Rains County Leader

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Vol. 140, Issue 23 – 1 Section, 12 pages EMORY, TEXAS – THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2026 **PRICE 75¢**

RAINS COUNTY

Commissioners spend afternoon discussing roads

By CHUCK FITTS
Rains County Leader staff

The Rains County Commissioners Court discussed the plans and goals for the Rains County Road & Bridge Department during a special meeting on Thursday, Nov. 5.

Rains County Judge Brent Hilliard stated at the start that the purpose of the meeting was to set goals, make plans and set deadlines for the Road & Bridge Department.

He restated that the agreed-upon goal for the department during the 2026-27 budget year is to focus on ditches and drainage to keep standing water from compromising the foundations of the roads.

The discussion touched on the fact that some roads will be more work-intensive than others, as well as trimming trees beside roadways, dealing with utilities in ditches, cutting ditches and replacing culverts. Commissioners also mentioned several times in the past when county residents were upset with the Road & Bridge Department for trimming trees along the sides of roads.

Commissioners discussed a policy for the court to decide whether a paved road would get crushed concrete. It was explained that crushed concrete had been used to fill holes in the base, and the department had not gotten back to lay pavement over those areas. They stated it was not something the department would normally do.

The court was presented with a request for qualifications (RFQ) to find an engineering firm to help with the assessment and engineering of county roads. The notice was unanimously approved.

The court also discussed the purchase of a John Deere tractor with a cutter but took no action.

Before beginning the roads discussion, the court was presented with a

see **COURT** *on page 2*

Sea Cadet makes waves in Rains County



Leader photo by CHUCK FITTS

Naval Sea Cadet Audrey Jones is presented a certificate of recognition for her outstanding dedication, leadership, community service and academic excellence by Griselda Chalk of the American Legion Auxiliary Unit 156 during a ceremony after the Veterans Parade in Emory on Saturday, November 7.

RAINS ISD

Board backs plan to lift Rains Intermediate from F rating

By CHUCK FITTS
Rains County Leader staff

The Rains ISD Board of Trustees held a regular meeting on Monday, November 9, to consider the Rains Intermediate Targeted Improvement Plan, hear about the accomplishments of the district's Career and Technical Education (CTE) Program and apply for grants.

The meeting began with a public hearing on the Targeted Improvement Plan from the Rains Intermediate campus. The plan was required by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) after the campus received a F rating in the last Academic Accountability Rating released in September.

As presented, the campus will continue with the Bluebonnet Learning curriculum and add instructional coaching, weekly teacher planning meetings, classroom observations every two weeks and two daily intervention periods for students who are behind. The goal is for 72 percent of students to be at approaching grade level on STAAR this spring and 38 percent meeting grade level, up from 60 percent and 32 percent last year.

No one from the public spoke during the public hearing so it was closed. Later in the meeting, the plan was unanimously approved by the board.

Paulette Aguilar and Robert Fisher spoke to the board about the district's CTE program and its goal to "to get every student college, career, military or life ready."

Fisher stated to the board that members of the senior class of 2026 had 111 industry certifications. He noted that so far the class of 2027 has 82 students who have industry certifications, the class of 2028 has 61 and the class of 2029 has 28.

To show the progress of the program, Fisher pointed to the graduating class of 2023 that had 29 students graduate with industrial certification.

"At the end of the day, what we want is very hands-on industry-aligned instruction," Aguilar said.

The trustees considered a proposal to

see **RISD** *on page 2*

TEXAS COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS

Emory native named TCMA Female Artist of the Year



Courtesy photo

Billie Jo Jones celebrates her Female Artist of the Year win at the 2026 Texas Country Music Awards at Billy Bob's Texas in Fort Worth.

From Staff Reports
Rains County Leader staff

Billie Jo Jones of Emory, a 2009 graduate of Rains High School, was named Female Artist of the Year at the 2026 Texas Country Music Awards on Sunday, Nov. 8, at Billy Bob's Texas in the Fort Worth Stockyards. She performs as Billie Jo.

In a social media post about the award, Jones thanked her family and team. She gave special credit to her grandparents, Richard and Billie Ebert of Emory, who raised her.

"Everything good in me started with the love and sacrifices they made for me," she wrote. "The truth is, I'm not standing here because the road was easy. I'm standing here because I didn't quit."

The award follows six consecutive No. 1 singles on Texas country radio. Her newest single, "Honk In This Tonk," a duet with Gretchen Wilson, had the highest first-week debut of her career on every Texas country radio chart.

The song was written by her manager, Len Snow of Get Joe Records, and produced by Kent Wells, a longtime collaborator of Dolly Parton.

Jones also reached a national audience over nine episodes of "The Road," the CBS music competition series streaming on Paramount+. The show features Keith Urban, Blake Shelton and Wilson.

"Honk In This Tonk" is available now on digital music platforms and at country radio.

Readers can see Jones live in Sulphur Springs on Saturday, Nov. 21, when she headlines at Canteen 2.0. She also plays the Rhinestone Saloon in Fort Worth on Saturday, Dec. 19.

SPOTLIGHT

Ferris Thompson is a young woman with a great work ethic

By JUDY KRAMER
Rains County Leader contributor

Ferris Thompson knows a lot about donuts and other breakfast foods that early risers buy on their way to work. In fact, she sells these items at Donut Supreme at 300 West Lennon from 5:00 a.m. until noon. The 19-year-old has been employed by the shop since she was 15 years old and going to school at the Rains Independent School District. She enjoys what she does and plans to make it her long-term career.

She is a cute, petite, sweet person who makes customers feel at home when they enter the business. She has duties besides waiting on customers, but she says that customer service is her main duty.

"In high school I worked on weekends, but now work all seven days a week," said Thompson. "I am an organized person, like the routine, and am used to waking up early and working from 4:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The owners of the shop begin work at 1:00 a.m. when they begin baking fresh doughnuts and croissants as well as preparing other foods."

The shop offers 11 kinds of donuts, six types of kolaches, biscuits and burritos, croissants and multiple beverage options.

She said that she doesn't even think about the early start of her day because she has afternoons off. She gets along well with the staff and when she wants or needs time off, she can ask for it and return to work when she is able. She grabs a meal when she has time and puts it aside if a customer comes in the shop.

Thompson's employers have been in the business of serving the public from 15 to 20 years in Emory. She said that they travel to Cambodia sometimes and stay gone for about a month.

Thompson lives with her mother and sister in town and said the family moved to the local area when she was two years old to be near an aunt and uncle. She said that she and her family like to take time to travel to places like Arkansas and Branson, Missouri. She likes being around mountains and trails which she loves. She says that she is a cat person and there are four cats and two dogs at her house.

Her hobbies include roller blading, hockey, being outside, and catching frogs.



Ferris Thompson

City Girl: *Welcome Home!* *Page 3*

Jody Dyer: *Mothman – Small Town...* *page 3*

Wildcat Sports *page 6*

Rain Report

No rain this week.

Total for Oct. . . . . 3.40 in.
Total for Nov. . . . . 0.03 in.
Year to date . . . . . 28.92 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 Tue., 6:30 p.m. Emory Baptist Church

EAST TAWAKONI SENIOR CITIZEN GAME DAY
Every Wed., 9:00 a.m. 255 Oakleaf Trail.

EMORY LIONS CLUB
1st and 3rd Tue., 12:00 p.m. Dos Charros in Emory. 214-620-6226, *www.lionsclub.org*

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 – Jan., Apr., July, Oct. Last Thur of month. 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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H.W. Martin - 1887
Sam Fitzgerald - Before 1900
W.O. Hebisen - Before 1900
A.S. Hornbeck - Before 1900
J.H. Bradford - 1901-1904
Tom W. Hill - 1904-1937
Earl Hill, Sr. - 1937-1960
Kathleen Hill Becknell - 1962-1995
Earl Hill, Jr. - 1995-2019

NEWS BRIEFS

Good Sam Clothes/ Thrift Shop Sales

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

American Legion Breakfast Sat., Nov. 14

Rabb Brothers Memorial American Legion Post #156 will hold a breakfast buffet on Saturday, November 14, from 7:00-10:00 a.m. at the Post home at 215 N. Duffy St. in Emory. Takeouts are offered. Payment is by donation, which goes toward the upkeep of the home and for veterans projects.

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.

SLKC Fundraiser Thanksgiving Bake Sale Nov. 21

Salt & Light Kids Club (a 501(c)(3) Christian homeschool learning and community service club) is holding a fundraiser bake sale at Good Samaritans on Saturday, November 21, 8:00 a.m. – noon. A coffee and hot chocolate bar will also be available.

American Legion Dinner Sat., Nov. 21

Rabb Brothers Memorial American Legion Post #156 will offer a dinner of Shepherd's Pie with desserts and drinks on Saturday, November 21, from 4:00-7:00 p.m. at the Post home at 215 N. Duffy St. in Emory. Takeouts are offered. Payment is by donation, which goes toward the upkeep of the home and for veterans projects.

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.*

Toys for Tots Applications available online

The 2026 Toys for Tots Applications are only available online and must be received by December 1. The link for the application may be found at *www.toysfortots.org.* Businesses or organizations wishing to host a box may also apply online.

Angel Tree Angels available now

Angel Trees have been delivered to area businesses. Locations include Sidekick's Bar & Grill, Roma's Restaurant, El Manna, Brookshire's and Hooten's Hardware. **Gifts must be dropped off at one of these locations by December 5**, or may be dropped off at the Rains County Fairgrounds December 5 from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Those interested in volunteering can call or text 903-662-8621, or email *rainscountyangeltree@gmail.com.* Those interested in making monetary donations for Forgotten Angel Shopping may do so online at *https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/donation-form/donate-to-rains-county-angel-tree*, or by mail at P.O. Box 1071, Emory, TX 75440.

Vendors needed for Christmas Around the Park

The City of Emory is looking for vendors for the Christmas Around the Park event being held on Saturday, Dec. 5. Businesses, crafters, artists and game or activity booths are welcome. A 10x10 booth costs $25, and electricity is limited. Setup is at 11:00 a.m., and the event opens at noon. Applications may be found online at the *www.cityofemory.com* or at City Hall and **must be turned in by Nov. 25**. Email to *leah@emorytx.com* or mail to PO Box 100, Emory, TX 75440.

Christmas Parade entries due Nov. 30

Entries are open for Emory's Christmas Parade, which starts at 7:00 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 5. Floats, vehicles, horses and other entries will line up at 6:00 p.m. at the Emory Emergency Shelter, 735 N. Texas St. Parking there is limited, so groups should carpool. Santa Claus has confirmed he'll be in the parade, so no other Santas are allowed. **Entry forms are due at Emory City Hall by Monday, Nov. 30.** Drop them off in person or email them to *jessie@emorytx.com*. For details, call the Emory EDC at 903-473-2465, ext. 106 or 112.

Emory storefront decorating contest

The Emory Development Corporation invites all businesses within the Emory city limits to enter "Emory's Tinsel Town," its fourth annual Christmas Storefront Decorating Contest. First, second and third place will win awards and prizes. Winners will be announced Saturday, Dec. 5, at the Emory Christmas Parade. **Registration will close on Tuesday, Dec. 1 at 4:00 p.m.** To register, contact Leah Drown or Jessie Hicks at 903-473-2465 or *jessie@emorytx.com*, or stop by 329 N. Texas St.

Community Seeds Christmas Dinner Dec. 3.

Community Seeds, a 501(c)(3) faith-based organization serving families throughout Hunt and Rains County, will hold the 18th Annual Christmas Dinner, December 3, 6:00 p.m., at Caddo Creek Venue in Greenville. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. The fundraiser gala features a menu of garlic-buttery smoked prime rib with all the trimmings (chicken or prime rib pork chop also available) and dessert. There will be music, a very special guest and a beautifully decorated venue. Individual tickets $125. Spaces limited. RSVP to (903)634-5673 or (903)634-4444, or visit *cseeds.org/gala.*

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 and fees 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.

Financial Independence, Retire Early: Dream or Reality?

There's a retirement strategy focused on building enough financial independence to retire early or gain greater flexibility over your career and lifestyle. It's called FIRE, which stands for Financial Independence, Retire Early



BRANDON ROBERTS
Edward Jones Financial Advisor

FIRE resonates with some people because, in addition to early retirement, it encourages intentional spending, disciplined saving and investing, and thoughtful planning for the future.

But retiring early comes with important trade-offs. Future expenses may change, healthcare coverage will need to be replaced before Medicare eligibility and you'll likely need to rely on personal savings for longer before Social Security benefits begin.

It's also important to remember that popular rules of thumb may not work for everyone. Early retirement often means your savings need to support more years of spending and inflation, so your strategy should be tailored to your goals and circumstances.

Whether your goal is early retirement or simply greater financial freedom, a financial advisor can help you build a personalized plan.

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

COURT

Continued from page 1

contract for services from CASA Engineering to provide engineering expertise for the insurance claims concerning hail damage to county buildings. The firm has more than 20 years of experience working with insurance companies to get the right reimbursements to fix damage, not just cosmetic issues. The contract was unanimously approved.

Commissioners discussed posting events on the county's website but decided a policy would need to be drafted before doing so. A motion was made and unanimously approved to post the Veterans Day Parade and Christmas Round the Square on the county website while the policy is developed.

The court approved a resolution to submit a grant application for the Texas Community Development Block Grant Program, accepted Jennifer Malone's certifications into the minutes of the meeting and agreed to apply for the Texas Indigent Defense Commission Formula Grant Program.

All commissioners were present for the special meeting.

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

THE PUBLIC FORUM

Dear Editor

The Rains County Commissioners Court would like to offer its heartfelt gratitude to Shawn Brookshire and BGS Construction Services for the donation of the time, effort, and resources required to make repairs and improvements to the Rains County Courthouse handicap parking areas.

Rains County Commissioners Court

RISD

Continued from page 1

apply for the Learning Acceleration Support Opportunities (LASO) Cycle 5 grant from TEA. The grant focuses on strategic planning, curriculum and instruction, strategic talent systems, expanded instructional time and innovative school models. The motion to apply for the grant was unanimously approved.

The board entered closed session to discuss personnel issues for about 50 minutes, but took no action upon returning to open session.

The next regular meeting of the Rains ISD School Board is scheduled for Monday, December 14, at 6:30 p.m. in the Alexander Boardroom of the Rains ISD Administration building.

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ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
ALL NOVEMBER LONG
WYLIE COMMUNITY CHRISTIAN CARE CENTER GOURMET COFFEE AVAILABLE
EXTENDED HOLIDAY HOURS
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

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!

