

# Gladewater Mirror

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50¢

## GISD adopts \$21M budget for '23-24

Districts statewide await word from Austin on school taxes

By James Draper

Gladewater ISD trustees unanimously approved the district's financial plan for the 2023-2024 school year Monday night – the balanced budget includes total estimated revenues of \$21,078,340, a 6.9 percent increase over the prior year.

Importantly, the 4-0 adoption June 26 only considered the GISD budget based on preliminary property values – adoption of a tax rate for the district won't come until after certified values are released.

"We always adopt our budget on the preliminaries because that's the information we have available at that time," GISD Chief Financial Officer Glenda Hickey reminded the board. Other factors outside the district's control come into play as well: "Honestly, we don't know what our max compression rate will be. It's still being discussed in legislation right now," tied up in special sessions in Austin.

According to TexasPolicy.com, tax rate compression means "using state funds to buy down school district M&O tax rates to reduce property tax bills."

While that's still being debated by elected officials at the state level, Gladewater ISD and other districts have to keep moving forward – the tax rate used for budgetary purposes includes Maintenance & Operation at \$0.9309 per \$100 valuation plus Interest & Sinking at \$0.2336.

"That's going to give us a tax rate of \$1.1645," Hickey said, repeating its preliminary nature. "I believe last year when we actually adopted it was \$1.28 – it has definitely gone down."

Once solid numbers are in-hand, "We'll recalculate again. If it makes a significant difference, we may do a budget amendment. If the difference is minor, we may leave the budget as it is."

Balancing revenues with spending, the school board adopts the budget on the function level, Hickey noted. That includes categories for everything from Instruction (50.05 percent of the budget) to Maintenance & Operation (14.26%) to Student Transportation (5.55%) and other functions.

"Our budget is 76 percent salaries. That's pretty good," she added. "As you would expect, instruction is going to be the highest percentage, and anything related to instruction."

"Everything should lean toward serving students, what we're here for."

Among a variety of other agenda items June 26, the board heard a brief Superintendent's Report from Dr. Cedric Clark, including an update on how the school weathered the June 16 storm: "Fortunately, we experienced minimal damage," Clark said. Among various damages, the tennis court fence will need repairs and six trees were lost at Gladewater High School. Meanwhile, "We were in the last week of summer school but had to cancel and close all of our offices due to widespread power outages."

Clark thanked the school's employees and supporters who turned out to lend a hand during recovery efforts.

Board members also considered final budget amendments for the 2022-2023 school year, approved a handful of tax refunds and adopted legal policy updates passed on from the Texas Association of School Boards.



*'I wanted to remind you how important you are.'*

By James Draper

Gladewater has great history and is a really important part of the 1st Congressional District, U.S. Rep. Nathaniel Moran told local officials Friday during a ranging tour of the town: "I wanted to remind you how important you are."

Facetime with officials in the district has been an essential component of the former Smith County judge's first six months in office, and he was quick to ask about local needs during his June 30 visit.

"This is the kind of thing I love to do," the freshman Republican told the local leaders during their face-to-face. "Growing up in East Texas, being from Whitehouse, I just love this."

"With some great communities in East Texas, we're all the same. We can deal with just rural East Texas stuff, and I like that."

Gladewater Chamber of Commerce President Lois Reed coordinated the tour for the congressman and Senior Advisor Jalam Lewis. They were joined by the bulk of Gladewater City Council along with City Manager Charlie Smith, Police Chief Gordon Freeman, City Inspector Al Harrison, Fire Chief Mike Simmons and City Clerk

... U.S. Rep. Nathaniel Moran

Judy Von Houten on a GoBus from East Texas Council of Governments.

It was Moran's third official visit to the community the last 5 weeks after taking in the fly-in at Gladewater Municipal Airport then the Round-Up Rodeo.

"We had a fabulous time out at the rodeo," Moran said. "It was great. We had a really wonderful time. My two little ones, it was their first time at a rodeo."

First stop on Friday's tour was the chamber's Business of the Year, EquipmentShare.

"They've been here three years. They're already in an expansion," Reed said. She's doubly grateful this week – after inviting the company to sponsor a portion of the year's pyrotechnics at Lake Gladewater, "They said, 'Oh, no, we want to pay for the whole fireworks show.'"

