1920's flair."

"I'm waiting on a young man," the ghostly girl said, "and we're going to dance the night away!" When the flesh-and-blood witness stepped toward the intruder, she vanished like a vapor in the breeze never to be seen or heard again.

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

STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

State has record number of registered voters

With early voting ending Friday, Oct. 30, Texas Secretary of State Robert Howden announced the state has 19 million registered voters — a record number ahead of the Nov. 3 election.



GARY BORDERS
Texas Press Association

"Texas continues to see strong voter registration numbers, and we want every eligible Texan to be prepared to participate in the upcoming election," Howden said.

As of Friday, Oct. 23, more than 2.7 million Texans had voted early, and the final early voting tally appears likely to set a record.

Voters who did not cast early ballots can find their polling place for the Nov. 3 election by visiting *votetexas.gov*, a nonpartisan site operated by the secretary of state's office.

Abbott, Hinojosa trade jabs in tight governor's race

Gov. Greg Abbott, seeking an unprecedented fourth term, told Republican voters that the state faces a choice between "common sense and crazy" in a race that appears far closer than originally expected, The Dallas Morning News reported. He faces Democrat Gina Hinojosa, an Austin state representative.

Hinojosa responded that Abbott is using culture wars to distract from his record on school vouchers, data centers and property taxes.

"After 12 years, Texans are ready for a governor who will put the people – not billionaires – first," she said in a statement. She announced last week that she has sued Abbott seeking the release of unredacted emails between the governor's office and billionaire Elon Musk, who is spending heavily on behalf of GOP candidates in Texas.

Is it now Talarico vs. Musk in Senate race?

Senate candidate James Talarico, the Democratic nominee, faces record spending by Musk, who has already spent $150 million supporting Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton, the Republican nominee. Musk — who has received millions in state contracts and tax incentives for his companies, including SpaceX and Tesla, both with headquarters in Texas — has been active on social media, attacking Talarico. Musk has called Talarico a "creep" who "hates Texas," according to the Houston Chronicle.

Talarico has vowed to take on billionaires in his campaign and pushed back against Musk in speeches last week.

"In all likelihood, if you have seen an attack ad on your TV, that was Elon," Talarico said last week. "If you've gotten lies in your mailbox, that was Elon. If you've received a text message saying scary things about me, that was Elon, too. Ken Paxton is funded by one dude."

Most polls show Talarico with a slight lead, generally within the margin of error. Texas has not elected a Democrat to a statewide office since 1994.

State still processing data center permits

Despite Abbott's order last month to pause data center projects in Texas, state regulators are still processing permits, the Texas Standard reported. On Sept. 21, Abbott directed the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to "halt all permits sought by data centers."

However, the oil and gas watchdog group Frac Tracker, along with Public Citizen, identified 35 permitting actions taken by TCEQ since that order was given.

"TCEQ has continued reviewing applications and issuing approvals that allow data center development to proceed," the groups said. "These actions do not signal an agency trying to pause."

Abbott's press secretary Andrew Mahaleris said the pause applies to approval, not processing, of permits.

"No permits have been approved," he said in a statement. "In line with the governor's directive, TCEQ has not taken and will not take any proactive actions related to the approval of data center permits."

Since the directive from Abbott, the TCEQ has fast-tracked or assigned engineers to 14 permits, approved stormwater coverage for 11, certified emissions estimates for seven, and issued public notices for three, according to permitting documents collected by the watchdog groups

"We need an actual pause to study the threats posed to the land, water and livelihoods of Texans," Sam Law, author of the report, said.

Voucher spending on private schools kept secret

State Comptroller Don Huffines has refused to answer public information requests about how millions of dollars in state funds have been distributed to private schools and vendors under the $1 billion school voucher program, the Austin American-Statesman reported.

Huffines' office has said concerns about student privacy and the state's history of not providing information on private schools justify keeping the voucher spending secret.

The comptroller's office released a list of more than 2,700 schools approved to participate in the voucher program and a list of nearly 2,200 approved vendors, but it did not disclose how much money each has received. The office said that releasing the amount of money spent could be considered a student record used to identify an individual student, which is prohibited by federal law.

"We've tried to take a conservative approach," the comptroller's office said. "When something's out, you can't take it back."

His Democratic opponent, state Sen. Sarah Eckhardt, D-Austin, has vowed to audit the program if elected.