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

CITY GIRL

Welcome Home!

By Linda Brendle

This article was first published on November 4, 2021. As we celebrated Veterans Day yesterday, I wanted to remind my readers of what many of our veterans really went through and what they still deal with today. Here's one man's story:



LINDA BRENDLE
Leader correspondent

In February of 1965, nineteen-year-old Robert Worley was accepted into the U.S. Marine Corps Platoon Leaders Class as a lance corporal E-3. He admits that, at the time, he had never heard of Vietnam – he was busy trying to adapt to college after Paducah High School. Three weeks later, everyone knew about Vietnam.

On March 8, 1965, President Johnson launched what became a three-year campaign of sustained bombing of targets in North Vietnam and the Ho Chi Minh Trail in Operation Rolling Thunder. The same month, U.S. Marines landed on beaches near DaNang, South Vietnam as the first American combat troops to enter Vietnam. Still, Worley thought the war, which was being called a police action, would be over by the time he graduated from college in 1968.

However, before he received his degree he was being trained by Vietnam veterans, and the TET offensive turned 1968 into the bloodiest year of the war. In October of 1969, 2nd Lt. Robert Worley was sent to DaNang Air Base as part of the First Marine Aircraft Wing. He was assigned as the Supply Officer for Marine Composite Reconnaissance Squadron 1. In December, he was promoted to 1st Lieutenant.

By then, Worley had learned some of the history of Vietnam. The French preceded the United States in South Vietnam until May 7, 1954 when North Vietnam defeated them at Dien Bien Phu. The U.S. provided the French and South Vietnamese with money and became secretly involved in the war in 1955 as soon as the French left. The first official U.S. death in Vietnam occurred in 1960, and President Kennedy officially entered Vietnam in 1961 with troop buildup. By 1962, nine thousand American troops were in South Vietnam in an advisory capacity but some were being killed. In February of 1965, President Johnson ordered the bombing of targets in North Vietnam in Operation Flaming Dart in retaliation for a Viet Cong raid at the U.S. base in the city of Pleiku and at a nearby helicopter base at Camp Holloway.

The Vietnam War is a controversial part of our nation's history with many attributing shameful and brutal behavior to the American military and touting the humane conduct of the North Vietnamese. Among the many spreading pro-Communist and anti-U.S. rhetoric were John Kerry, Dan Rather, and Walter Cronkite, to name a few. Most notable among these is Jane Fonda who toured Vietnam in July of 1972 where she visited several sites including the Hanoi Hilton, the infamous Hoa Lo Prison in Hanoi. After her visit, Fonda concluded that the U.S. was unjustly bombing farmland and other sites far removed from military targets. She also claimed the Vietnamese provided their prisoners of war with the most humane treatment in the history of war.

John Kerry also spent three months in Vietnam. After returning home to run for congress, he told about how inhumane the U.S. military was. Kerry was once asked by David Frost if the South Vietnamese people liked U.S. soldiers. Kerry's answer was that the Americans were hated. But Worley has a completely different story to tell.

Shortly after being stationed in DaNang, Worley discovered that his unit regularly sent medical civic action patrols far into the jungle to take medical teams – doctors, nurses, dentists, surgeons, and other volunteers – to offer treatment to South Vietnamese who had been brutalized by the North Vietnamese. They worked in crude conditions, doing amputations in mud huts and performing dental procedures sitting on a four-legged stool on patients who were sitting in a regular chair. All personnel kept helmets and pistols at the ready in case of attack. The medical teams were always accompanied by a Marine reinforced rifle company for protection. Worley went once as an observer, and he said once was enough. He went on to say, "It was a sobering day, seeing the torture and cruelty the North Vietnamese did to Vietnamese natives who they thought were friendly to the Americans." The First Marine Aircraft Wing received the Civic Action Medal from the South Vietnamese government for these trips and more that benefitted the South Vietnamese.

Although the medical missions were not for him, Worley still wanted to be part of what was included in that "more." When he discovered that a group of Marines, enlisted and officers, and Vietnamese Air Force officers were teaching English as a Second Language at a Catholic orphanage, he wanted in. Every Tuesday night the volunteer teachers dressed in flak jackets and traveled through enemy territory to Ahn Sang School where they taught grades 1-12 and others. They were shot at on the way to the school, and classes were taught to the background of the sounds of war.

The students in Worley's class included a high school principal, a nurse, and a teenage boy. The teenager was a Montagnard Indian, a generic term for Vietnamese natives who lived in the mountains and were fiercely anti-communist. One of Worley's most treasured war relics is a hand-carved wooden water buffalo bell given to him by this student. His favorite ESL memory is the evening he spent explaining America's favorite pastime to a class who didn't know what baseball was.

In direct rebuttal to John Kerry's claim that the South Vietnamese hated Americans, Worley said, "We were all that was between them and genocide." When Nixon announced a phased withdrawal, his ESL class was in tears, asking why the Americans were leaving them. "They were terrified, and they all wanted us there," he added. On his last night, Worley gave a graduation speech. "I told them to be strong. I said that even though the good guys were pulling out, their army could prevail. I lied."

Of course, not all the natives were as cordial. The South Vietnamese bought garbage from the Americans, and some of those people were used to set up attacks on the base. One day Worley noticed a mama-san walking very slowly and carefully across the base. Later, it was realized that she was making markers for a planned rocket attack. In early 1970 during one of these raids, a Vietnamese rocket exploded close to his hooch, landing squarely on an enlisted hooch. One enlisted Marine was killed, seven were injured, and Worley eventually developed tinnitus and went deaf.

Another of Worley's treasures is a signed copy of *When Hell Was in Session*, a book written by Admiral/Senator Jeremiah Denton. The inscription reads *Robert, To one of the best who always got there 1st.* In response to Jane Fonda's comments about the Hanoi Hilton, Worley refers to that book. Denton was a prisoner at the time of Fonda's visit. He says that, before she arrived, prisoners were cleaned up and given new clothes, and anyone who showed signs of being beaten or punished was secluded. The prisoners were lined up, and Fonda shook hands with each one. Denton says the man next to him palmed a note to her giving names of some of the other prisoners, and that she passed it on to the prison guards. After she left, that prisoner was beaten to death.

When asked what he most wanted people to take away from his story, Worley said, "We were not murderers." He conceded that atrocities occurred in Vietnam. "There were a few who were vicious," he said, "but there are vicious people in regular civilian life. The vicious ones of the 2.1 million who served in Vietnam were in the minority.

"One of the hardest times for those who served 'boots on the ground' in Vietnam was the return. We were aware of the nation's attitude toward us during and after Vietnam. I only encountered the negativism a few times, and it wasn't that bad for me. But I had friends who were cursed at, spit on and called 'baby killers.' That was really sad. I only got accused of being a baby killer once. Some of the most ardent promoters of that attitude – John Kerry among them – are still with us and still spewing out stupidity. To this day it is appropriate to say to a Vietnam veteran – 'Welcome Home!'"

Worley left Vietnam in May of 1970 as a 1st Lt. He was transferred immediately to Okinawa, then to Camp Pendleton, California in July of 1971. He was honorably discharged in July of 1972 as a Captain.

Robert Worley is now retired from his position as Director of Economic Development of the City of Emory Development Corporation. For more insights into the politics and strategies of the long Vietnam War, he suggests "We Were Soldiers Once, and Young" written by Army Lt. Col. Hal Moore and also the movie, "We Were Soldiers."

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*.

Mothman – Small Town Monster

"What stands six feet tall, has wings, two big red eyes six inches apart and glides along an auto at 100 miles per hour? Don't know? Well neither do four Point Pleasant residents who were chased by a weird 'man-like thing' Tuesday night."

Mary Hyre – Columnist
The Athens Messenger



JODY DYER
Typewriter Weekly

It was a cold and dark November night in 1966 when Roger and Linda Scarberry and their friends Steve and Mary Mallett decided to go for a ride in Roger's 1957 Chevy Bel Air. Their meandering nighttime drive took them by an old abandoned WWII munitions plant and storage facility known as the TNT area, just outside of their hometown of Point Pleasant, West Virginia. As they neared the facility, a creature appeared in their headlights at the side of the road ahead. They described it later as a 6-7 feet tall humanoid figure with large, glowing red eyes and a massive wingspan. The thing stood and stared at their approaching car. As the terrified couples sped by, the creature gave chase, pursuing them back to town at speeds up to 100 mph. As it flew alongside their car, the monster emitted a high-frequency sound that made the fillings in their teeth ache. Deputy Millard Halstead who interviewed the couples later said that you could see the terror in their eyes and he was convinced they were not lying. Based on the brute's description, Mary Hyre, a local reporter and columnist for *The Athens Messenger* newspaper, dubbed the creature Mothman, and one of the strangest cryptid legends in American folklore was born.

Over the next 13 months, many more sightings were reported across the region, only ending the following December, when disaster struck with another strange occurrence where 46 people lost their lives.

The initial sighting of the Mothman monster occurred on Tuesday, November 15, 1966. Reporter Mary Hyre's first headline story the next day ran with the title – "Winged, Red-Eyed 'Thing' Chases Point Couples Across Countryside." Hyre's next Mothman story ran the very next day with the headline "Monster Returns to Mason" (the town of Point Pleasant was located in Mason County). Hyre wrote:

"Six – or maybe seven – more people became believers in the Mason County Monster Wednesday night. What was it they saw? They don't know, but they have managed to convince a raft of people they saw something."

The town tried to make sense of these first sightings. Some thought the creature had to be a large owl, or some kind of mutant sandhill crane hatched in the toxic environment of the TNT area. Some thought it was an alien from outer space. More sightings would come.

Two days after the first sighting, construction worker Newell Patridge claimed his German Shepherd disappeared into the night after chasing two giant red eyes glowing in the tree line behind his house.

Then, on November 25, the day after Thanksgiving, there was another sighting. This time it was in broad daylight. That Friday morning Tom Ury, age 25, of nearby Clarksburg, sighted the creature about 7:15 a.m. while driving on Route 62. He was approximately eight miles north of Point Pleasant, nearing the "Homer Smith Farm" when he reportedly saw the monster "rise up just like a helicopter" from a nearby field and fly away.

Several more sightings were reported in December and early January. Waitress Faye Dewitt reported that she saw Mothman perched on the roof of the Mason County Courthouse one evening. Firefighter Paul Yoder said he encountered Mothman, again seen on Route 62, standing in the middle of the highway in the early morning, around 3:00 a.m. Previous unreported sightings also came to light, including a report from a group of gravediggers who claimed they had seen the monster earlier, but did not report it. More strange happenings continued.

On January 22, 1967, there was a reported UFO sighting in the area. A Mr. Tad Jones, of Dunbar, said he spotted an unusual disc-like craft hovering above Interstate 64. On April 2, reporter Mary Hyre related in her column that there had been continued sightings of both the Mothman and more UFOs. She noticed that folks were having "watch parties" in hopes of seeing either the Mothman or his UFO friends. More was to come...

On December 15, 1967, the Silver Bridge, which spanned the Ohio River and connected Point Pleasant, West Virginia, to Gallipolis, Ohio, collapsed at 5:00 p.m. during rush-hour traffic. Forty-six people were killed. Prior to the collapse, some witnesses claimed they saw Mothman on the bridge, theorizing that the creature was an omen or forewarning of the impending disaster. Mothman sightings largely stopped after the bridge collapse.

In March of 1975, John Keel, a well-known UFO researcher and writer, who had investigated the Mothman story and worked with Mary Hyre, published a book based on his work – *The Mothman Prophecies*. In the book Keel speculated about the connection between the Silver Bridge collapse and the appearance of Mothman. Keel's book was used as the basis for the 2002 movie of the same name starring Richard Gere. The movie has gained a significant cult following. If interested, you can watch *The Mothman Prophecies* for free (with ads) on YouTube.

If you visit Point Pleasant today, it is evident that the town has embraced Mothman in all his glory. Downtown there is a twelve-foot tall Mothman statue. You can also visit the Mothman Museum. And every September the good folks of Point Pleasant stage the Mothman Festival. I have not been to Point Pleasant, but would like to visit someday.

It's hard to know how much of this tale is truth, and how much is fiction, but it is a good story…

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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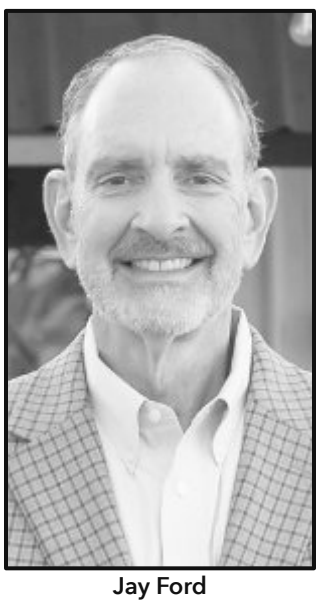
MARQUIS WHO'S WHO

Ford named to Who's Who

Rains County resident Jay Ford has been recognized by Marquis Who's Who for his work in logistics and supply chain management.

Ford became chief executive officer of Premier LogiTech in Coppell this year and also serves on the company's board of directors. From 2024 to 2025, he was a senior executive adviser to the Postmaster General at the U.S. Postal Service. Before that, he held senior roles at GXO Logistics, XPO Logistics, Ingram Micro Mobility and other companies, in a career that began at AT&T in 1985. One of his best-known projects was automating a reverse logistics facility for mobile devices that handled 65,000 to 75,000 devices a day. Ford believes it was the first facility of its kind in the country.

Ford graduated from Louisiana Tech University. In 2018, he and his wife bought a farm in Rains County, where they raise cattle and horses and grow hay. He supports Rains ISD programs and volunteers in the community. In March, he ran for Rains County Judge, coming within 212 votes of the incumbent in the primary. He calls the campaign one of the most rewarding experiences of his life.