"Obviously, they're a great business to have here. Their plans are still ongoing. They own 20-plus acres. It can be a dream for us."

After a quick stop in the main facility, the tour

Continued on Page 8

## Reporting system helps curtail illegal dumping

The East Texas Council of Governments (ETCOG) is proud to announce the launch of a new reporting system designed to combat illegal dumping and keep East Texas clean. The system, called RID – Report Illegal Dumping, is a simple and convenient way for residents to report instances of illegal dumping in their neighborhoods and communities.

Illegal dumping is a persistent problem in many communities, creating health and safety hazards, detracting from the beauty of our neighborhoods, and negatively impacting the environment. The new online system provides a convenient solution to this problem, allowing residents to quickly and easily report incidents of illegal dumping with just a few clicks.

RID features a user-friendly interface and easy-to-follow instructions that guide users through the reporting process. Users can submit a report by providing a description of the incident, a photo

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## Man indicted in father's death

By Phillip Williams

The Upshur County Grand Jury recently indicted a 46-year-old Gilmer man on charges of murdering his father, said District Attorney Billy Byrd's office.

Michael Timothy Caffey is charged with killing 66-year-old Timothy Allen Caffey on March 26 through "blunt force trauma with a hammer," Byrd said. The elder Caffey suffered "multiple blows" to the head, he added.

Michael Caffey, indicted June 22 in Gilmer, remained in Upshur County Jail there under \$1 million surety bond after being indicted, Byrd's office said.

Timothy Caffey's body underwent an autopsy after being found outside his and his son's home March 27 in the 2400 block of Air-strip Road in Latch community, said sheriff's Chief Deputy David Hazel.

Michael Caffey was charged with the murder after his March 27 arrest on a misdemeanor charge in Gregg County, Hazel said in a press release at the time.

Sheriff's deputies "responded to a dead body call" at the home in southwest Upshur County about 9:30 a.m. after members of a crew which had come to do a roofing job there found the remains and contacted the sheriff's office, Hazel said.

He also said authorities believed Timothy Caffey had been dead no longer than 24 hours. In the news release, Hazel said "evidence at the scene clearly indicated" the man "was the victim of a homicide."

Hazel gave these details of subsequent events:

After investigators learned the father and son lived together, the Upshur sheriff's office sent a bulletin to northeast Texas area law enforcement agencies asking to be notified if Michael Caffey was located. In early afternoon, Gregg County deputies contacted Upshur County and reported having found him in a neighborhood near Liberty City.

Residents there had contacted the Gregg sheriff's office due to Caffey "wandering the street and walking onto residential properties." Gregg County also reported it had a warrant for his arrest on a class C misdemeanor charge of some sort.

Upshur County Sheriff Larry Webb and other Upshur personnel responded to the scene near Liberty City to talk to Caffey, and "while there, investigators located evidence linking Mr. Michael Caffey to the homicide."

## GFD pays respect to Medal of Honor recipient

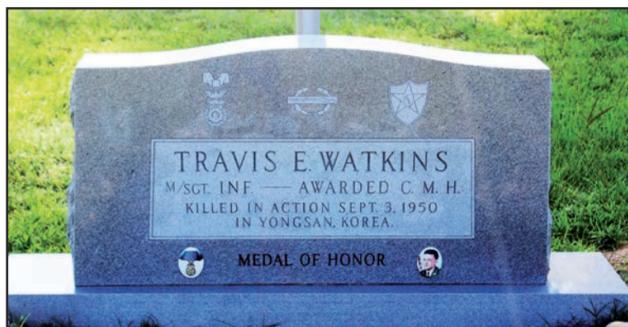
It started with a phone call.

The person on the other end of the line told Gladewater's interim city manager a key flag in the community was worn and frayed – it needed to be replaced. Charlie Smith knew the military veterans in Gladewater's fire department would complete the task quickly.

Soon enough, it became an all new venture for the department and a long-term commitment: the firefighters and their supporters would not only replace the flags at the gravesite of U.S. Army Master Sergeant Travis E. Watkins, they'd revitalize it – in perpetuity.

"I'm a veteran myself," said GFD Captain Kevin Palmer. He joined the U.S. Army in '98. "That's a big deal when you come across a Medal of Honor winner's grave. That's why it's super important for us as well."