"If we really, really, really think vouchers are going to improve the educational outcome of the children who get them, then we need transparency and honesty about it," Eckhardt said.

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*.

50 years ago this week

Gleanings from the Rains County Leader archives

Thursday, October 28, 1976

Free Hot Dogs & Beans Oct. 28

Thursday, Oct. 28, at 7 p.m. Dr. James Hogan, DDS, our Republican candidate for Congressional District One, will be at the Rains County Rose Community Center in Emory. Dr. Hogan wishes to personally inform you on the congressional issues for our district and offer his solutions. In conclusion, Dr. Hogan will answer any questions you ask.

This gathering is sponsored by the Rains County Republican Party.

Be sure to come and remember free hot dogs and beans.

County-State Tax Valuation $387,238

Deputy tax collector Mrs. Flossie Stuart reported the following tax valuations: County, $200,133.01; State, $187,105.32; Total: $387,238.33.

Ninety percent is expected to be collected as follows: County, $180,127.00; and State $162,400.63; for a total of $342,527.63. Taxpayers may receive 3% discount for October, 2% discount for November and 1% discount for December.

Commissioners Court

A special session was called for 2 p.m. Friday of the Rains County Commissioners' Court.

Commissioners-elect Fenter and Luckett were on hand to discuss the service centers that are being planned for each commissioner.

The subject of the land being considered for a new jail was passed over because Commissioner Daugherty and Northcutt were absent.

The only action taken was to transfer $10,000 from the General Fund to the Salary Fund. Commissioners Kirkpatrick & House, with the Judge voting, passed this.

Judge Johnston said he didn't know if another special session would be called before the regular meeting Nov. 8th.

The judge said he had called the docket for county court for Oct. 28th for the disposition of 60 cases.

Exhibition to Be Held at School Library

On Oct. 28 thru Nov. 1, "A Texas Photograph Album," a Bicentennial exhibition, will be on display at the Rains High School Library during the hours of 8 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. on the days of Oct. 28-29. Open House will be Oct. 31st from 2 to 4 p.m. in the library.

"A Texas Photograph Album" is one of a series of twelve traveling exhibitions made possible by a grant from the Moody Foundation of Galveston to the Humanities Research Center of The University of Texas at Austin. The Moody Bicentennial Humanities Exhibitions have been created from materials drawn from the extensive collections of the Humanities Research Center, and they will travel throughout the State of Texas during 1976 and 1977 in conjunction with the National Bicentennial Celebration. The album is a selected record of the lives of Texans from 1870 to 1930, the period which saw the closing of the frontiers and the arrival of the state in the 20th century with the urban bustle, the birth of mechanical sophistication, and the irrepressible energy which have characterized our century.

Rains High School Ag. Co-Op

Agriculture Cooperative part-time training is one of the programs that some of the students at Rains High School choose to take. These students have usually completed two years of Voc. Ag. and are juniors or seniors. Basic requirement for co-op is a desire to work and being 16 years of age. Students are enrolled in regular courses besides a one hour classroom in Ag. Co-Op. Part of the school day they work for wages and training at various work stations around the community.

Examples of work stations are dairies, produce farming and handling, ranching, ag. mechanics, swine operations, vet assistants and many others. Pictured are just three of our present co-op students. They are Raymond Foreman, Tony Pennebaker and Lloyd Brumit.

Raymond, son of Mr. & Mrs. Charles Foreman, works at A. W. Steed's Tractor Sales & Service. He receives training in all phases of tractor repair and maintenance. He comes in contact with customers, parts sales and general work that makes for a complete tractor dealership and service center. When asked what he thinks of Ag. Co-Op, he replied, "I think it is great to be able to work and learn something at the same time."

Tony Pennebaker works at Roy Don & Kenneth Shipp's dairy. He is the son of Mr. & Mrs. Charles Pennebaker. Tony is a member of the Rains High School football team, therefore he works early in the morning at the dairy. Tony learns all aspects of the dairy business from actual milking procedures to rations, proper health care & sanitation practices. Tony says one of the most important things he has learned is job responsibility. He says, "Some mornings it would be a lot easier to lay there and sleep than to get up and go milk, but I like that money."

Lloyd Brumit is the son of Mr. & Mrs. Lloyd Brumit Sr. He works at Piggly Wiggly in the fresh meat & vegetable area. Lloyd learns all there is about handling, displaying, selling & customer relations while there on the job. He also knows that food marketing is big business & will always be in demand. Lloyd says about Ag. Co-Op, "I bet I can find a good job with the training I've gotten as soon as I graduate."