Jay Ford

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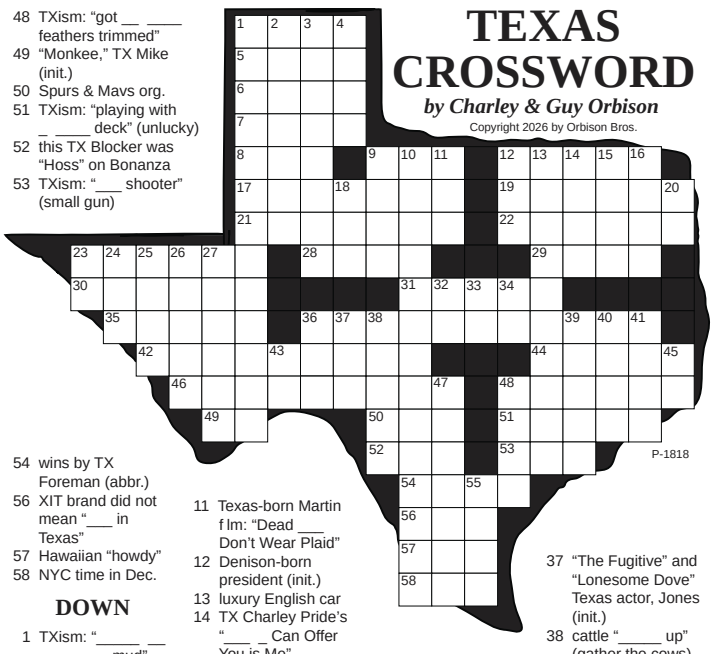
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TEXAS CROSSWORD

by Charley & Guy Orbison

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P-1818

ACROSS

1 TXism: "watering ____" (pond)
5 horse doc (2 wds.)
6 this Nocona was father of Chief Quanah Parker
7 George W.'s title (2001-09) abbr.
8 sweet tater
9 1960s war for many Texas soldiers, for short
12 Cowboy "Too Tall" was first overall _____ pick in 1974
17 Van _____, TX
19 TXism: "bet your bottom _____."
21 rise late (2 wds.)
22 "Mama Cass" _____
23 chicken that is bred in Texas
28 TXism: "tie up the loose ____"
29 TXism: "stretch your ____" (smile)
30 TX Vernon Dalhart's "Can't __ ____ Me Calling Caroline?"
31 TXism: "truth stretchers"
35 this TX Jones pioneered theater-in-the-round
36 TXism: "tough as _ _____ _____ steak"
42 ___-_____ hat (early cowboy hat)
44 TXism: "it'll make your hair stand __ ____" (scary)
46 TX Stephen Stills wrote 1969 hit: "_____: ____ Blue Eyes"
48 TXism: "got __ ____ feathers trimmed"
49 "Monkee," TX Mike (init.)
50 Spurs & Mavs org.
51 TXism: "playing with _ ____ deck" (unlucky)
52 this TX Blocker was "Hoss" on Bonanza
53 TXism: "___ shooter" (small gun)
54 wins by TX Foreman (abbr.)
56 XIT brand did not mean "___ in Texas"
57 Hawaiian "howdy"
58 NYC time in Dec.

DOWN

1 TXism: "_____ __ _ ___ __ mud" (contented)
2 TXism: "turn ____ ___ the cow patties in Texas" (extensive search)
3 TXism: "never ___ '__ ___ you sweat"
4 pilot abbreviations
9 former ABC drama: "____ Blue"
10 WWII Iwo Jima combat, e.g. (3 wds.)
11 Texas-born Martin film: "Dead ___ Don't Wear Plaid"
12 Denison-born president (init.)
13 luxury English car
14 TX Charley Pride's "___ _ Can Offer You is Me"
15 pancake cooking action
16 New Mexico ski area
18 TXism: "wouldn't touch it with a ___-foot pole"
20 late Texas actor, "Rip" (init.)
23 TXism: "__ the skin of my teeth"
24 computer memory
25 TXism: "at the drop of _ ___"
26 TX Tanya Tucker's "_____ Some Love"
27 TX John Hillerman was in TV's "_____ P.I." (1980-88)
32 TX Willie Nelson's "Farm Aid __"
33 Ranger/Astro leag.
34 this Duvall was in "The Apostle" with TX Farrah (init.)
36 "Steak and ___"
37 "The Fugitive" and "Lonesome Dove" Texas actor, Jones (init.)
38 cattle "_____ up" (gather the cows)
39 TXism: "he'll kick you ____ _ funeral home" (mean horse)
40 calf meat
41 Oklahoma town
43 TXism: "try your hand __ it"
45 a Texas ID (abbr.)
47 Rangers and Astros New York foe
48 atlas pages
55 TXism: "chew __ __ awhile" (ponder)

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Sheriff's Report

The Rains County Sheriff's Office took the following reports of activity during the week of November 2-8:

Arrests



MICHAEL HOPKINS
Rains County Sheriff

11-3: Gabriel Nicole Hickman. Possession of a controlled substance, PG 1/1-B, less than 1 gram; probation violation warrant.

11-4: Charity Amber Lillian Tant. Driving while intoxicated.

11-6: Jordan Don Currey. Traffic offense, Class C; resisting arrest, $25,400 bond.

11-6: Clinton Ryan Galiano. Assault of a peace officer or judge, $230,000 bond.

Calls

11-2: CR 3446 Medical assist; S Texas St. Welfare concern; FM 2946 Accident; W North St. Meet complainant; S 1st St. Point Livestock on roadway; Sheriff's Office (SO) Lobby Release property; FM 779 Medical assist; SO Lobby Meet complainant; SO Lobby Meet complainant; SO Lobby Meet complainant; CR 1640 Welfare concern; CR 3374 Environmental; FM 47 Livestock on roadway; S Texas St. Medical assist; FM 3299 Medical assist; PR 7722 Medical assist; E Lennon Dr. Meet complainant; CR 3060 Environmental; Hwy. 276 Welfare concern; Hwy. 276 Consensual contact; Hwy. 276 Welfare concern; Mohawk Tr. East Tawakoni (ET) Shots fired; FM 2795 Aggressive animal; SO Lobby Agency assist; CR 1621 Animal at large.

11-3: Clark Dr. Debris in roadway; Mill St. Consensual contact; CR 4510 Suspicious activity; CR 4516 Brush fire; Airport Rd. Medical assist; W North St. Investigation; PR 7722 Medical assist; CR 3325 Trespassing; S 1st St. Point Medical assist; CR 3445 Consensual contact; Hwy. 19N Medical assist; Quitman St. Suspicious activity; CR 2420 Child custody; CR 2120 Aggressive animal; Clark Dr. Downed power lines; SO Lobby Meet complainant; Mill St. Consensual contact; SO Lobby Meet complainant; SO Lobby Investigation; Doris Briggs Pkwy. Medical assist; Hwy. 69W Abandoned vehicle; FM 275 Domestic disturbance; Hwy. 19N Reckless driver; SO Lobby Meet complainant; SO Lobby Courtesy transport; PR 7321 Accident; W Quitman St. Structure fire; Clark St. Traffic control; FM 514 Medical assist; PR 7336 Repossession; Ravine St. Warrant service.

11-4: E Lennon Dr. Suspicious vehicle; W Lennon Dr. Animal welfare concern; Hwy. 276 Accident; Hays Cir. Agency assist; CR 1495 Controlled burn; W North St. Scam; W Lennon Dr. Accident; CR 1502 at Hwy. 276 Environmental; Hwy. 276 at CR 1411 Environmental; CR 1325 Medical assist; PR 8515 Shots fired; CR 1275 Medical assist; Hwy. 69 at FM 515 Accident; Hwy. 19N Medical assist; White Rock Rd. Environmental; FM 2946 Consensual contact; Hwy. 19S at S Dunbar Ln. Reckless driver; CR 3351 Domestic disturbance; FM 2737 at CR 1515 Livestock on roadway; Hwy. 276 ET Accident; FM 275 Agency assist; FM 2737 Livestock on roadway.

11-5: Ave. A Point Suspicious activity; Hwy. 69W Motorist assist; Industrial Park Rd. Suspicious vehicle; S Texas St. Disturbance; CR 3330 Disturbance; Kansas St. Medical assist; Pine St. Public assist; CR 2420 Medical assist; Hwy. 276 ET Reckless driver; E Lennon Dr. Medical assist; Hwy. 276 Controlled burn; SO Lobby Meet complainant; Hwy. 276 Aggressive animal; SO Lobby Meet complainant; PR 7795 Welfare concern; N Texas St. Accident; CR 2160 Environmental; W Quitman St. Controlled burn; S 1st St. Point Medical assist; Hwy. 19N bridge Accident; CR 1402 Disturbance; FM 3299 Consensual contact; PR 5449 Meet complainant; CR 3412 Missing person; E Lennon Dr. Noise complaint; CR 1140 Smoke investigation; PR 5501 Medical assist; Airport Rd. Noise complaint; Hwy. 19N at the county line Debris in roadway.

11-6: E Lennon Dr. Suspicious vehicle; Hwy. 69 Suspicious person; CR 3445 Disturbance; CR 3445 Agency assist; PR 5451 Medical assist; Hwy. 276 at CR 1230 Accident; CR 4251 Medical assist; Hwy. 69E at CR 3381 Livestock on roadway; Hwy. 69 at TxDOT Consensual contact; FM 2795 Medical assist; Quitman St. at N Texas St. Motorist assist; SO Lobby Meet complainant; SO Lobby Meet complainant; W Quitman St. Intoxicated individual; White Rock Rd. Environmental; N Texas St. Accident; Ave. D Point Medical assist; CR 1307 Residence alarm; CR 3412 Welfare concern; W Lennon Dr. Medical assist; CR 3202 Meet complainant; Quitman St. at N Texas St. Motorist assist; Hwy. 69 Livestock on roadway; W North St. Meet complainant; CR 1307 Panic alarm; Hwy. 69 E Point city limits Reckless driver; CR 1472 Medical assist; CR 1410 Medical assist; S Dunbar Ln. Meet complainant; CR 1460 Medical assist.

11-7: Hwy. 69W Medical assist; E Lennon Dr. Suspicious vehicle; South St. Suspicious vehicle; E Lennon Dr. Suspicious vehicle; FM 275 Burglary; Quitman St. Consensual contact; McMillan Dr. Domestic disturbance; Hwy. 69W Welfare concern; Veterans Day Parade Special assignment; N Texas St. Medical assist; FM 514 Meet complainant; CR 1692 Death; CR 1150 Meet complainant; N Planters St. Business alarm; CR 3360 Medical assist; Honeysuckle Ln. Medical assist; FM 514 Medical assist; W Quitman St. Public assist; Hwy. 276 Reckless driver.

11-8: Hwy. 19N Accident; CR 3333 Suspicious activity; Doris Briggs Pkwy. Suspicious vehicle; E Lennon Dr. Consensual contact; Hwy. 69W Medical assist; CR 3025 Investigation; Ave. B Point Livestock on roadway; Hwy. 276 bridge Suspicious activity; W North St. Meet complainant; E Lennon Dr. Drug activity; FM 2795 Aggressive animal; E Lennon Dr. Business alarm; FM 2795 Medical assist; Hwy. 19N Livestock on roadway; CR 3345 Medical assist; Meadowview Ln. Point Shots fired; E Lennon Dr. Consensual contact; CR 1532 Meet complainant; Smith Cir. Point Hit-and-run accident; S Texas St. Reckless driver; S Texas St. Motorist assist; N Texas St. Medical assist.

The Sheriff's Department reported 459 calls for the week. Among the calls were: 1 paper service, 2 debris in roadway calls, 4 disturbances, 3 domestic disturbances, 1 downed power lines call, 1 drug activity, 42 extra patrols, 1 brush fire, 15 follow up investigations, 7 environmental calls, 1 structure fire, 1 intoxicated individual, 3 investigations, 8 livestock on roadway calls, 20 meet complainant calls, 2 noise complaints, 25 public service calls, 6 reckless drivers, 1 repossession, 1 scam, 3 shots fired calls, 1 smoke investigation, 1 special assignment, 1 missing person, 5 suspicious activity calls, 1 suspicious person, 7 suspicious vehicles, 1 traffic control, 1 warrant service, 7 welfare concerns, 1 trespassing, 11 accidents, 3 controlled burns, 1 death, 4 aggressive animals, 2 public assists, 84 area checks, 10 consensual contacts, 1 abandoned vehicle, 1 hit-and-run accident, 4 agency assists, 2 business alarms, 1 panic alarm, 1 residence alarm, 1 animal at large, 1 release property, 1 animal welfare concern, 4 motorist assists, 1 burglary, 1 child custody, 1 courtesy transport.

There were 114 traffic stops, 99 warnings, 13 citations, 36 medical calls, and 23 transports.

TEXAS RURAL REPORTER

Texas Exercised Its Independence

By Suzanne Bellsnyder,
Texas Rural Reporter



SUZANNE BELLSNYDER
Texas Rural Reporter

Texans have always been independent. We "Remember the Alamo," and independence is part of our state's identity. Over the years, Texas has been reliably red, and one might argue it has become a place where a political party could count on our votes before it even knew who it was going to put on the ballot.

Last Tuesday, it couldn't.

Some Republicans stayed home. Derek Ryan, a Republican data guru, estimated that about 625,000 Republicans sat out this election. I know a few. They couldn't bring themselves to vote for a Democrat, and they felt like the Republicans were offering them nothing. So they stayed home.

Other Republicans crossed party lines. Whether it was data centers or public education, some Republicans simply agreed with what Democrats were saying. In rural Texas, I heard that some Republicans didn't trust Abbott to protect Texans from the impacts of data centers after he'd welcomed Texas as the industry's epicenter. They also had a voucher hangover and questioned whether their own party was still on the same page with them on public education.

Nearly three in ten Texas voters described themselves as independent or something other than Republican or Democrat. That's roughly 2.9 million people. About one in seven voters said this was the first midterm they'd ever voted in. While some longtime voters decided to sit this one out, a lot of Texans decided this was the year to show up.

All of these voters exercised their independence, and they decided Tuesday's election. And here's what I find shocking in a state that's been so reliably red. In every one of our 254 counties, the margin in the U.S. Senate race moved toward the Democrat compared with the 2024 presidential vote.

You could see the shift even in rural, red Hansford County, where I live. Abbott still won 81 percent of the vote here. In 2022, 91 people voted for Beto O'Rourke. This year, 253 voted for Gina Hinojosa. That's 162 more votes in one small county. Add up shifts like that across rural Texas, and you can see how much was happening in counties that still showed up red on the map.

So what happens when both parties have to govern Texas again? I remember what that looked like.

When I worked in the state Capitol in the 1990s, George W. Bush was a Republican governor. Bob Bullock, the lieutenant governor, was a Democrat. So was House Speaker Pete Laney, who came from Hale Center in the Texas Panhandle. They worked together on public education, juvenile justice, and water. If the governor wanted to get something through the House, he had to deal with a Democrat from Hale Center. And the Democrat from Hale Center had to deal with him.

Republicans took control one piece at a time. Bush beat Ann Richards in 1994. Republicans took the Texas Senate in 1997 and swept the statewide races in 1998. Democrats still held the House under Laney. It took the 2002 election to give Republicans the House. When lawmakers came back in January 2003, Republicans controlled both chambers and the governor's office.