Watkins was an Army soldier and veteran of World War II who was killed August 31, 1950, during the Battle of Yongsan in the Korean War following courageous action on the battlefield. He was interred



in Gladewater Memorial Park and was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor in February 1951.

For years, U.S. Marine Corps veteran and long-term veterans advocate Leon Watson tended the site with other VFW volunteers and other helpers, but they need more hands on deck to keep up the effort.

"It can't be just one person," Palmer said. "It's got to be the community. The community's got to care about it."

There was a gap and a need, GFD Chief Mike Simmons said, praising his firefighters for stepping in.

"Most of us didn't know there was a Medal of Honor award winner gravesite out there," he added. "When they got out there and realized it was, they saw the gravesite needed some TLC. The flag was tattered, the pole was leaning, people hadn't been out there in a while."

"We started talking about it, and (Palmer) wanted to know if we could do more to help out."

First task, get the flag replaced and the pole fixed. Then, come up with a plan for the future.

That strategy quickly centered

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The 2023 White Oak Softball Camp was hosted by Head Softball Coach Ninevah Blankenship. The 8U and 10U groups of future Ladynecks are pictured here with their assistant coaches.

Photo by Mike Peery



# OPINION/COMMENTARY

## ... everything

The meaning of life is something I have never had to search for. It was always just 'there', sure as the black dirt beneath my feet. The rock solid truth is that the ultimate reason for being is simply to love and be loved. Harder to do for some than others. I was taught that love was a choice. Love is not a feeling, or not just a feeling, love has to be an action regardless of how you feel. That kind of love enables you to survive just about anything, do just about anything.

I learned early that life is not fair. It is never going to be fair and the sooner that fact of life is grasped the smoother the road you trod can be simply by not wasting your energy and emotion on what you have been denied, what has been taken from you, what you did that was credited to someone else, or cruelty that is undeserved and unearned. It just is. So the power one has is when you have done all you can do, "just stand"...until you find your way to step forward.

I know that we all can be very small-minded creatures. We often preach the Golden Rule and the importance of not judging others and then we spend most of our time breaking the former and doing the latter. What a waste of time. I have found that when people's conception of what is right or wrong, or even their perception of God is rattled they have a tendency to attack, often viciously. If someone is indeed convinced they are right, why do they feel threatened? Why do they feel the need to angrily attack someone they disagree with? If you are right rest in your confidence. Also, why drive the other guy further from what you believe to be the truth with anger?

If you know you are right, why are you not at peace letting your light illuminate a better path. You can not be heard when you are screaming. Sometimes only actions can be

## Senate passes tax bill as second special session begins

The Texas Senate on the first day of the Legislature's second special session unanimously passed a tax bill last Wednesday that increases the homestead exemption and includes a pay hike for teachers, the Austin American-Statesman reported. The first special session ended with the Senate and House unable to agree on how to provide property tax relief.

The Senate bill provides a \$2,000 pay increase for teachers in urban districts over the next two years, and a \$6,000 hike for teachers in rural areas. It increases the homestead exemption from \$40,000 to \$100,000.

Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick and House Speaker Dade Phelan are set to meet in an attempt to come to agreement on the property tax issue, after Patrick texted the best way to resolve debt differences between House and Senate versions would be to meet face-to-face.

"They have responded; we're looking forward to a meeting. ... Whenever that is, I believe we can get this resolved quickly," Patrick told the Statesman.

During the first special session, the House passed its version of a property tax package on the first day and immediately adjourned for the remainder of the 30-day session.

### 3 die daily in state due to drunk driving

Officials with the Texas Department of Transportation are again urging Texans to drive sober, as drunk driving deaths increased again last year to 1,162 — an average of more than three people a day. The

agency is spearheading a Faces of Drunk Driving campaign, highlighting families whose lives have been adversely affected by a drunk driver, such as Monse Montoya, who lost her mother and father when a drunk driver ran a stop sign and T-boned her parents' car.

Last year, 26% of all traffic deaths in Texas involved a drunk driver.

"Numbers can sometimes feel abstract," said TxDOT Executive Director Marc Williams. "But these are real people whose lives were either lost or forever altered by someone's decision to drink and drive."