Rains Voc. Ag. Students Show at State Fair

Danny Huddleston & Kenneth Kirkpatrick showed their Milking Shorthorn dairy animals at the State Fair of Texas. Danny won every division he showed in and took Grand Champion honors in both dairy bull and dairy cow. Kenneth took a 1st place and Danny also took all the Reserve Champion honors. Danny Huddleston has one of the best Milking Shorthorn herds anywhere around and has proved it in Lubbock, Albuquerque and Dallas so far this year where they have won over $3,000 in premiums. Danny was assisted by Tony Hayes who showed several head for him along with helping groom, feed and care for the show string. This was Tony's first major show and he is realizing how much hard work it takes.

BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU

Tips for Finding a Holiday Side Gig

Looking for seasonal work? Amazon plans to hire more than 300,000 workers across its U.S. operations this holiday season, and UPS expects to add 100,000 seasonal employees. If you're hoping to earn some extra income this season, now is the time to apply. But scammers know this is when people are actively looking for work, so BBB reminds job seekers to watch for red flags.

"A seasonal job is a great way to supplement your income, particularly in today's economic environment," said Mechele Agbayani Mills, President and CEO of BBB Serving Central East Texas. "It's important to remember, however, that if your personal information gets in the wrong hands, a scam artist can do considerable damage, so be careful when sharing."

Before accepting a position with a potential employer, consider the following:

Start your job search sooner rather than later. Retail, shipping, restaurants and catering companies are common sources of seasonal employment. Decide which type of job suits you best, identify the companies you'd like to work for and start submitting applications. Many employers held hiring events in October and are already moving into training mode, so don't wait.

Does the job sound too good to be true? Any job which promises high pay for little work, like reshipping packages, stuffing envelopes or other jobs which require little to no experience, is not likely a legitimate opportunity. These offers are often an attempt to steal your personal information through a fake job application, and the damage can follow you for a long time.

Be wary of unexpected texts from "recruiters." Scammers are sending text and WhatsApp messages offering easy online work, such as liking videos or rating products, in exchange for commissions. These "task scams" show a growing balance of fake earnings, then ask you to deposit your own money, often in cryptocurrency, to keep working or to withdraw your pay. Real employers don't recruit through random texts, and they never ask you to pay to get paid.

Keep an eye out for overpayment scams. These scams all work the same way. The scammer sends a check, asks you to deposit it and then asks you to send the "extra" to another person or company. The check turns out to be counterfeit, but often not until long after you've sent the money. When it bounces, you're left with less money in your account than when you started.

Protect your information. Make sure you are applying on a secure website, and never give a potential employer your Social Security number or bank account information until you've done your homework, completed a proper interview and been officially hired. Your personal information is valuable, and scam artists want it.

Never pay for a job. Background checks, drug tests, training and equipment are part of the cost of doing business. If a potential employer asks you to pay for any of these, you will likely never hear from them again once they have your money.

No interview? Not legitimate. If you are offered a position without a formal interview, either in person or by video, it's most likely a scam. Be wary of employers who hire you on the spot or conduct interviews only by text, email or instant messaging.

Research side gigs before applying. No matter how good a job seems, do your research first. Go directly to the company's official website or careers page to verify the job posting, and make sure the company has legitimate contact information. Search online for the job title and company name. If the exact same post pops up in multiple cities, or people are reporting it as a scam, don't engage.

If you spot a job scam, report it to BBB Scam Tracker so you can help protect others. To learn more about scams and how to avoid them, visit *bbb.org/scamtips*, and always look for the BBB seal. It's the sign of a better business. Read more about BBB's Accreditation Standards.

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

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The *Rains County Leader* tries to include a little bit of everything in each issue. For those who enjoy finding errors, we included some of those as well.

Jaxie Morgan

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

As Nights Get Longer, TxDOT Reminds Texans to Look Out for People Walking

AUSTIN – As days get shorter, more of us drive in the dark, which can put people walking at higher risk.

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is asking everyone to remember their responsibility to watch out for pedestrians and drive like a Texan: kind, courteous and safe.

A future cut short

Last year, Jose Flores III, a 16-year-old from San Antonio, was walking in a crosswalk when the driver of a truck crashed into him. Flores died in the hospital a month later in October 2025.

Flores' mother, Amanda Saucedo, has a simple plea for everyone to prevent another young person from being killed.