Come January, Democrats will have the governor's office and the House. Republicans will have the Senate. There are already signs that some of them are willing to work together. Republicans stood alongside Democrat Senfronia Thompson when she said she had the votes for speaker. The governor-elect named Ernest Bailes, a rural Republican who fought vouchers, to her transition team. I'd like to see the House give committee chairs to members of both parties again. Who knows the issue? Who can get a bill through committee that people on both sides can live with?

The tension between parties and the checks and balances of our government are a healthy part of our democracy. One might argue that one-party rule in Texas didn't serve Texans well and that working together again might be the medicine we need to keep Texas a state we can be proud of.

When one party can count on our votes, how hard does anybody in Austin have to listen when we tell them what's happening in our schools or what we're worried about with our water?

After all, there's really so much we agree on. We want good public schools. We want a hospital close enough to get to in an emergency. We want a say in what happens to our land and water. We can argue about how to do all of that. I expect we will.

But if Democrats come away from this election thinking they can count on those votes next time, they ought to ask Republicans how that worked out for them last Tuesday.

Texans already knew how to think for themselves. Austin just got a reminder.

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*.

STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

Talarico pledges unity, bipartisanship in Washington

Democratic U.S. senator-elect James Talarico told reporters last week after his decisive win over Republican Ken Paxton that his win was not so much a partisan triumph as a call for something different in Washington, The Dallas Morning News reported.



GARY BORDERS
Texas Press Association

Talarico said his winning coalition was united by economic frustration and a desire for change.

"People across the political spectrum are hungry for a different kind of politics. Not a politics of hate, not a politics of fear, not a politics of division, but a politics of love," he said.

When asked if Democrats should concentrate on legislative priorities or investigating the Trump administration, he rejected it as a false choice.

"Our top priority has to be delivering for the people of Texas, for the people of this country," Talarico said. "They didn't send us to Washington for political retribution."

Talarico's six-year term as the state's first Democratic U.S. senator in more than 30 years begins when he is sworn in on Jan. 3.

Hinojosa set to make key appointments

Gina Hinojosa, the Democratic state legislator from Austin who made history by being elected the state's first Latina governor, is likely to make dozens of key appointments in her first few months of office, the San Antonio Express-News reported. She will be inaugurated on Jan. 19 on the south steps of the Texas State Capitol.

In her victory speech on Nov. 3, Hinojosa promised to fire Texas Education Agency Commissioner Mike Morath on "day one" in office. He likely is not the only appointee of outgoing Gov. Greg. Abbott facing an uncertain future. The governor has the power to reshape Texas government by appointing leaders of the state's agencies and public university systems, including the boards at the University of Texas, Texas A&M University, and Texas Tech University. She will also appoint a new Secretary of State not long after assuming office.

Hinojosa said last month that she would take each appointment on a "case-by-case basis" to find the most qualified candidates.

"What has happened in Texas is it has become a pay-to-play government, where it is Greg Abbott's donors who are appointed to everything," she said.

During her campaign, Hinojosa also vowed to end the state's $1 billion school voucher program and halt state takeovers of public-school districts. The former Austin ISD school board trustee said she would "work tirelessly to repair the damage caused by the Texas voucher scam and end an era in which our schools are sold for parts."

While she can't repeal the voucher program on her own, the new governor can use line-item veto power to eliminate funding for it.

Dems will take control of Texas House in 2027 session

In addition to winning every statewide race on the ballot, Democrats will hold a majority in the Texas House when lawmakers convene in January. The final number of changed seats was still unknown as of two days after the election, with some races still uncalled. The Associated Press reported that Democrats flipped 14 state House seats and led in the eight uncalled races. Winning all eight would give them an 84-66 majority.

The Texas Senate is a different story, with Republicans maintaining their 19-12 majority. There will be two Senate vacancies in January when Democratic senator Sarah Eckhardt of Austin takes over as comptroller and Democrat Nathan Johnson of Dallas becomes attorney general. Lt. Gov.-elect Vicki Goodwin, another Democrat, will preside over the Senate after defeating incumbent Republican Dan Patrick for that historically powerful post.

University of Texas political scientist Joshua Blank said Goodwin, an Austin state representative, will have considerable power even if Senate Republicans unite against her.

"There are certain powers as the presiding officer over the body that Republicans will have a hard time removing from the lieutenant governor," he said.

Republicans lost ground in rural Texas

The Texas Tribune reported that voters in many of the state's most reliable red counties either voted for Democrats or stayed home, resulting in Texas Republicans losing considerable ground in rural Texas. About 90 percent of the counties that saw a drop in voter turnout were rural.

Talarico closed the party vote gap in rural counties by about 10 percentage points since 2018 and outperformed Beto O' Rourke's 2018 margin in exurban counties by about 15 percentage points.

"This tells us that you can't take rural Texas for granted," Drew Landry, a political science professor at Levelland College, said. "Republicans were really trying everything to gin up support, but they didn't want to talk about the big issues, and they paid the political price for it."

The largest increase in voter turnout occurred in the state's border counties, up 8.2 percentage points since 2022, followed by urban counties, up 7.9 percentage points. Rural counties, by comparison, saw turnout rise 1.4 percentage points.

Patrick's loss could mean change in cannabis laws

Outgoing Lt. Gov. Patrick was a fierce opponent of legalizing marijuana and worked to ban the sale of any products containing THC, the primary psychoactive compound in the cannabis plant. That bill was vetoed by Abbott, but stricter regulations have since been enacted.

Patrick's defeat could mean a change, since Goodwin campaigned on legalizing marijuana, the Austin American-Statesman reported.

During her campaign, she said that tax revenues from marijuana sales could help fund health insurance coverage for the 5 million uninsured Texans.

However, with the Senate still dominated by Republicans, it remains unclear whether a legalization bill can pass that chamber.

Cruz now Texas' only statewide GOP lawmaker

Ted Cruz woke up Wednesday morning as the state's only statewide elected Republican lawmaker as of January, the Express-News noted, leaving questions about his political future, though he still has four years left on his term.

Cruz campaigned extensively for GOP candidates across the country in a failed bid to save his party's congressional majorities. On Wednesday evening, he described the midterms as a "Watergate-level repudiation."

With Democrats taking control of the U.S. Senate in January, Cruz will lose his chairmanship of the powerful Commerce, Transportation and Science Committee. Speculation that he would run for president in 2028 is now leavened with the reality that his full-throated defense of Trump might cause him to rethink that plan, as one conservative radio host said.

"The Texas Republicans are very unpopular right now, and he's one of them," Kenny Webster 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*.



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SAVVY SENIORS

How to Save on Medicare in 2027

Dear Savvy Senior,
I'm on Medicare. What changes are coming in 2027, and how can I make sure I'm not paying too much for my coverage?
--Careful Shopper



JIM MILLER
Savvy Senior

Dear Careful,

If you have Medicare, now's a good time to make sure you're getting the best coverage for your money. Open enrollment runs through Dec. 7, giving you a chance to switch Medicare Advantage or prescription drug plans for 2027. Since costs, drug coverage and extra benefits can change from year to year, comparing plans now could save you money and headaches later.

Even if you're happy with your current plan, don't assume next year's coverage will be the same. Here's what to look for.

Prescription drug changes

Medicare Part D prescription drug plans are changing, and some enrollees could pay more. In 2027, the maximum annual deductible will rise from $615 to $700, while the annual out-of-pocket limit for covered Part D medications will increase from $2,100 to $2,400.

That limit helps protect people who take expensive medications. Average premiums for stand-alone Part D plans are projected to rise by less than $1 a month, but individual plans can differ considerably. A temporary federal program that helped stabilize premiums is also ending, making it especially important to compare your options.

Your insurer may change its list of covered drugs, called a formulary, or move your medication to a more expensive cost tier. Check that your prescriptions are still covered and what you'll pay for them.

Medicare Advantage changes

If you have Medicare Advantage, the private-insurance alternative to Original Medicare, review your plan carefully. Some insurers are dropping plans or leaving certain markets, while others may change costs or trim extra benefits, such as dental, vision and hearing coverage.

Doctor, specialist and hospital networks can change, too. If your plan is being discontinued, you'll need to choose new coverage. Even if it continues, compare next year's costs, benefits and provider networks before automatically renewing.

Help with weight-loss drugs

A new Medicare GLP-1 Bridge program offers eligible beneficiaries certain medications for weight management for $50 a month through Dec. 31, 2027. Covered drugs include Wegovy, Zepbound (KwikPen only) and Foundayo.

Eligibility is limited. For example, you generally need Medicare drug coverage and must meet specific body mass index and health requirements. The program operates separately from regular Part D coverage, so the $50 monthly payment doesn't count toward your Part D deductible or annual out-of-pocket limit.

Learn more and check eligibility at *Medicare.gov/coverage/weight-loss-drugs*.

How to shop smart

Here are four ways to find coverage that fits your needs without overpaying.

Read your plan notice: Your insurer should send an Annual Notice of Change explaining next year's premiums, deductibles, copayments and coverage changes. Medicare Advantage members should also check provider networks and extra benefits.

Compare total costs: Visit *Medicare.gov/plan-compare*. Enter your medications and preferred pharmacies to compare plans and estimate annual costs. Don't focus on premiums alone; include deductibles and what you'll pay for prescriptions.

Check your doctors: If you're considering Medicare Advantage, contact your doctors and hospitals directly to confirm they'll accept the specific plan in 2027. Online directories can be outdated.

Get free help: Your State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) provides free, unbiased Medicare counseling. Find a local counselor at *ShipHelp.org* or call 877-839-2675.

One important caution: If you're thinking of switching from Medicare Advantage to Original Medicare, check your Medigap options first. In most states, insurers can deny you a Medigap policy or charge higher premiums based on your health history if you don't qualify for guaranteed-issue protections. Make sure you understand your options before dropping your current plan.

Take time to compare plans before Dec. 7. A little homework now could save you money and help you start 2027 with better coverage.

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.

Remembering those who served



Leader photo by CHUCK FITTS

Avis Huizar and Virginia Northcutt talk about Jasper Northcutt at the Veterans program held on Saturday, November 7, in front of the Veterans Memorial in Emory.

RAINS YOUTH SPORTS ASSOCIATION

First Annual Stew Cook-off set for December

By JENNIFER HILL
Rains County Leader staff

Plans for a long-awaited and highly-anticipated event are coming to fruition in Rains County. Kevin Douglas and Jeremy Latham are working to organize the First Annual RYSA Stew Cook-Off to benefit the Rains Youth Sports Association. The event is hosted by supporters of the RYSA and will be held at the sport park located at 549 Tawakoni Dr. (Hwy. 276) in Emory on Saturday, December 5.

Plans are still evolving little-by-little, but the bulk of the event has taken shape. Interested participants/teams must register by November 30. Entry forms are available on the *RYSA Stew Cook Off* facebook page. Forms and fees may be dropped off to Sidekicks Bar & Grill, Your Favorite Place Sports Bar, or Country Flowers & Gifts.

Entry options include Beef Stew, Chicken Stew, Cornbread and Dessert. There will be trophies and cash prizes for each. The stew categories will have first, second and third place prizes of $500, $250 and $100, respectively. The remaining categories of Best Campsite, People's Choice, Best Cornbread, and Best Dessert will have prizes of $100 each.

How it started

Douglas is in charge of organizing the Rains County Fair Chili Cook-off. Latham has been a big help to him in the event, as well. "He is a great steward of the community, and he is all about helping the RYSA," Douglas said. "That guy wants nothing but the best for our kids."

As most of you know, it is still pretty warm and toasty during the fair (this past fair showed that to be exceedingly true). After one of the chili cook-offs, some of the organizers and participants were joking about the situation and thought they should do something during the cooler weather, and that is when the idea was formed to host a stew cook-off. Several of the chili cooks and supporters have children involved in sports at the RYSA and decided it would be the perfect organization for which to raise funds. Their goal is to raise money for much needed renovations and for items such as bleachers for fields five and six.

Rules are rules

Douglas indicated that they are hoping to have 40 teams for the challenge. Teams will be allowed entry to the park beginning at 4:00 p.m. on Friday, December 4. Each team is allowed a 20x20 campsite, and spots will be available as first come, first served. Every component of the stew must be completely prepared onsite, there must be a minimum of five gallons of finished stew available for sale, and it must be ready by 10:15 a.m. Saturday morning. Cornbread and dessert entries may be prepared onsite or at home and brought to the site by 10:00 a.m. Additional rules are available online.

If there is enough interest, vendor booths will be offered/accepted for a fee. Set up would be near Field One and the concession stand, and the fee would be $100.

Public Invitation

The event will open to the public beginning at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday. Tickets may be purchased for $10 each, and allow for all you can eat. Drink is included. Only ticketed customers will be served, and for health reasons, only the bowls, plates and utensils provided by officials may be used.

Games at the event include a pitching machine and a home run derby for all ages. There is also the possibility of a special Christmas guest photo opportunity.

In addition to food and fun, visitors will have the opportunity to participate in a raffle at the event. Raffle items are still being collected, but all items will be posted ahead of time on the event facebook page. They will also be auctioning off one quart of stew from each of the top three winners and for People's Choice after the winners are announced.

For more information, contact Kevin Douglas at 903-268-3731 or Jeremy Latham at 903-335-1842.

TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT

Waterfowl Hunters: Lend a Hand to Help Halt the Spread of Invasive Species

AUSTIN – The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) requests the help of waterfowl hunters to protect Texas water bodies from the spread of aquatic invasive species that can reduce the quality of waterfowl habitats, block recreational access and harm ecosystems and infrastructure.

Hunters can make a difference to help protect waterfowl and the hunting experience by simply taking a few minutes to clean, drain and dry their boats and equipment, including decoys and other hunting gear, before traveling from lake to lake. These simple steps help keep invasive species like giant salvinia, other aquatic invasive plants and zebra mussels from spreading to new waters.

Aquatic invasive plants can easily become entangled or trapped on boats and boat trailers or even tow vehicles (including around lights, license plates, and between the boat and bunks) and be moved to other lakes. Hunters should also make sure they aren't inadvertently carrying invasive species on or in other equipment, like waders, decoys, decoy bags and marsh sleds by cleaning, draining and drying this equipment as well.