### Weevils making positive impact on giant salvinia

Giant salvinia presents a major threat to Texas lakes, forming dense carpets of foliage on water surfaces that can expand very rapidly and make boating, fishing and swimming nearly impossible. Now, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department biologists say there are encouraging signs that giant salvinia weevils are effective in controlling the invasive species.

Giant salvinia invaded Texas waters in 1998 in the Houston area. It was found in Toledo Bend Reservoir later that year.

It is now found on 36 Texas lakes and numerous rivers, creeks and marshes. With the spread to more lakes in recent years, TPWD has worked to attempt to establish weevil populations in colder portions of the state while continuing stockings to augment or rebuild existing populations

## The Best of Suzanne Bardwell



'heard'. So, how do we

find purpose and peace? Maybe it is time for a diet of the soul. One that requires a little less screen time, a lot less social media and a whopping helping of kindness.

My wise mother taught me that we make the life we live. We choose how we will respond to the anger, injustice, cruelty and harshness of life. We decide if it will make us bitter or better, and it is a choice. A choice that we make over and over again. A choice that makes our lives, and our corner of the world a much better place to be when we choose better.

Anger and grudges can be the acid that burns away our soul and damages those we love. Choosing forgiveness, choosing kindness and compassion even when it is undeserved is my idea of peace on earth. At least in this tiny corner of mine.

I am surrounded by people who make this corner better every single day by their hard work, their commitment, generosity and sheer goodness. The magic to their success is not that they walk on water but that they start anew when they fail...time after time. They don't give up, or in, to the frailties of being human. They know the secret too. I bet that most of you dear readers know it as well.

When we forget we just need someone to remind us that love is the greatest gift of all.

If we have that gift we have everything.

## Gary Borders Capital Highlights



in areas more hospitable to weevils.

The weevils are more tolerant of low temperatures than previously believed, according to TPWD, and continue to be effective at reducing the spread of giant salvinia.

### SNAP benefits for storm victims

Victims of the mid-June storms that caused numerous power outages and subsequent food losses can apply for replacement benefits through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program in a dozen Texas counties.

Those counties include Camp, Cass, Franklin, Gregg, Harrison, Marion, Morris, Ochiltree, Panola, Titus, Upshur, and Wood.

"For families that have been impacted by the recent storms, these replacement food benefits will help provide some peace of mind," said Michelle Alletto, with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission.

SNAP recipients with food lost or destroyed during the storms can apply by July 14 by dialing 2-1-1 and selecting option 8.

### New law could boost math skills

A new Texas law recently signed by Gov. Greg Abbott requires school districts and charter schools to automatically enroll fifth graders who score in the top 40% on state

math tests to be placed in advanced math classes, KUT reported. The result could be more equitable access to advance math classes, advocates say.

"This will have a huge impact," Kristen Hengtgen, a senior policy analyst with The Education Trust, said. "The sheer numbers of students who will be identified for advanced math in Texas and in the country is so exciting."

### During heat wave, solar power crucial

The "heat dome" that settled over much of the state during June has pushed electrical demand to new highs. One key component in keeping the grid from overloading is the increase in solar panels, which have grown more than sixfold since 2019, according to the Texas Tribune.

**THE FIRST AMENDMENT:** Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of all the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

# THE ECONOMIST

By Dr. M. Ray Perryman

## Back to the Office ...

Although remote work was a notable and growing segment of overall employment before the pandemic, COVID-19 dramatically ramped up the process. During the worst of the shutdowns, it was often either that or nothing (unless one was an "essential" worker). While many have since returned to offices, the way we work has fundamentally changed.



In some areas, only about half as many people are working in office buildings as prior to the pandemic. Office vacancy rates are rising in many areas, as firms downsize their square footage. In very large cities such as New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago, 20-30% of downtown space is empty. In Texas, the Dallas and Houston central business districts are also about 30% empty, with somewhat lower vacancies in San Antonio, Austin, and Fort Worth. Although certain types of space and some specific buildings are flourishing, the overall pattern has shifted.

As things evolve, however, some companies are pushing employees to return to the office, citing various reasons for wanting workers on site. Many indicate that they think collaboration will be easier and synergies greater. Others feel that if employees are remote, they're less productive. Hundreds of thousands of individuals have recently been faced with mandates to return to the office to at least some degree.