"Please watch out for pedestrians. Be careful, because no family should have to go through this," Saucedo said.

The most dangerous months for pedestrians

In 2025, 694 people were killed by vehicles in Texas while walking, and nearly 20 percent of those deaths were in October and November. These months had the highest number of crashes involving pedestrians all year.Most happened at night. In fact, 68 percent of pedestrian fatalities and serious injuries last year in our state occurred in the dark.

While pedestrian fatalities in Texas decreased by 10 percent from 2024 to 2025, they still make up 18 percent of all traffic deaths.

Because days will become even shorter when daylight saving time ends on Nov. 1, now is a critical time to encourage drivers and pedestrians alike to be more cautious.

"People walking are already at greater risk when they are near traffic," TxDOT Executive Director Marc Williams said. "But when you add low visibility at night, that risk increases. Drivers and pedestrians alike need to stay alert, visible and focused."

How TxDOT is helping

To help encourage everyone to drive like a Texan, TxDOT is asking drivers to Be Safe. Drive Smart. and watch out for pedestrians. Throughout October and November, TxDOT will be deploying street teams of walking billboards displaying pedestrian safety tips. These teams will go across the state focusing on places where motorists and pedestrians share the road.

TxDOT encourages Texans to follow these safety tips

For drivers:

Stay alert. Scan for pedestrians everywhere, at all times.

Stop and yield to pedestrians in crosswalks.

Yield the right of way to pedestrians when turning.

Pay attention. Put your phone away before you begin driving.

Be cautious when passing stopped vehicles. They can block your view of pedestrians.

Follow posted speed limits and drive to conditions.

Be especially careful if you drive an SUV or pickup truck. They have large blind spots that can make it hard to see pedestrians.

For pedestrians:

Cross the street only at intersections and crosswalks.

Make eye contact with drivers before crossing. Don't assume traffic will stop for you.

Follow all traffic and crosswalk signals. Look left, right, then left again before crossing the street.

When walking, put away your phone or earbuds that take your attention off the road.

Stay visible. Wear reflective materials or use a flashlight when it's dark.

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

CHRISTUS HEALTH

CHRISTUS Health performs first da Vinci robotic surgery in Sulphur Springs

(SULPHUR SPRINGS, Texas) — CHRISTUS Health Sulphur Springs has reached a milestone in advancing surgical care with the completion of its first da Vinci robotic-assisted surgical procedure, performed by urologic oncologist Dr. Randy Vince on Oct. 20.

The addition of the da Vinci surgical system allows Vince to perform advanced procedures not previously available at the hospital, expanding access to specialized surgical care for patients in Sulphur Springs and surrounding communities.

"This is an exciting step forward in advancing surgical care and enhancing the quality of care we provide to our patients here in Sulphur Springs," Vince said. "Having the da Vinci system allows us to bring advanced surgical techniques to our patients closer to home. This technology gives us additional capabilities to care for patients who may otherwise need to travel outside their community for certain procedures."

The da Vinci system allows surgeons to operate using robotic-assisted instruments and a high-definition, three-dimensional view of the surgical area. The technology supports precise movements and enhanced visualization, helping surgeons perform complex procedures through small incisions when appropriate.

The milestone reflects CHRISTUS Health Sulphur Springs' continued commitment to investing in advanced technology, expanding specialty services and improving access to high-quality care throughout Northeast Texas.

By bringing innovative surgical capabilities to the region, patients have access to the personal, specialized care they need, close to home.

For more information on surgical services in Sulphur Springs or to learn more about Dr. Vince, visit *christushealth.org*.

TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT

New World Screwworm Detected in Hunter-Harvested Elk in Pecos County

TPWD Encourages Hunter Harvest Inspection, Reporting of Animals Affected by New World Screwworm

AUSTIN – On Oct. 21, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) received confirmation of a detection of New World screwworm (NWS) in a hunter-harvested female elk in Pecos County. A sample was collected from the elk and was identified and confirmed as NWS at the ARS Knipling-Bushland U.S. Livestock Insects Research Laboratory in Kerrville.

This detection highlights the critical role hunters, landowners, outdoor enthusiasts and wildlife professionals play in helping detect and manage the spread of NWS.

"We encourage all hunters and landowners to be vigilant for signs of New World screwworm while they are out in the field this season," said Alan Cain, Wildlife Division Director. "The partnership between TPWD biologists and local hunters and landowners expedited the identification and confirmation of this new detection."

The Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) will modify a previously established infested zone. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and TPWD are conducting additional wildlife surveillance in the area.

Hunter Harvest Inspection

With the kick-off of hunting season across Texas, all hunters are encouraged to inspect their harvest before field dressing or moving the carcass.

While in the field, hunters should look for animals that may be showing signs of infestation which include:

- Irritated or depressed behavior
- Loss of appetite
- Head shaking
- Smell of decaying flesh
- Presence of fly larvae (maggots) in wounds
- Isolation from other animals or people

Once an animal is harvested, hunters should be sure to inspect:

- Eyes, ears, nose, mouth, genitalia and any mucous membranes.
- Run your hands along the body of the animal and check the feet and between the toes looking for any wounds that might have a foul smell or maggots.

A video on how to inspect your harvest for NWS is available online.

Hunters and landowners can find additional information in the TPWD New World Screwworm Guide for Hunters and Landowners.

Early detection and reporting is critical. Report all suspected and confirmed cases of NWS immediately.

If you suspect a wild animal has an NWS infestation, contact your local TPWD wildlife biologist or call 512-389-4505.

Report suspected cases in livestock and companion animals: TAHC – Region Office or the Veterinarian on Call 1-800-550-8242.

For more information and resources please visit *screwworm.texas.gov*.

AUDIE MURPHY AMERICAN COTTON MUSEUM

Frontier Day at the Cotton Museum

Join the fun at the Audie Murphy American Cotton Museum for Frontier Day. It's all about life during the early frontier days for children during an era where there was no television or video games! There will be all sorts of games and activities for children to do as well as watch blacksmith demonstrations. Children will be able to make a craft, learn archery, play old-fashioned carnival style games, learn how to make rope, and make campfire biscuits and homemade butter. They will also be able to play games like marbles and horseshoes and participate in sack races, and more.

All activities will take place outside on the grounds of the Audie Murphy American Cotton Museum and will take place on **Saturday, November 7, 2026** from **10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.** Admission will be $7 per child (ages 4-15) with one adult free with every child. Additional adults will be $7 each. The fee also includes admission to the museum. Children must be accompanied by an adult. The Museum is located at 600 Interstate Highway 30 in Greenville. For additional information contact the Museum at 903-450-4502.

ADVERTISING WORKS
903-473-2653

Golden Sweet Potato Festival











SAVVY SENIORS

Why Women Lose Hair as They Age – and What Can Be Done About It

Dear Savvy Senior,
I'm a 68-year-old woman and over the past few years my hair has become noticeably thinner, especially on top. Is this just part of aging, or could it be a sign of a health problem? And are there treatments that really help women with hair loss?

– Thinning Thelma



JIM MILLER
Savvy Senior

Dear Thelma,

Hair thinning is a common concern for women as they age, especially after menopause, but it's not something you should automatically dismiss as getting older. While some hair loss is a normal part of aging, it can also be linked to underlying health conditions, medications, nutritional deficiencies, stress, or other treatable issues. The good news is that in many cases, the cause can be identified and sometimes successfully treated.

Aging changes

One of the most common causes of thinning hair in older women is female pattern hair loss, also called androgenetic alopecia. It usually appears as gradual thinning on the top of the scalp or a widening part, rather than bald patches. After menopause, declining estrogen levels can affect the hair growth cycle, causing strands to become finer, grow more slowly, and shed more easily over time.

Possible causes

But hormones and aging aren't the only explanations. Hair loss can also follow a major illness, surgery, COVID infection, or a period of significant stress. In these cases, shedding often begins a few months later and may improve on its own.

Other possible causes include thyroid disorders, iron deficiency, poor nutrition, autoimmune conditions, and scalp disorders. Medications can also play a role. Drugs such as blood thinners, antidepressants, beta blockers, cholesterol medications, thyroid treatments, arthritis drugs, and some hormone therapies have all been linked to hair loss in some people. If you suspect a medication may be involved, don't stop it on your own – ask your doctor about alternatives.

Get checked

Because there are so many possible causes, the first step is getting a proper evaluation. See your doctor or a dermatologist if you notice sudden shedding, rapid thinning, bald patches, or scalp itching or pain. They may review your medications, examine your scalp, and order simple blood tests to check for problems such as thyroid imbalance or iron deficiency.

What helps

Treatment depends on the cause. If an underlying condition such as thyroid disease, iron deficiency, medication side effects, or poor nutrition is identified, treating it may help restore hair growth.