Tips on how to clean, drain and dry specifically for waterfowl hunters from recent studies include (1) use a wet/dry vacuum to help remove plants from the boat, trailer and most equipment before rinsing with a water hose that can push plant fragments into small, unreachable spaces; (2) use a water hose to rinse waders and decoys after hand removing plants, mud and organisms, with a stiff brush to clean out boot treads; and (3) take care to drain water out of decoys and consider adding drain holes to older, cracked decoys that tend to hold water or plant fragments. A video to help hunters learn how to properly clean, drain and dry their gear can be found on the TPWD YouTube Channel.

Giant salvinia, a highly invasive, free-floating aquatic fern that can double its coverage area in a week, can produce thick surface mats that impact the ecosystem and aquatic life, and make access for hunting, fishing, boating, swimming and other water recreation nearly impossible. It only takes a single fragment moved to a new lake to cause a new infestation.

"Giant salvinia is often thought of as a plant that causes recreational access issues for anglers and boaters, but additionally it can create serious problems for waterfowl hunters," said Jessica Metz, TPWD aquatic habitat enhancement biologist. "This invasive plant can not only form thick mats that block hunters' access to prime waterfowl hunting areas but also outgrow and replace the native plants that waterfowl rely on for food and high-quality habitat. Taking time to clean, drain and dry boats, equipment, waders, and other gear can help protect waterfowl as well as maintain your gear."

Giant salvinia is currently present on 30 East Texas lakes and numerous rivers, creeks and marshes largely between Houston and Beaumont. However, other invasive plants that can also degrade waterfowl habitat are present in many other lakes, and it is important to be vigilant and clean, drain dry when leaving any water body.

Zebra mussels, a non-native shellfish that attaches to hard surfaces, pose a significant concern for Texas lakes. These invasive mussels are filter feeders that compete with native species, alter lake ecosystems and can cause harm to many native species. They also damage boats and infrastructure for water supply and control, and litter shorelines with hazardous, sharp shells that impact lakefront recreation.

Zebra mussels are now found in 40 Texas lakes across eight river basins as well as in river reaches downstream of infested lakes. TPWD and partner organizations monitor numerous at-risk lakes around the state for early detection of zebra and closely related quagga mussels. Once they've been introduced and become established in a lake, little or nothing can be done to control or eradicate them, with efforts focused on mitigating or minimizing damage to critical water infrastructure. Because of this, taking action to prevent spread is critical.

"Zebra mussels and quagga mussels can attach to boats and even be carried by anchors, plants clinging to boats, or other equipment including treads of waders and boots," said Monica McGarrity, TPWD senior scientist for aquatic invasive species. "Though they can't be seen with the naked eye, microscopic zebra mussel larvae can also be transported unknowingly in residual water in the boat or even in water in decoys. Taking just a few minutes to clean, drain and dry boats can make a huge difference in our efforts to prevent further spread of this highly damaging species and harm to Texas lakes."

On top of the harm invasive species cause to aquatic ecosystems, water infrastructure, and recreational experiences at lakes, the transport of these organisms can also result in legal trouble for boaters.

Transporting prohibited aquatic invasive species in Texas is illegal and punishable with a fine of up to $500 per violation. It's also legally required that boaters must drain all water from their boat and onboard receptacles, including bait buckets, before leaving or approaching a body of fresh water. In addition, boaters must remove all invasive plants from their boat, trailer, and transport or launch vehicle and equipment before leaving a lake.

TPWD and partners monitor for invasive species in Texas lakes but still need everyone's help. Anyone who finds them in lakes where they haven't been reported before – or spots them on boats, trailers or equipment being moved – can help identify and prevent new introductions by immediately reporting the sighting of invasive species being moved to TPWD at (512) 389-4848 or by emailing photos and location information for new invasions to *aquaticinvasives@tpwd.texas.gov*.

To learn more about giant salvinia, zebra mussels and other invasive species in Texas, visit *tpwd.texas.gov/StopInvasives.*

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



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Sports

RAINS WILDCAT FOOTBALL

Wildcats season ends on the road in Winnsboro



Leader photo by CHUCK FITTS

Wildcat Cohen Witt (21) beat the defender and hauls in a 31-yard pass from Wallace during the 55-25 district loss to the Red Raiders on Friday, November 6, in Winnsboro.

By CHUCK FITTS
Rains County Leader staff

The Rains Wildcat varsity football team wrapped up the football season with a 55-25 district loss to the Winnsboro Red Raiders on Friday night, November 6.

The Wildcats were more productive in the second half where they out scored the Raiders 19-17. Rains had 255 yards rushing and 164 yards passing while Winnsboro had 559 total yards in the game.

Senior Jabari Shields led the team in rushing with 189 yards on 14 carries and two touchdowns, while sophomore DaQuan Hutchison ran the ball seven times for 34 yards.

Junior Major Wallace threw for two touchdowns while completing 6 of 15 passes for 164 yards. He was sacked twice for 15 yards.

Wallace completed a pass to six different receivers on the night with junior Jace Davis catching a 25-yard touchdown and junior Triston Hurley hauling in a 60-yard touchdown.

Winnsboro took the opening kickoff. After a penalty, a pass went off the receiver's hands and into the arms of Hurley for an interception.

The Wildcats went right after the Raiders as Shields caught a go-route for 35 yards and Davis caught the next pass for a 25-yard touchdown. Rains 6, Winnsboro 0.

Winnsboro answered in three plays with a 27-yard touchdown run. Rains 6, Winnsboro 7.

The Rains offense began a more steady, nine-play drive that ended with a sack and incompletion in Raiders territory.

Winnsboro's offense put together a nine-play, 70-yard drive that was finished with a 23-yard touchdown run. Rains 6, Winnsboro 14.

The Wildcats moved eight yards in four plays and turned the ball over on downs. The Raiders used four plays to go 45 yards for another touchdown. Rains 6, Winnsboro 21.

Rains' next drive ended with a fumble on its first drive. Winnsboro capitalized on the turnover with a touchdown five plays later. Rains 6, Winnsboro 28.

The Wildcats started their next drive with a 22-yard run and a 31-yard pass before the drive stalled.

The Raiders put together a 10-play, 82-yard drive with a two-yard touchdown run to finish it off. Rains 6, Winnsboro 35.

Winnsboro intercepted a Wildcat pass, and five plays later kicked a 25-yard field goal. Rains 6, Winnsboro 38.

The Rains offense started the second half with an eight-play drive, but turned the ball over on downs when the fake punt failed to get a first down.

The Raiders scored three plays later on a 36-yard touchdown run. Rains 6, Winnsboro 45.

The Wildcat offense managed two yards and punted. Winnsboro's offense ran five plays before the quarterback slid down inside the five to allow a 19-yard field goal. Rains 6, Winnsboro 48.

Rains was held to a three-and-out, while the Raiders were held to 16 yards in six plays and forced to punt.

After a three-yard loss, Shields ran 66-yards to the end zone for a touchdown. Rains 13, Winnsboro 48.

Winnsboro gained 18 yards in three plays before a 58-yard touchdown run capped their scoring for the night. Rains 13, Winnsboro 55.

The Wildcast were not done and Shields took the first handoff of the next drive and ran 68 yards to the end zone. Rains 19, Winnsboro 55.

The Raiders were held to 21 yards in seven plays so they punted.

Hutchison started the next drive with a 23-yard run before Hurley caught a 60-yard touchdown pass from Wallace. Rains 25, Winnsboro 55.

The Raiders kneeled to run out the season for the Rains Wildcats.

The Wildcats finished the game with a 13-play drive that ended with an incompletion in the end zone as the clock ran out.

The Rains Wildcats finish the season with a 1-5 record in District 7-3A-1 and a 2-8 overall record.

RAINS WILDCAT FOOTBALL

Oakes resigns as athletic director

By CHUCK FITTS
Rains County Leader staff

Rains ISD Superintendent Joe Nicks announced in a press release on Tuesday, November 10, that Bryan Oakes would no longer be the athletic director for Rains ISD.

"I want to thank Coach Bryan Oakes for his service as our Athletic Director and Head Football Coach and for the time and energy he has given to our student-athletes and our district," Nix stated.

Oakes finishes his tenure as the head football coach after four years with a record of 7-33 overall and 5-19 in district.

Scott Delozier will serve as interim Athletic Director until the next athletic director is hired.

"We are committed to finding a strong leader who will invest in our students, support our coaches, and lead the entire Wildcat athletics program," Nix said.

LUKE CLAYTON

A winning combo



Luke Clayton
Outdoor Columnist

Some hunters come in from a cold sit in a deer stand or duck blind to peanut butter and jelly sandwiches or Vienna sausages with saltines. In a pinch both will suffice, but when time allows, and it usually does with a bit of forethought, camp food can be a bit more!

To me, there is nothing tastier at camp than sitting down to a big bowl of venison stew with lots of meat and plenty of veggies. Hot cornbread is an absolute must! This is exactly the meal I prepared last weekend. Rifle hunters often have yet to harvest venison early in the season, but by the opening of the general season many bowhunters and those hunting managed lands with permits have their freezers stocked. I was fortunate to take a couple of fat doe for the freezer while hunting at the Choctaw Hunting Lodge owned by the Choctaw Nation in southeast Oklahoma.

I cubed up some front shoulder meat which lends itself well to slow cooking with moisture, seasoned it well, dusted it with flour and browned it in my big cast iron Dutch Kettle. Then I added tomatoes, carrots, celery, corn, and bell and jalapeno peppers and let it simmer until the meat was fork tender. I used a packet of beef stew seasoning and of course a few extra seasonings to add even more flavor. I prepped most of this at home. With veggies in the cans, fresh ones chopped in a Ziploc bag, the meat cubed, seasoned and ready, it didn't take long to have my stew simmering in the kettle beside the cook fire. Of course, I could have prepared it on a propane stove but there's something special about cooking with a Dutch kettle over wood coals.

Stew is pretty simple to prepare and every camp cook has his or her favorite recipe, but stew without cornbread is like, well…bread without butter! I needed to make some hot cornbread to accompany my stew, and I decided upon 'hot water cornbread'. I was surprised to learn that many folks have not enjoyed cornbread made this way. I grew up eating conventional oven-baked cornbread, but my mother would occasionally make the fried hot water version. It's really very easy to cook, especially at camp.

There are a few simple steps to follow and your first attempt at this crispy, very flavorful cornbread will turn out perfectly. Here's how I make it, this recipe will make enough cornbread for five or six hungry people. Begin by mixing two cups of cornmeal with about a half cup of flour, a little salt and sugar. I like my fried cornbread crispy, so I add a rounded tablespoon of baking powder, even when using self-rising meal or flour. The 'rise' the baking powder makes the cornbread extra crunchy, not tough or chewy, but crunchy. You can hear the crunch with every bite!

I have a pot of boiling water going and simply pour the water into the cornmeal/flour mix. Pour and stir until the batter is thick but will drop off a spoon into hot oil. The boiling water actually cooks the meal in the bowl and the frying crisps it up. I like to use lard instead of vegetable oil for much of my frying. I honestly believe lard might be better for humans than vegetable oil but that's another subject. I do know the lard gives the cornbread a great flavor and very little is absorbed into the cornbread when heated to around 350 degrees. I honestly don't ever check the temperature when frying. When a little test sample of cornmeal sizzles when it heats the lard, the temperature is just right.

Sometimes I make cornbread patties but usually I just drop the meal into the skillet right off the spoon. A heaping tablespoon is about the right amount but if your goal is more flat patties, you will need two or three tablespoons. Just push the meal down into a patty form after you add it to the lard/oil. It won't be a perfectly formed round piece of fried cornbread, but I promise your guests won't care one they bite into that crunchy goodness! It takes less than two minutes on either side to turn the meal mixture into very crunchy little pieces of cornbread.

It's possible to make tasty conventional cornbread at camp in a Dutch Kettle but I always place a metal pan in the bottom of my kettle and set another pan with the cornbread mixture on top. I've had zero luck trying to cook cornbread with the mix setting in the bottom of the Dutch kettle, it always scorches regardless how few coals I put under the top. Even when using the pan to elevate the cornbread mix, I go very sparingly with coals under the kettle and let the coals setting atop the recessed lid to do most of the cooking. (A Dutch kettle without a recessed top is simply a pot. The recessed lid on a true Dutch kettle designed for outdoor cooking is a must. It's necessary to check the cornbread after about fifteen minutes, exact temperature with a Dutch kettle is hard to achieve because of ambient air temperature, wind and the amount of coals. It's always best to check before scorching!

Here's wishing everyone a happy and successful hunting season. I hope you find time to give my venison stew (or pork or beef if you haven't taken your venison just yet) a try. I can guarantee you it's far better than those peanut butter and jelly sandwiches after a cold sit I the woods!

Listen to Lukes weekly outdoor show "Catfish Radio" on a station near you or anytime at *www.catfishradio.org* or one of the many podcast hosts, search "Catfish Radio with Luke Clayton and Friends.

Texas 811
Know what's below.
Call before you dig.