Research generally indicates that remote employees are actually at least as productive, which may be due in part to a tendency to work more hours from home. While there are quality tools to facilitate collaboration, there are obvious benefits to being in person. Conversely, in some offices, open floorplans can impede concentration. Some people want more connection with coworkers and separation of work and home. By contrast, there are others who object to commutes or challenges associated with family responsibilities. The bottom line is that the countless variables in personality, type of work, setting, corporate culture, management style, and other factors impact the best approach.

There was a time when CEOs felt they couldn't compel workers to do much of anything (particularly in technology fields) because jobs were so plentiful that employees could easily switch. As the economy slows, the balance is shifting to some extent (although the long-term trend will see perpetual labor shortages).

The most likely outcome for many is a hybrid situation, working in an office a few days a week. Simultaneously, many fully remote jobs have been proven effective and will remain with us. Some office areas will likely be converted to urban living spaces, and the square footage per employee will typically increase (reversing a long-term trend). Additional amenities in the workplace will similarly become more commonplace. In essence, we'll see an ongoing adjustment, with efficiency being a driving market force. Stay safe!

Dr. M. Ray Perryman is President and Chief Executive Officer of The Perryman Group ([www.perrymangroup.com](http://www.perrymangroup.com)), which has served the needs of over 3,000 clients over the past four decades.



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## DON'T LET SOCIETY CORRUPT YOU

A person's environment has a tremendous impact on one's life. The society in which we live affects each of us. At the very least it affects us all to some degree. In many cases it affects people to a great degree. A corrupt society is a corrupting society. It tends to corrupt those within it. Attitudes slowly change. Moral standards soften. Sin becomes tolerable, then it becomes acceptable. Alexander Pope wrote: "Vice is a monster of so frightful mien, as to be hated needs but to be seen, yet seen to oft, familiar with her face, we first endure, then pity, then embrace." Yes, a person's environment really does have a tremendous impact on one's life.

Bible believers, however, have a counterbalance to the corrupting influences of the world. You see, the Scriptures can help us keep our thinking straight, and our priorities right. In Rom. 12: 2 God says: "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." In this sense the Christian is to be a non-conformist! His manner of life is reformed, springing from a transformed or renewed mind. One source of strength for those fighting the corrupting influence of the world, is God's will found in His written Word. It is the will of God that first works in the heart (renews the mind) to produce this transformation. Psalms 119: 11 says: "Your Word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You." That Bible-approved solution to the corrupting influence of a morally bankrupt society will still work. Through study, meditation, and memory, you can put God's Word into your heart and renew your mind.

One obviously knew what he was talking about when he said: "Unless there is within us that which is above us, we soon yield to that which is about us." My friend God's Word in your heart will give some fortification and preparation when the temptations of corrupting influences come. Think on these things.

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# WHAT'S HAPPENING

## Manna House needs donations

The local Manna House is always in need of food so they can help our neighbors. So please continue your weekly donations of jelly and cereal, along with bread, canned fruit. So, when you are grocery shopping, consider picking up a few extra items for Manna House, so they can keep helping others. Drop off the non-perishable items at 519 E Broadway Ave. or at the *Gladewater Mirror* at 211 N. Main. Got questions, call (903) 845-3128.



## Lee-Bardwell Library crocheting

The Lee-Bardwell Library hosts "Cozy Crochet" every Saturday at 1 p.m.. Everyone is invited! Call 903-845-2640 for information.



Joseph Horn, center, lines up his shot with dead-aim precision during the summer archery camp held at Mary Underwood Gymnasium at the White Oak Elementary School and hosted by retired Superintendent Brian Gray. Horn will be going into the 3rd Grade at White Oak.

Photo by Mike Peery

## County library hosts storytime

Two books will be read to small children at both of the Upshur County Library's two weekly "Storytime" sessions in Gilmer on Thursday (July 6.)

To be presented at the 10 a.m. and 4:15 p.m. gatherings are "The Hug" by Eoin

McLaughlin, and "The Two of Us Belong Together" by Michael Engler, said library spokeswoman Kari Dunn.

A craft will follow each Storytime at the library, 702 W. Tyler (which is also Texas 154).

The events are free to the public, but children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult.

For more information, contact the library at (903) 843-5001 or visit its website at [www.youseemore.com/upshur](http://www.youseemore.com/upshur).