For older women with age-related female pattern hair loss, the treatment with the best evidence is topical minoxidil (Rogaine), available over the counter. It can help slow thinning and stimulate some regrowth, but results take several months and continued use is needed to maintain any benefit. Some women who don't respond may be candidates for low-dose oral minoxidil, which is an off-label treatment and requires medical supervision because of possible side effects.

Be cautious with hair-growth supplements. Unless you have a true deficiency, products such as biotin usually provide little benefit and can interfere with certain lab tests, including thyroid and some heart tests.

Gentle hair care and cosmetic options can also help. Avoid harsh chemical treatments, tight hairstyles that pull on the hair, and excessive heat from blow dryers or styling tools. A fuller haircut, thickening styling products, hair-building fibers that reduce the appearance of thinning spots, or lightweight hairpieces and wigs can also improve appearance and confidence.

Hair thinning in older women is common, but it isn't always just a normal part of aging. Because it can sometimes signal an underlying medical issue, it's worth getting checked – especially if it comes on suddenly or worsens quickly. While not every type of hair loss can be reversed, treatment and practical strategies can often slow it down and help you feel better about how your hair looks.

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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The *Rains County Leader* tries to include a little bit of everything in each issue. For those who enjoy finding errors, we included some of those as well.

Jaxie Morgan

Believers' Baptist Church

By Linda Brendle

But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5:8

In honor of Reformation Sunday, Pastor Jason Rolen took a break from the Luke series with a sermon from Romans titled "By Grace through Faith." Romans tells of the need for justification or pardon by God through faith because we all have sinned. Our religion is in vain, and we cannot justify ourselves or come into the presence of God on our own. But Christ died for the ungodly while we were still sinners, so all who believe can be justified. God's love is poured into our hearts, and we are saved from the wrath of God which we deserve. When we have been justified by faith, we have hope and peace and are no longer enemies of God. We can even rejoice in our suffering because it makes us more Christlike. We are reconciled to God by Jesus's death and saved by His life. Our peace with God should make us feel great gratitude.

• Monthly Home Groups will meet next Sunday at 5:00 p.m. If you need more details about where your group meets or getting plugged in to a group, contact the church office at 903-474-0027.

• The Church Praying meets November 8, at 6:00 p.m.

• The church office will be closed November 25-27 for Thanksgiving.

Continuing Activities:

• Christmas Choir Rehearsal, Sunday, 4:00 p.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.

The "Asking for a Friend" podcast has a new segment! Episode #257 is titled "Does the Protestant Reformation Still Matter Today?" Find the link at *www.bbcemory.org*.

Emory Baptist Church

By Ronnie Witt

"And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Matthew 16:18

We are so grateful for all the students and adults who attended Fields of Faith at Rains Wildcat Stadium. Thank you to the volunteers who put it together and to the students who shared their testimonies.

On Sunday morning, Bro. Charles Boswell shared a message from the book of Matthew titled, "Our Master Builder." He pointed out that Jesus establishes His Church on the confession of Jesus as the Christ. On Sunday night, Bro. Charles led a directed time of prayer for the pastor search committee, the church, and the man that God will bring to be the next pastor of Emory Baptist. After the prayer meeting, we held the October Members' Meeting.

On Wednesday night, EBC hosted the annual Fall Festival in the Family Life Center and fellowship hall. Thank you to all the Sunday School Small Group classes that hosted games and activities. Thank you also to all the families that stopped by for a burger and a bag full of candy.

Emory Methodist Church

By Mary White

"No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money"

Luke 16:13

The Rev. David Banks continued his series "The Promise to the World" with message titled "As You Go" from Luke. Our mission is simply to go and serve. With our doubts and all, we hear the promise that goes with us: I am with you always. We are strengthened by God's promise and presence today and all the days to come.

Remember daylight saving time ends Nov. 1, at 2:00 a.m. There will be an Emmaus meeting after worship on Nov. 1. Emory Health & Rehab Outreach will be on Nov. 5, at 10:00 a.m. Interested in discovering the Holy Land? Join Dr. Banks, on Monday, Nov. 2, at 4:00 p.m., in the Fellowship Hall, as he shares details about the trip.

Birthday wishes go to Shirley Eversult, Casey Banks and Essie Robin Franklin.

Pray for Ann Smith, Beverly Gilther and Thomas White.