RHS SCHEDULES

2026-27 Wildcat Basketball

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME	TEAMS
11/17	vs Wolfe City	5:00/6:15	JV/V
11/20	vs Mt. Vernon	2:00/3:15	JV/V
11/23	@ Mildred	5:00/6:15	JV/V
11/28	vs Mineola	11:00/12:15	JV/V
12/1	@ Blue Ridge	4:30/5:00/6:15	9/JV/V
12/3-5	Celeste Tourn.	TBD	V
12/8	@ Quinlan Ford	4:30/5:00/6:15	9/JV/V
12/10-12	Graham Tourn.	TBD	V
12/11	vs Lone Oak	7:30	JV
12/15	vs Quitman	5:00/6:15/7:30	9/JV/V
12/17-19	Eustace Tourn.	TBD	JV
12/22	@ Grand Saline*	12:00/1:15/2:30	JV/9/V
12/28-30	Leonard Tourn.	TBD	V
1/2	vs Commerce*	4:30/5:45/7:00	JV/9/V
1/5	@ Edgewood*	4:30/5:45/7:00	JV/9/V
1/8	@ Eustace*	4:30/5:45/7:00	JV/9/V
1/12	vs Scurry-Rosser*	4:30/5:45/7:00	JV/9/V
1/15	vs Malakoff*	4:30/5:45/7:00	JV/9/V
1/19	@ Lone Oak*	4:30/5:45/7:00	JV/9/V
1/22	vs Grand Saline*	4:30/5:45/7:00	JV/9/V
1/26	@ Commerce*	4:30/5:45/7:00	JV/9/V
1/29	vs Edgewood*	4:30/5:45/7:00	JV/9/V
2/2	vs Eustace*	4:30/5:45/7:00	JV/9/V
2/5	@ Scurry-Rosser*	4:30/5:45/7:00	JV/9/V
2/9	@ Malakoff*	4:30/5:45/7:00	JV/9/V
2/12	vs Lone Oak* (SN)	4:30/5:45/7:00	JV/9/V

* District Matches

2026-27 Lady Cat Basketball

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME	TEAMS
11/12&14	JV Van Tourn.	TBD	JV
11/13	vs Mineola	5:00/6:15	JV/V
11/17	@ Lindale	5:00/6:15	JV/V
11/19-21	Bishop Gorman Tourn.	TBD	JV/V
11/23	@ Gilmer	10:00/11:15	JV/V
11/24	vs North Lamar	10:00/11:15	JV/V
12/1	vs Brownsboro	5:00/6:15	JV/V
12/3-5	Glen Rose Tourn.	5:00/6:15	V
12/8	@ Sulphur Springs	5:00/6:15	JV/V
12/11	vs Quitman	5:00/6:15	JV/V
12/15	@ Malakoff*	5:00/6:15	JV/V
12/18	vs Lone Oak*	5:00/6:15	JV/V
12/22	@ Grand Saline	12:00/2:00	JV/V
12/23-27	GYM CLOSED		
12/28-30	Tenaha Tourn.	TBD	V
1/2	vs Commerce*	4:30/6:00	JV/V
1/5	@ Edgewood*	4:30/6:00	JV/V
1/8	@ Eustace*	4:30/6:00	JV/V
1/12	vs Scurry-Rosser*	4:30/6:00	JV/V
1/15	vs Malakoff*	4:30/6:00	JV/V
1/19	@ Lone Oak*	4:30/6:00	JV/V
1/22	vs Grand Saline*	4:30/6:00	JV/V
1/26	@ Commerce*	4:30/6:00	JV/V
1/29	vs Edgewood*	4:30/6:00	JV/V
2/2	vs Eustace* (SN)	4:30/6:00	JV/V
2/5	@ Scurry-Rosser*	4:30/6:00	JV/V

* District Matches

HONORING ALL WHO SERVED




John Henry Abernathy
Army


Dwain Asbill
Army


Lincoln Barnes
Marine


Rider Barnes


Sarah Beattie
Air Force


Jordan Bernier
Navy


Andrew Bond
Army


David Brendle
Navy


J.P. Brendle
Navy


David Broome
Army/Marine


Lou Carista, Jr.
Army


Gene Carista
Army


Lou Carista, Sr.
Army


Jerry Carlisle
Air Force


Leroy Cason
Navy


Tonia Cason
Army


Lowell Chalk
Air Force


Billy Gene Cobb
Army


Douglas Conner
Navy


Elaine Davis
Army



Randy Davis


Kenneth Dennis
Army


Katherine Derham
Army


Dana Durham
Army


Vernell Edwards
Army


Danny Fenter
Marines


George Fenter
Army


William Fenter
Army


James Michael Gaby
Army


Stephen Gowin
Army


Cliff Green
Army


Kyle Green
Marine


Mel Hall
Navy


Marvin Hartog
Army


David Harvey
Navy


Kenneth Hayes, Sr.


Alan Henderson, Sr.
Navy


Alan Henderson, Jr.
Navy


Cole Henderson
Navy

Robert Henderson
Navy

Duane Hensley

Jerry Wayne Heuer
Army

Clifton Hobbs
Navy

James Hooten
Army

J.C. Hooten
Air Force

Larry Hooten
Army

William Hunter
Air Force

Brian Jackson
Army

Gavin Roy Jackson
Air Force

George Jacobs, Sr.
Air Force

Troy Jacobs
Navy

Bobby Jennings
Army

Curtis Lee Jones
Navy

Bryan Kelley
Army

Steven Legate
Army

Alan Little
Air Force

Roy Maxwell, Jr.
Navy

Roy Maxwell, Sr.
Army

Tom Maxwell, Jr.
Navy

Tom Maxwell, Sr.
Army

Bill McBride
Army

Chris McClaskey
Army

Jerry McSwain
Navy

Chris Messinger
Navy

L.M. Mosley
Army

Walter Mosley
Army

Thomas Nelson
Navy

Bill Nichols
Navy

Jeffrey Niemann
Army

Norris Northcutt
Army

Jasper Northcutt
Army

Linda Northcutt
Army/Navy

Marvin Northcutt
Army

Roger Northcutt
Army

Howard Oler
Navy

Max Orsborn
Navy

Don Rabb Jr.
Navy

Harold Rabb
Air Force

Joel Rabb
Army

Robert Rabb
Army

William Rabb
Army

Keith Rabe Sr.
Navy

Jimmy Rabe
Army

Dennis Radcliffe

Ron Radcliffe
Marine

Aaron Rivers
Army

Buster Rivers
Army/Air Force

Matthew Robare

Chase Robertson
Navy

Jack Rudder
Marines

Debbie Runion
Air Force

Skyler Runion
Army

Lonnie Sanders
Navy

Billy Shockley
Air Force

Bob Sisk
Air Force

Wade Charles Small
Navy

Daniel Smith
Army

Jeffrey Lee Smith
Air Force

Robert Stepney
Army

Danny Stover

Trogan Vaught
Navy

Thomas Waters
Air Force

Jim Weddle
Marine

Joe Weddle
Army

Jon Perry Weddle
Air Force

Ben Wedeking
Navy

Jon Wedeking
Army/Navy

Wendell Williams
Navy

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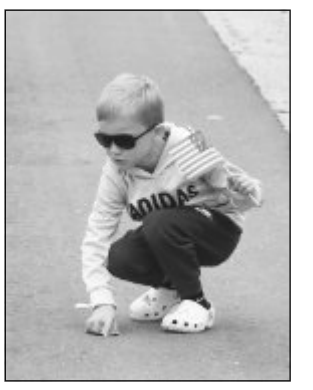
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RAINS COUNTY ANGEL TREE

Angel Tree has application increase

By JENNIFER HILL
Rains County Leader staff

The Rains County Angel Tree has seen a 15-percent increase in applications over last year.

The application window closed with a total of 389 Angels ready to be picked from the trees this year. That is 50 more angels compared to last year's total.

President of the organization and organizer of this event, Candice West, said that last year they had approximately 40 unshopped Angels by the deadline, and she fears that could mean there will be upwards of 90 Angels left to shop for this year.

"Times are tough and we are really seeing it in our Angel Tree application numbers. We know so many of you are feeling it in your pocketbook, as well." She said.

West is hoping that the guidelines they use to shop for unpicked Angels will help those in the community who are able to pick from the trees.

"When we as an organization shop, we make sure each child has an outfit (including a jacket and shoes), one "want" item, one "need" item and a book. They don't necessarily get everything – this helps us help more." She continues, "Knowing this might help you stretch what you have purposed to help this season a little further."

She ends by saying, "God is good, and so are His people here. Thank you to all of you who so generously support us in this mission."

Other officers of the 501(c)(3) charity organization include Vice President Keri Bangs, Secretary Cassie Patton, Treasurer Sarah Patterson, and voting member Brad Chastain.

Angel Trees are located at Sidekick's Bar & Grill, Roma's Restaurant, El Manna, Brookshire's and Hooten's Hardware.

For more information on deadlines, volunteering or donating, see the related News Brief on page 2 of the *Leader*.

Believers' Baptist Church

By Linda Brendle

The elders came up and said to him, "Tell us by what authority you do these things, or who it is that gave you this authority."

Luke 20:2

"When Men Question God" was the title of this week's sermon from Luke.

Jesus authoritatively drove those who bought and sold out of the Temple. He was the King, and it was His Temple. In the Old Testament, priests cleared the uncleanness from a house. If it came back, the priest came back in judgment and destroyed the house. In the same way, Jesus cleansed the Temple at the beginning of His ministry, and He came back in judgment before His crucifixion. Jesus has authority over how His people worship, and He hates those who try to kill true worship and use His house for their own profit. In the week before His death, He taught the Gospel in the Temple every day in power and clarity with self-acclaimed authority. The religious leaders hated Him out of envy. The Pharisees demanded to know who gave Him the authority to teach. In return, He asked them a question about John the Baptist. They couldn't answer without getting in trouble, so they said they didn't know, so He refused to answer their question, too. Do you question God's authority over your life?

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

Members Meeting, November 29, 6:00 p.m.

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 #258 is titled "Psalm 100, Thanksgiving and Christian Contentment." Find the link at *www.bbcemory.org*.

Emory Methodist Church

By Mary White

Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.

Matthew 25:13

The Rev. David Banks continued his series "The Promise Not Yet Fulfilled" with a message titled "Keep Watch." The scripture text was taken from Matthew.

Jesus tells us to keep watch, but we would rather see what is coming and be prepared. We pray that God will forgive us when we become distracted, complacent, or consumed by what we cannot know. Throughout the Bible, oil symbolizes the Holy Spirit and now you need the oil of the Holy Spirit more than ever. We pray that God will teach us to live faithfully with what He has entrusted to us, trusting His promise even when we cannot see its fulfillment. Just remember the One who made the promise, keeps His promise.

Our Communion offering for November is Rains County Good Samaritans and we all know what a wonderful mission this is for Rains County.

Coming up this week we will have Game Night Friday, November 13 at 5:00 p.m. and everyone is welcome. Bring your favorite game and a snack and fellowship with us.

Birthday wishes go to Linda Ross, Steve Haupt and Lonnah Basham.

Pray for Billy & Marlene Morris, Jim Oldham, Amber Ross and Ed Lurie.

Have a great week and enjoy our wonderful fall weather.

Obituaries

Joan Avery

1939 – 2026



Joan Avery, 87, died on November 4, 2026, at her home in Rains County, surrounded by her family. She was born on May 13, 1939, in Dallas, to John and Opal Lee Fobes (Pickett).

Mrs. Avery worked some in retail, but the work that defined her life was at home. She devoted herself to being a mother, grandmother and homemaker, and she took great pride in creating a safe place for her family.

She was quick-witted and funny, with a way of making others smile and feel at ease. She loved to shop, finding the best deals and she loved animals, especially goats and dogs. She also found happiness in looking at and taking family photos, preserving the moments and memories that mattered most to her.

Mrs. Avery is survived by her children, Susan Harrison, and Erin Kirkland and Ricky; grandchildren, Jamie Johnson and Kevin, Jake Kitchens and Kristea Schwartz, and Eric Kirkpatrick; great-grandchildren, Daniel Harrell and Dalton Harrell.

She was preceded in death by her parents.

Sheriee Lynn Hurst

1957 – 2026



A Celebration of Life for Sheriee Lynn Hurst, 69, will be held on Friday, November 20, at 11:00 a.m., at Wilson - Orwosky Funeral Home.

Mrs. Hurst died on November 7, 2026, in Tyler, following a short illness. She was born on March 10, 1957, to Bobby and Bonnie Carter Asbill.

On December 7, 1974, she married the love of her life, Steve Hurst, and they built a beautiful life centered around faith, family and love. They were married for 50 years. She dedicated 30 years of her career to L3 Communications (formerly E-Systems), where she worked as an aircraft mechanic.

She loved Jesus and her family and she had a remarkable way of making those around her feel loved.

One of her greatest gifts was her faith in Jesus Christ. She didn't simply speak about her faith; she lived it every day. Through her love, guidance, and example, she helped lead many members of her family to know and love Jesus. Her faith was the foundation of her life and will remain one of her greatest legacies.

Mrs. Hurst is survived by her children, Shanda Ramm and husband Justin of Lone Oak, Sy Hurst and wife Hayley of Point, and Stewart Hurst of Point; grandchildren, Tavin Ramm and wife Paige of Lone Oak, Austin Ramm and wife Maci of Caddo Mills, Allie Ramm and fiancé Corbin Johnson of Lone Oak, JaCee Hurst and fiancé Brenan Kirkpatrick of Tyler, Carter Hurst, who is currently serving in the United States Marine Corps, and Rayleigh Hurst of Emory, great-grandchildren, Aspen and Cash Ramm of Lone Oak, and Wylder Ramm of Caddo Mills; godsons, Ty Tolleson and wife Kelsey and their children, Stevi, Slayde, Sophie and Maizlee, of Sulphur Springs, and River Tolleson of Lone Oak; sister, Sheila Banta and husband Steve of Point; sister-in-law, Vicki Hurst Walker and husband Jack of Alba; and brother-in-law, Roger Hurst and wife Trena of Oklahoma.

She was preceded in death by her husband; her parents; in-laws, Sammy and Leta Stewart Hurst; sister-in-law, Anette Hurst Foster; and niece, Sammye Foster Cotton.

A visitation with the family will be held on Friday, November 20, at 10:00 a.m., one hour prior to the Celebration of Life.

Walter Bernard Braly, Jr.

1956 – 2026



Funeral services for Walter Bernard Braly, Jr., 70, of Alba, will be held on Saturday, November 14, at 2:00 p.m., at Wilson-Bartley Funeral Home in Alba, with Bro. Otis Lee officiating. Interment will follow in Cottonwood Cemetery in Alba. Pallbearers will be Danny Petillo, Teddy Petillo, Jimmy Petillo and Blaine Bobo.

Mr. Braly died on November 9, 2026, in Van. He was born on August 19, 1956, in Palestine, to Walter Bernard Braly, Sr. and Mildred Pauline Elliott Braly.

He spent most of his life in the Alba area, where he made his home and became part of the community. He was a member of Cottonwood Assembly of God Church.

He found enjoyment in the simple things in life. He loved watching Jeopardy, listening to the music of the 1980s, playing along on his air guitar and imaginary drums.

He was a skilled locksmith by trade and worked for seven years in the maintenance department at Grand Saline ISD. The Braly family name was well known in Palestine through Braly Builders Supply, a part of the family's history and legacy.

Mr. Braly is survived by his four sisters, Connie Ray of Van, Elva Jean Lewers of Alba, Nella Featherston of Alba, and Lou Duncan and husband Billy of Kilgore; nieces and nephews, Misty Burks and husband Bruce, David Duncan and wife Tasha, and Stacey Brown; great-nieces and great-nephews, Emmalee Browning, Madison Duncan, Ian Duncan and Blaine Bobo; and numerous other relatives and friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents; and his nephew, Michael Alton Lewers.

A visitation will be held one hour prior to the service at the funeral home.

Let them give thanks to the Lord for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for mankind, for he satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things.