Have a great week and remember be kind.

Obituaries

Vickie Pierce

1947 – 2026

As an update to the obit previously printed, a Celebration of Life for Vickie Pierce, 79, of Emory will be held Saturday, November 21, from 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. at The Links at Land's End in Yantis.

Mrs. Pierce died on October 14, 2026. She was born on January 28, 1947, in Terre Haute, Indiana, to Burford and Ruth Gilbert. See the full obit in last week's issue.

Anne Foreman Caton

1934 – 2026

Anne Foreman Caton, 91, of Alba, died on October 19, 2026, at home surrounded by her family. She was born on October 21, 1934, to Isaac Homer Foreman and Ethel Winnefred (Zochert) Foreman in Dumas.

Mrs. Caton earned a Bachelor of Science in education and served as a special needs teacher. Her work in education touched lives in meaningful ways and stood as an expression of her care for others.

She met Ross Caton at Sul Ross University in Alpine. He was a tall, handsome, Montana cowboy and became the love of her life. Their marriage of 55 years was a lasting testament to devotion, partnership, and shared memories.

Mrs. Caton is survived by sons, Homer Caton and C.R. Caton; daughter, Barbara Dains; son-in-law, Chris Dains; grandchildren, Caleb Caton, Winston Caton, Joe Dains and wife Tina, Ben Dains and wife Ashlie, Cheyenne Crawford and husband Chance, Shelby Workman and husband Ryan, Emilia Caton and Augustus Caton; and 14 great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her husband; parents; and brother, Gale Foreman.

Larry O'Neal Slatter

1943 – 2026



A memorial service for Larry O'Neal Slatter, 82, will be held on Saturday, October 31, at 11:00 a.m., at First Baptist Church Sulphur Springs, 116 Oak Ave, Sulphur Springs, Texas 75482.

Mr. Slatter died on October 26, 2026, in Sulphur Springs. He was born on December 19, 1943, in Emory, to William Slatter and Grace Potts Slatter.

He earned a bachelor's degree in education and went on to serve as a teacher for 60 years. He was also a coach, bringing that same spirit of leadership and support to those around him. He will be remembered as a patriarch, a legend, and a mentor whose life touched many through his work, his music, and his devotion to family.

Music was one of his great joys. He loved music, sang in the gospel group "The Gastons," and played the guitar.

He married Judi Gustafson on February 12, 1972, in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. He was deeply proud to have her as his wife of 52 years, and their marriage was a treasured part of his life. Among his proudest accomplishments were his daughter and his grandchildren. They brought him great happiness and pride.

Mr. Slatter is survived by his daughter, Shannon Millard and husband Bruce; grandchildren, Daylan Millard and Reid Burns; great-grandson, Jadx Cummings; sister, Sandy Ward and husband Greg; and nephew, Mike Hutchins.

He was preceded in death by his wife; and his parents.

A visitation will be held one hour prior to the service at First Baptist Church Sulphur Springs.

Church Directory

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

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

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

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

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH Point, TX
9:45 a.m. …….. Sunday School
11:00 a.m. ... Morning Worship
6:00 p.m. ..... Evening Worship
6:00 p.m. .. Wednesday Service
Pastor Bryan Barnes
903-598-3220
www.fbcpoint.com

EMORY BAPTIST CHURCH
On The Square
Corner Of North & Planters
Downtown Emory
903-473-3357
EmoryBaptist.org
Dr. Charles Boswell Interim Pastor
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 6:30pm
(Adults, Youth, Children)

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 Rolen – Pastor
Jerod Haygood – Student & Family Pastor
Duffey Henderson – Music & Media Minister
www.bbcemory.org 903-474-0027

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

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Wednesdays 7pm
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Saturday Night Prayer 6pm
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PUBLIC/LEGAL NOTICE | PUBLIC/LEGAL NOTICE | PUBLIC/LEGAL NOTICE | PUBLIC/LEGAL NOTICE

FOR SALE

SALES

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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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.

To advertise in the Classifieds, call Lea at 903-473-2653.

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SMITH'S LAWN CARE
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HOOTEN'S LAWN & TREE SERVICE, LLC Tim Hooten
Lawn maintenance, sodding, landscaping, tree trimming & removal, retaining walls, irrigation systems. LI 0019094. 903-473-8706, 903-474-4402.