Psalm 107:8-9

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

Call the Leader at 903-473-2653

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

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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
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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 9:15 am
Morning Worship 10:30 am
Evening Worship 4:00 pm
Wednesday
Wednesday Worship 6:30 pm
(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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Saturday Night Prayer 6pm

NOTICE OF SALE

STATE OF TEXAS §
§
RAINS COUNTY §

BY VIRTUE OF AN ORDER OF SALE

and issued pursuant to judgment decree(s) of the District Court of Rains County, Texas, by the Clerk of said Court on said date, in the hereinafter numbered and styled suit(s) and to me directed and delivered as Sheriff or Constable of said County, I have on October 29, 2026, seized, levied upon, and will offer for sale the following properties, on the first Tuesday in December, 2026, the same being the 1st day of said month, at the west side of the Courthouse of the said County, in the City of Emory, Texas, between the hours of 10 o'clock a.m. and 4 o'clock p.m. on said day, beginning at 10:30 AM, and will proceed to sell for cash to the highest bidder all the right, title, and interest of the defendants in such suit(s) in and to the following described real estate levied upon as the property of said defendants, the same lying and being situated in the County of Rains and the State of Texas, to-wit:

Sale #	Cause # Judgment Date	Acct # Order Issue Date	Style of Case	Legal Description	Adjudged Value
1	3090TX 09/25/26	0025-0110-0000- 43 OCTOBER 29, 2026	RAINS COUNTY, ET AL VS. CLYDE TENNYSON, ET AL	CHANEY BORNEN SURVEY, ABSTRACT# 25 -0.50 ACRES SALE NOTES: SUBJECT TO POST JUDGMENT TAXES	$12,600.00
2	3101TX 04/11/25	0188-0470-0050- 43 OCTOBER 29, 2026	RAINS COUNTY, ET AL VS. MISTY NEWSOME, ET AL	F D ROJAS SURVEY, ABSTRACT# 188 - 1.283 ACRES GREENTREE ESTATES UNPLATED. SALE NOTES: SUBJECT TO POST JUDGMENT TAXES	$293,298.00
3	3125TX 06/05/26	0292-1350-0000- 42 OCTOBER 29, 2026	RAINS COUNTY, ET AL VS. JEANNIE PERRY	A. SPAIN SUMMERLIN SURVEY, ABSTRACT# 292 - 1.00 ACRES SALE NOTES: SUBJECT TO POST JUDGMENT TAXES	$85,099.00
4	3183TX 06/05/26	2900-0000-2080- 41 OCTOBER 29, 2026	RAINS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT, ET AL VS. GABRIELLE ELYSE WILCOX	TRACT 1 LOT # 208 WHISPERING OAKS ADDITION SALE NOTES: SUBJECT TO POST JUDGMENT TAXES	$170,654.00
5	3183TX 06/05/26	2900-0000-2490- 41 OCTOBER 29, 2026	RAINS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT, ET AL VS. GABRIELLE ELYSE WILCOX	TRACT 2 LOT # 249 WHISPERING OAKS ADDITION SALE NOTES: SUBJECT TO POST JUDGMENT TAXES	$11,250.00
6	3183TX 06/05/26	2900-0000-2500- 41 OCTOBER 29, 2026	RAINS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT, ET AL VS. GABRIELLE ELYSE WILCOX	TRACT 3 LOT# 250 WHISPERING OAKS ADDITION SALE NOTES: SUBJECT TO POST JUDGMENT TAXES	$11,250.00
7	3188TX 06/05/26	2756-0000-0290- 43 OCTOBER 29, 2026	RAINS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT, ET AL VS. PEGGY HOWARD, AKA PEGGY STEWART HOWARD	LOT # 29 STEAMBOAT SHORES SUBDIVISION - 0.0454 ACRES SALE NOTES: SUBJECT TO POST JUDGMENT TAXES	$21,200.00
8	3242TX 09/25/26	0281-0155- 000E-43 OCTOBER 29, 2026	RAINS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT, ET AL VS. BOBBY JOE ESSARY	IMPROVEMENT ONLY BUILDING - JESSE YARBER SURVEY ABSTRACT# 281 SALE NOTES: IMPROVEMENT ONLY BUILDING SUBJECT TO POST JUDGMENT TAXES	$31,008.00
9	3280TX 06/05/26	0231-0255- 00M2-43 OCTOBER 29, 2026	RAINS COUNTY, ET AL VS. MICHAEL J. NORTHCUTT, ET AL	MOBILE HOME ONLY - LABEL#(S) SFW020407TXA & SFW020407TXB, SERIAL#(S) NTA185766 & NTA185767 E W TOLLETT SURVEY, ABSTRACT# 231 SALE NOTES: MOBILE HOME ONLY SUBJECT TO POST JUDGMENT TAXES	$153,369.00
10	3289TX 09/25/26	0253-0001-0010- 43 OCTOBER 29, 2026	RAINS COUNTY, ET AL VS. ICO PIPE & SUPPLY, INC.	JOHN VOCHERY SURVEY, ABSTRACT # 253 - 2.694 ACRES SALE NOTES: SUBJECT TO POST JUDGMENT TAXES	$266,843.00
11	3301TX 09/25/26	0189-0931- 010B-43 OCTOBER 29, 2026	RAINS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT, ET AL VS. LYNN JACKSON	IMPROVEMENT ONLY BUILDING - GEORGE W RITTER SURVEY ABSTRACT# 189 SALE NOTES: IMPROVEMENT ONLY BUILDING SUBJECT TO POST JUDGMENT TAXES	$82,330.00
12	3310TX 09/25/26	0189-0931-0010- 43 OCTOBER 29, 2026	RAINS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT, ET AL VS. LAVONDA JACKSON	GEORGE W RITTER SURVEY, ABSTRACT# 189 - ACRES 2.00 SALE NOTES: SUBJECT TO POST JUDGMENT TAXES	$270,737.00
13	3348TX 09/25/26	2350-0000-0870- 43 OCTOBER 29, 2026	RAINS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT, ET AL VS. WILLIAM E. HEAD, JR., AKA WILLIAM EDWARD HEAD, JR., ET AL	JAMES HOOKER SURVEY, ABSTRACT# 10 - LOTS 87 & 96 HOLIDAY HILLS SUBDIVISION (ACCT#' 2350-0000-0870-43 (6946) & (ACCT# 2350-0000-0960-43 (6955)) SALE NOTES: SUBJECT TO POST JUDGMENT TAXES	$21,630.00
14	3369TX 09/25/26	4900-0000-0110- 43 OCTOBER 29, 2026	RAINS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT, ET AL VS. PEGGY DARNELLE CHAPMAN	TRACT 1 GEORGE SCULL SURVEY, ABSTRACT# 204 - 0.50 ACRES AKA TRACT #11 HOGANVILLE PARK SALE NOTES: SELLING TRACT #1 & TRACT #2 TOGETHER FOR ONE BID SUBJECT TO POST JUDGMENT TAXES	$16,821.00
15	3369TX 09/25/26	4900-0000- 011M-43 OCTOBER 29, 2026	RAINS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT, ET AL VS. PEGGY DARNELLE CHAPMAN	TRACT 2 MOBILE HOME, LABEL# TEX0314527 & SERIAL# 50300864 SALE NOTES: SELLING TRACT #1 & TRACT #2 FOR ONE COMBINED BID SUBJECT TO POST JUDGMENT TAXES	$18,814.00
16	3372TX 09/25/26	2302-0000-0970- 43 OCTOBER 29, 2026	RAINS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT, ET AL VS. CHARLES SWINNEA, AKA CHARLES EDWARD SWINNEA, ET AL	TRACT 1 THOMAS BROOKS SURVEY, ABSTRACT# 14 - LOT 97 HERMITS COVE SUBDIVISION #3 SALE NOTES: SUBJECT TO POST JUDGMENT TAXES	$1,450.00
17	3372TX 09/25/26	2302-0000-0960- 43 OCTOBER 29, 2026	RAINS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT, ET AL VS. CHARLES SWINNEA, AKA CHARLES EDWARD SWINNEA, ET AL	TRACT 2 THOMAS D BROOKS SURVEY, ABSTRACT# 14 - LOT 96 HERMITS COVE SUBDIVISION #3 SALE NOTES: SUBJECT TO POST JUDGMENT TAXES	$1,450.00

(any volume and page references, unless otherwise indicated, being to the Deed Records, Rains County, Texas, to which instruments reference may be made for a more complete description of each respective tract.) or, upon the written request of said defendants or their attorney, a sufficient portion of the property described above shall be sold to satisfy said judgment(s), interest, penalties, and cost; and any property sold shall be subject to the right of redemption of the defendants or any person having an interest therein, to redeem the said property, or their interest therein, within the time and in the manner provided by law, and shall be subject to any other and further rights to which the defendants or anyone interested therein may be entitled, under the provisions of law. Said sale to be made by me to satisfy the judgment(s) rendered in the above styled and numbered cause(s), together with interest, penalties, and costs of suit, and the proceeds of said sales to be applied to the satisfaction thereof, and the remainder, if any, to be applied as the law directs.

RECENT CHANGES IN THE PROPERTY TAX CODE NOW REQUIRE PURCHASERS OF TAX SALE PROPERTY TO HAVE A STATEMENT FROM THE RAINS COUNTY TAX ASSESSOR-COLLECTOR CERTIFYING THAT THE PERSON/FIRM/COMPANY PURCHASING PROPERTY AT A TAX SALE OWES NO DELINQUENT PROPERTY TAXES TO ANY TAXING ENTITY WITHIN THE COUNTY. YOU WILL NOT RECEIVE A TAX SALE DEED TO ANY PROPERTY YOU PURCHASE WITHOUT THIS CERTIFICATE.

TO OBTAIN A CERTIFICATE, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR RAINS COUNTY TAX ASSESSOR-COLLECTOR AT LEAST TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO THE SALE.

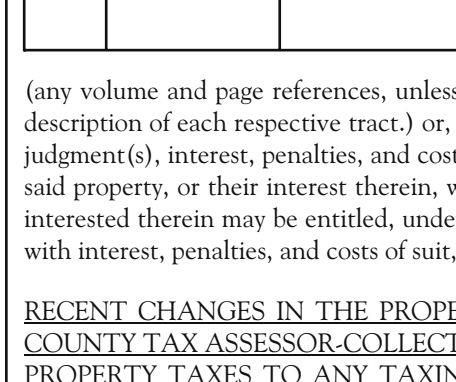
Dated at Emory, Texas, October 29, 2026

_____
Sheriff Michael Hopkins
Rains County, Texas

By _____
Deputy

Notes:

The Minimum Bid is the lesser of the amount awarded in the judgment plus interest and costs or the adjudged value. However, the Minimum Bid for a person owning an interest in the property or for a person who is a party to the suit (other than a taxing unit), is the aggregate amount of the judgments against the property plus all costs of suit and sale. ALL SALES SUBJECT TO CANCELLATION WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. THERE MAY BE ADDITIONAL TAXES DUE ON THE PROPERTY WHICH HAVE BEEN ASSESSED SINCE THE DATE OF THE JUDGMENT. For more information, contact your attorney or LINEBARGER GOGGAN BLAIR & SAMPSON, LLP, attorney for plaintiffs, at (903) 597-2897



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Good Samaritan's Thrift/Clothes store will be open Saturdays in November 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.

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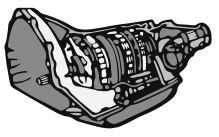
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PUBLIC/LEGAL NOTICE

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

City of Point Water urges all prospective land buyers to verify with the water operator or city secretary at City of Point at our 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 OF SALE

Bright Star-Salem Special Utility District is accepting separate sealed bids for the following:

- **2016 JD Zero-Turn Mower w/557 hours - $2,500 minimum bid**
- **2018 Bobcat Mini Ex E-55 w/ 1,400 hours - $35,000 minimum bid**
- **2019 Chevrolet 2500 4WD w/ 133,333 miles - $12,500 minimum bid**

Sealed bids must be received in the District's office no later than Monday, November 23rd @ 12:00 noon. Each piece of equipment may be viewed at the District's office located at 238 N Osborn Street in Alba. The Board of Directors reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids. All equipment is sold as is with no warranty expressed or implied.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS IN THE ESTATE OF DANIEL WILKES PARRISH, DECEASED

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of Daniel Wilkes Parrish, Deceased, were issued on October 28, 2026, under Cause No. 3424, pending in the County Court of Rains County, Texas, to Pamela Marshall Henricks.

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

c/o Robert S. Morris
Attorney at Law
2871 Lake Vista Drive, Suite 100
Lewisville, Texas 75067

SIGNED on November 4, 2026

/s/ Robert S. Morris
Robert S. Morris
Attorney for Pamela Marshall Henricks
State Bar No.: 14500300
2871 Lake Vista Drive, Suite 100
Lewisville, Texas 75067
Telephone: (972)436-9300
Facsimile: (972)436-9000
Email: rsm@hammerle.com

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

ALL UNKNOWN HEIRS AND KNOWN HEIRS WHOSE ADDRESSES CANNOT BE ASCERTAINED

CITATION BY PUBLICATION

STATE OF TEXAS

TO THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF PATRICE LENNAEA VIEIRA, DECEASED — GREETINGS:

YOU ARE HEREBY COMMANDED TO APPEAR BEFORE THE COUNTY COURT OF RAINS COUNTY, TEXAS AT THE RAINS COUNTY COURTHOUSE ANNEX LOCATED AT **220 W. QUITMAN ST., EMORY, TEXAS 75440.** BY FILING A WRITTEN CONTEST OR ANSWER TO THE **APPLICATION FOR INDEPENDENT ADMINISTRATION OF INTESTATE ESTATE BY AGREEMENT AND LETTERS OF INDEPENDENT ADMINISTRATION UNDER TEXAS ESTATES CODE, SECTION 401.003 AND FOR DECLARATION OF HEIRSHIP** FILED BY **MICHAEL WAYNE VIEIRA,** ON **11/04/2026 IN CAUSE 3430** IN THE COUNTY COURT OF RAINS COUNTY, TEXAS AND BEING STYLED: **IN THE ESTATE OF PATRICE LENNAEA VIEIRA, DECEASED** ON OR BEFORE THE MONDAY NEXT FOLLOWING THE EXPIRATION OF 10 DAYS FROM THE DATE THIS CITATION WAS PUBLISHED. BY THE **APPLICATION FOR INDEPENDENT ADMINISTRATION OF INTESTATE ESTATE BY AGREEMENT AND LETTERS OF INDEPENDENT ADMINISTRATION UNDER TEXAS ESTATES CODE, SECTION 401.003 AND FOR DECLARATION OF HEIRSHIP** APPLICANT SEEKS THE COURT TO DETERMINE AND DECLARE THE HEIRS OF **PATRICE LENNAEA VIEIRA, DECEASED** AND THEIR INTERESTS IN SAID ESTATE.