TREE SERVICES

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

HOOTEN'S LAWN & TREE SERVICE, LLC.
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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 Calhoun's Gym LLC 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, including but not limited to facade upgrade, signage, electrical, window, door, and landscape improvements and other expenses related to the same. Total of all project incentives and the expenditure of funds not to exceed $3,000.00.

The EDC will hold the public hearings in which all interested persons shall have the right to be heard regarding such proposed project incentives and expenditure of funds. The public hearings will be held at the City of Emory/EDC Conference Room, 329 N. Texas St., Emory, Texas, 75440 on Wednesday, November 4, 2026, at 11:30 a.m.

Jessie Hicks, Executive Assistant, Emory Development Corporation

ADVERTISING WORKS
903-473-2653

PUBLIC NOTICE

Application has been made with the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission for a Wine & Malt Beverage Retail Dealer's Off Premise Permit by American Investor Group LLC D/B/A Axtons Bass City Resort to be located at 2959 FM 2946, Emory, Rains County, TX 75440. The sole Manager of said entity is Subhadra Paruchuri, Manager.

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 off ce 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 off ce, located on FM 1567, east of Hwy. 19, north of Emory, Tex., or south of Sulphur Springs, Tex., whether or not water is available at the tract of land in question.

Shirley Water Supply Corp.
6684 FM 1567W
Sulphur Springs, Texas 75482

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE

Pursuant to Chapter 59, Texas Property Code, Rains County Storage, which is located on Hwy. 19 and FM 2795, in Rains County, Texas will hold a public auction of property being sold to satisfy a landlord's lien. Sale will be at 10:00 a.m. on November 21, 2026. Property will be sold to the highest bidder for cash. Deposit for removal and clean-up may be temporarily required. Seller reserves the right to not accept any bid and to withdraw property from sale. Property in each space may be sold item-by-item, in batches, or by the space. Property being sold includes contents in space(s) of the tenant listed below, with brief description of contents in the spaces(s).

Tenant's complete name as shown on rental agreement and general description of property:

Sarah Boyett Contents in Unit 5
Nicole Young Contents in Unit 21
Richard Gillis Contents in Unit 37
Ronald Brown Contents in Unit 51
Katia Mora Contents in Unit 52
Hunter Dieken Contents in Unit 59
Elaine Wise Contents in Units 67 & 68
Ronald Gomm Contents in Unit 75
Kathy Lane Contents in Unit 112
Jonathan Mungaray Contents in Unit 119

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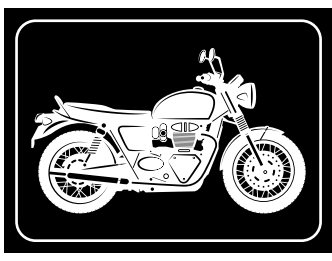
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9	8	1	3	4	5	2	7	6
6	2	5	9	1	7	3	4	8
7	3	4	8	2	6	5	1	9
3	6	9	5	7	2	1	8	4
2	1	8	4	6	9	7	3	5
4	5	7	1	8	3	9	6	2
1	9	6	2	3	4	8	5	7
5	4	3	7	9	8	6	2	1
8	7	2	6	5	1	4	9	3



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50 years ago this week

Gleanings from the Rains County Leader archives

Thursday, October 28, 1976

General Election Tuesday, Nov. 2nd

In the general election Tuesday, Nov. 2nd, a total of some 3,000 voters in Rains County are given the choice of choosing candidates, who will be in charge of our county, state and national government. If we do our share, we at least have the opportunity to vote for or against, as our choice.

This year's general election might be the greatest in our generation to help uphold the freedom, way of life, yes, and freedom of choice.

Vote as you choose, but please do vote.

Voting places will be at Emory, Point and East Tawakoni.

4-H Girls Learn Cake Decorating

On Monday & Tuesday night the 18th & 19th of October, five 4-H Club girls went to Jan Stone's house to learn the basic cake decorating steps to having beautiful cakes.

Those attending the meetings were: Kim Sisk, Denita Clifton, Deann Potts, Patty Carter and Donna Stone. On-lookers attending were Carol Stone and Connie Jo Stone.

Monday night the girls learned to level their cakes, ice their cakes smoothly, shell border, writing, and making roses. Kim Sisk won the turn table when her name was drawn.

Tuesday night the girls did their complete cake and then piped an elephant holding flag on top of their cake. Patty Carter won the small teddy bear cake mold when her name was drawn.

4-H Club is a great organization. You should contact Mary Sue Cole for more information.