ISSUED AND GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL OF SAID COURT AT OFFICE IN EMORY, TEXAS, THIS November 5, 2026.

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

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50 years ago this week

Gleanings from the Rains County Leader archives

Thursday, November 11, 1976

Rains Voters Stay in Demo Fold

Rains County voters didn't deter a single iota when voting for all the democratic nominees (she seldom does).

In the count, Jimmy Carter received 1,339 to Jerry Ford's 510. Smith Gilley with no opponent and seems no opposition, received 1442 for State Representative District 10. Roy Weatherford in a write-in campaign, was unsuccessful in his bid for constable for Precinct 3 which Max Fletcher won with 246 votes to Weatherford's 129.

Unofficial votes were reported to have been cast for John Slatter, and not counted, in a write-in effort for Justice of Peace Precinct 2.

U.S. Senate candidate Lloyd Bentsen was chosen over Republican candidate Alan Steelman in a 1,272-466 vote. For U.S. representative, Rains County voters again went heavily Democratic in a 716 vote for Sam B. Hall Jr. over Republican candidate James Hogan, with 145 votes.

Rains chose Ray Roberts as U.S. representative from the Fourth District in a 572 vote over Republican opponent Frank Glenn, with 107 votes.

The voters expressed a heavy preference for Jon Newton as railroad commissioner, in a 1,425 vote over opponent Walter Wendlandt, with 206 votes. In the race for associate justice of the Texas Supreme Court, Place 2, Rains County went for Don Yarbrough in a 1,135 vote over write-in candidate Sam Houston, with 187 votes.

The first proposed constitutional amendment on the ballot failed in Rains County in a 586-356 vote and the second proposed constitutional amendment also failed, in a 527-395 vote.

Lloyd Luckett won as county commissioner for Pct. 1, with 219 votes. Boyce Childers got three and T. H. Northcutt won six write-in votes for the position. E. L. Dougherty was returned to office as county commissioner, Pct. 3 with 377 votes. Write-in candidate R. W. Henon got 5 votes. Douglas Fenter won with 497 votes as commissioner for Pct. 4. Mickey Cooper, with 370 votes, won with no opposition as justice of the peace for precinct 3.

Outstanding Citizen Award Deadline Nov. 26

Last week's Rains County Leader publicized the Emory Lions Club 2nd Annual Banquet scheduled for Tuesday, Dec. 7, at 7 p.m. to be held at the community center in Emory.

Those people who may have missed last week's edition, the purpose of the banquet is to recognize an outstanding citizen of Rains County for 1976.

Tickets are the same as last year, $3.00 per person. This is a bargain due to the rising food costs since last year's banquet.

Please make your nominations as outlined in last week's publication.

Nominations will be accepted through Friday, Nov. 26th, day after Thanksgiving.

Place your nominations in a sealed envelope, mark on outside of envelope "NOMINATION" to avoid accidental opening of your letter before time.

An executive committee selected of officers & directors of the Emory Lions Club will meet Tuesday, Nov. 30th, at 7 p.m. to open all nominations and select a winner. The name will not be divulged until the night of the banquet.

Make your nomination now--don't wait until Nov. 26th. One nomination allowed per person. Select the person you feel is befitting the award, regardless of age, sex, race or religious beliefs.

Commissioners' Court

In the Rains County Commissioners' Court meeting Monday the grant application for the remodeling of the courthouse has been applied for and filed. The application for the new jail has not. Some of the commissioners are worried that the old jail will be turned into office space as the courthouse remodeling gets underway and that Rains County will be without a jail.

The voting returns were canvassed and the report of the election judges were accepted and approved.

There is a report that a recount will be asked for on account of write-in votes for Justice of Peace in Precinct 2 not being acknowledged.

County Court

Rains County Judge Cecil Johnston held county court on Oct. 28th and the following cases were disposed of:

Belinda Jones charged with driving while intoxicated, fined $150 and 30-day jail sentence, sentence suspended for twelve months; Robert Jones, driving while intoxicated, $150 fine and 20-day jail sentence suspended for 12 months; Ronald Howell, driving while intoxicated, $150 fine and 30-day jail sentence suspended for 12 months; Rolland Springfield, driving while intoxicated, $100 fine and 3 days in Rains County jail; the cases of Fredrick Cramer, Donnie Dennis, Ernest Lennon, Michael Lawhorn, James Chiotti and Hubert Harvey were dismissed for lack of evidence.

Stop Signs for City of Emory

The City of Emory has purchased twenty-four stop signs with four 4-way signs and three all-way signs for a total of $333.55. These signs have been placed throughout the City of Emory.

Spence Family Gospel Benefit Nets $527.00

The Roy Lee Spence Family Benefit Saturday night was a great success. It was well-attended by about 200 persons. The total donations was something over $527.

There was nearly three hours of good gospel singing. The Flats Church of God would like to thank everyone who helped, Especially Mr. Holman, who arranged for the benefit to be held in the cafeteria. The following is a list of the ones who helped: Joe Ben Cason, Vickie Cason, Paul Cason, Betty Cason, Naomi, Glenda & Sandra Wallace, Lillie Dotson & family, Rev. & Mrs. Ishmael, Mr. & Mrs. Hoover, Rev. Junior Mitchell and singers from Freedom, Rev. Wilds and all singers from the First Assembly of Yahvah and a number of musicians.

May the Lord richly bless one and all for each and everything that was done.

Film to Show at Bright Star Baptist Church

The motion picture, "A Thief in the Night" will be shown Saturday night, Nov. 13, 1976 at 7:30 p.m. at the Bright Star Baptist Church. If you would like to see what will and can happen when Jesus Christ returns, please attend. Everyone is invited to see this great film.

LOOKING BACK...

THE Wedding

By AUDY CODY
Rains County Leader contributor

Big excitement in little old Emory! Emma Lee Nabors was getting married on Friday evening, February 6,1948, at The Emory Baptist Church – and it was to be a BIG wedding. I was 12 years old, adored Emma Lee and I was going to be in the wedding!

Emma Lee's father had died a few years before and Mrs. Nabors had an insurance agency. She was such a lady, a true example of the "virtuous woman" described in Proverbs. (She played the organ in Emory Baptist Church and even bought the organ and the chimes (which still ring out at noon each day.) As an excellent business woman, she probably insured more than half the people in Rains County. Emma Lee was her only child and she wanted only the best for her.

Thus the wedding dress as well as all the bride's attendants' dresses had to be purchased from A. Harris department store in Dallas! Now that was a BIG deal also!

Mama loaded me into the hulking 1939 Chevy sedan and off we went to purchase my pale blue silk peau de soie Junior Bridesmaid's dress. At that time, just driving the 30 miles to Greenville was a monumental event and driving all the way to downtown Dallas was a rarity.

Unfortunately, one of those "Texas Blue Northers" blew in the day before the wedding and there was ice on the ground. After the ceremony, Daddy decided I shouldn't walk on the ice to the car so he proceeded to pick me up and carry me. Bad decision… he slipped on the ice and fell down on one knee. I was unscathed but he tore the knee out of the pants to his one and only suit.

The reception was at Mrs. Nabors' home and since it was on the corner just a long block from the church, normally the guests would have walked. However, because of the bad weather they drove so there were lots of cars parked every which-a-way on the streets. There were probably 100 guests and they all came to the reception.

Her 'city' home was beautifully decorated, with floor to ceiling custom drapes with valances, nice furniture and all the 'trimmings' – much more so than the majority of the homes in Rains County. The guests behaved in a genteel manner, no raucous talking, just chatting as they enjoyed their wedding cake and fruit punch.

Now the Sparks Osborne family – Sparks, Velma, Paul Sparks and Mary Lynn – lived in a small home directly behind the Nabors. They were a good family, but Sparks, well…as my maternal Grandmother said about my functioning alcoholic Grandfather, "He was a good man, he just drank a little too much." The idea that Emma Lee at age 18 was marrying a man who was 36, twice her age, and was not "from here" did not set well with Sparks. He was so upset he dealt with the situation by 'drinking a little too much'. About half way through that lovely reception, he loaded his pistol, and took off, staggering, to get rid of "that old man". The guests were enjoying such a "lovely reception" with, of course, the local 'wags' dissecting everything from what the mother of the bride wore and how much it cost when they heard a shot fired and Sparks appeared in the front doorway waving his pistol. As they saw such a sight at the front door, sedate gentility flew out the back and they started running for cover. Lillian Rodes, wife of Pete Rodes the banker, had brought their 8-year-old son, David, and she hurriedly grabbed his hand and pulled him behind the nearest drape! In later years she laughed and told me that she then realized that her actions availed little, actually nothing, because the fabric drape was no protection at all! Fortunately, one brave guest, Robert Holley, walked over to Sparks as he entered the front door, held out his hand, and while saying "Now Sparks, give me the gun, you don't want to do something you will regret," he calmly took the gun from Sparks' hand and the crisis was over. The only victim of the escapade was the big brand new blue Buick belonging to Ardis and Frank Alexander, owners of "F S Alexander, Grocery-Market-Feed". Their long awaited fancy car now had a hole through the windshield. Thereafter, the reception continued as normal, but was the talk of the town for months after.

Appendum

Matron of honor was Mrs K. W. Tottenham, sister of the groom. Miss Mickey Daniel, of Winnsboro, was maid of honor. Bridesmaids were Miss Billye Welch of Naples, Miss Helen Durham, of Simms, Miss Jo Ann Ratliff, of Paris, and Miss Barbara Nabors, of Longview. Junior bridesmaids were Audnette Cody of Emory and Frances Ruth Nettles of Waskom. Tommie Gus Orsborn of Emory, was ringbearer and Nancy DeBerry of Emory, was flower girl. Candle lighters were Miss Phyllis Ann Potts of Grand Prairie, and Miss Jane Guest, of Commerce.

Charles O'Neil, of Beeville, was best man. Ushers were Frank Goff Alexander of Emory, Eddie Penal, of Denison, Bobbie Ivie of Emory and L. M. Braziel, Jr., of Emory. Mrs. J. T. Ratliff presided at the bride's book.M. H. R. Ivie served the bride's cake and Mrs. Felton Furrh poured punch. Others in the house party were Mrs. Sparks Orsborn, Mrs. Robert Holley, and the wedding attendants.

THIS WEEK IN TEXAS HISTORY

Mexican revolution too close for comfort

by Bartee Haile



BARTEE HAILE
Historical Columnist

The residents of Texas' westernmost town awoke on Nov. 15, 1913 to the familiar sound of gunfire in the streets of Juarez.

The life-and-death struggle Mexicans called a revolution began three years earlier, when Francisco Madero challenged the dictatorship of Porfirio Diaz. The aging tyrant responded with the iron-fisted repression that had kept him in power for 34 years and forced the mild-mannered intellectual to flee the country for the safety of San Antonio.

Abraham Gonzales followed his hero into Lone Star exile but selected sympathetic El Paso for his home away from home. He recruited guerrillas, passed the sombrero for donations and established a munitions pipeline.

Taking advantage of lax laws, which permitted the purchase of war material for export, Gonzales bought in bulk from an arms supplier in New York. The guns and ammunition were shipped to an El Paso sporting goods dealer, who not only handled the merchandise for free but often paid the freight charges out of his own pocket.

After a brief return to Mexico cut short by a military setback, Madero checked into an El Paso hotel in the spring of 1911. While their timid leader licked their wounds, Pascual Orozco and Pancho Villa fought the Diaz defenders for control of Juarez.

Oblivious to stray bullets and artillery shells, El Pasoans watched the three days of fireworks from rooftops, boxcars and the banks of the Rio Grande. The fall of Juarez to the rebels on May 14 resulted in the resignation of Diaz and his replacement by Madero.

But the do-nothing policies of the democratic dreamer soon alienated his more militant supporters. Juarez once more became a bloody battleground, as Orosco's "Red Flaggers" stormed the city and flooded El Paso with panic-stricken refugees.

The very merchants, who had made a killing selling everything under the sun to the revolutionaries, now howled in protest. Blaming "the deplorable state of affairs in El Paso" on "the continued anarchy in Juarez," Mayor C.E. Kelly demanded federal protection in a strongly worded appeal to President Taft.

Army troops at Fort Bliss entered the city to restore order and close the crossing points. Reinforcements rushed to the scene from San Antonio along with National Guard units and Texas Rangers mobilized by Gov. Oscar Colquitt.

The eventual eviction of the "Red Flaggers" from Juarez by Madero loyalists brought a welcomed return to the serene status quo. For a few peaceful months, it was business as usual on the border.

But all bets were suddenly off after Gen. Victoriano Huerta overthrew and murdered Madero in February 1913. El Pasoans braced for another round of fighting in their troubled sister city.

Pancho Villa had spent the three months prior to the Huerta coup in El Paso, where he had taken refuge following a close call with a firing squad. He dramatically reappeared in northern Mexico, rallied his ragtag regiments and in the name of the martyred Madero struck at Chihuahua in November 1913.

The inconclusive clash deteriorated into a siege, which was definitely not Villa's style. He rode north with just his cavalry in the hope of surprising the Juarez garrison.

The villistas turned a captured coal train into a Trojan horse on wheels and rolled right into the heart of the sleeping city before dawn on Nov. 15, 1913. Khaki-clad peasants silently surrounded the main barracks and mowed down the government soldiers as they came running out the door.

Most officers followed the example of their cowardly commander, who disguised as a peon headed for El Paso as fast as four legs could carry him. He was found later that morning hiding under a bed in the backroom of a store.

A hail of lead ended the frantic flight of a lieutenant in the middle of the international bridge. American soldiers at the opposite end of the span reacted to numerous near-misses by charging the villistas, who wisely raised their rifles over their heads in symbolic apology.

El Pasoans returned from an afternoon tour of Juarez with reports of bodies on nearly every block. The majority were not combat casualties but victims of Villa's roving death squads.

Speaking to American newspapermen in the same hall where Diaz toasted Taft in 1909, the victor justified the executions. "It must be done. Traitors must pay the penalty."

Villa did express regret for the slaying of an American taxi driver outside a Juarez gambling den and the wounding of a messenger boy on an El Paso avenue. But he hastened to add, "I will continue to protect American lives and property in the future as I have always done in the past."

That cynical pledge was broken two and a half years later by Villa's unprovoked raid on Columbus, New Mexico.

"Unforgettable Texans" brings to life the once famous people no one remembers today. Order your autographed copy for $24.00 by mailing a check to Bartee Haile, P.O. Box 130011, Spring, TX 77393.