## Summer Shoe drive underway

The Darla's Angels charity outreach is kicking off a Christmas in July effort this weekend – the 2023

Summertime Shoe Drive is looking for locals who are ready to step up for students.

Throughout July, four businesses in Gladewater will be collecting donations of new pairs of shoes and socks for boys and girls in a variety of sizes. The four donation locations include Citizens Bank, the Glade-

water Mirror, Penny's Food & Fuel and City National Bank.

Shoes sizes range from toddler through youth and adult. Socks will be greatly appreciated, says organizer Darla Ferguson.

For more information, contact Darla the Mirror at 903-845-2235.

## Reporting system helps curtail illegal dumping

Continued from Page 1

of the dumped material, and the location of the dumping site. All reports are sent directly to local enforcement officials, who will follow up to address the issue.

"Our solid waste advisory committee is committed to

keeping our communities clean and safe," said ETCOG's Economic Development Specialist, Lisa Smith. "The new reporting system has been funded by recommendation of the committee to allow East Texans to be part of the solution to

minimizing environmental damage. This is a significant step forward in our efforts to combat illegal dumping and improve the quality of life for residents in our region."

The online reporting system is available on the ETCOG website and does not

require a mobile download. Residents are encouraged to visit and use it to report illegal dumping in their neighborhoods. ETCOG's member cities and counties are encouraged to add the RID logo and link to their website and promotions to help share the tool's availability.

For more information about the ETCOG RID Reporting System, visit [www.etcog.org/rid](http://www.etcog.org/rid).

## GFD pays respect to Medal of Honor recipient

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on not just the firefighters but also their Bucket Brigade, a community group of volunteers 20-strong and actively recruiting more.

"We've got people who are in their 80s and people who are in middle school," Palmer said.

The volunteers soon took on fundraising for the memorial's revitalization.

"As we started talking about it, more and more people were excited about getting it cleaned up and getting it back the way it should be," Simmons said. "We decided to do a booth drive at Gusher Days to raise funds."

GFD volunteer firefighter Byron Bogue put together a mock-up through his Double B Industries business, incorporating rocks, plants and other landscaping touches to refine the spot.

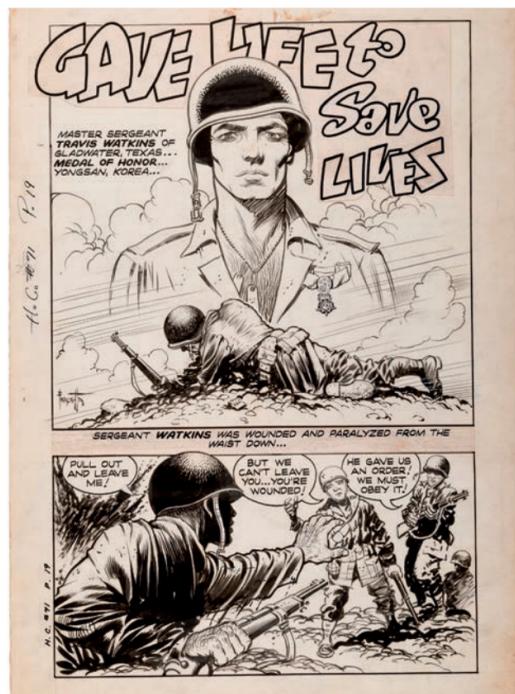
Soon, Lois Reed from Gladewater Chamber of Commerce was coordinating an effort to reconnect with Wreaths Across America. Mayor Scott Owens donated a new flagpole. Early cash donations came in from Custom Booths and Tico Industries to augment the funds raised at the Gusher Days dunking booth. Bogue's workers volunteered their time landscaping the site.

"It just started growing and growing and growing," Simmons said. Firefighters continue putting in time as their rotations allow. "Now, we just have to do the final touch-ups and clean-ups. The plants are taking root; we just need to finish some of the weeding and cleaning up.

"There were a lot of people that got excited and got behind it, and it turned into a cool thing."

A rededication event will be scheduled once the revitalization is officially complete. Palmer has been in touch with Watkins' daughter and grandson, keeping them in the loop.

"They've been to most



M/Sgt. Watkins distinguished himself by conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty in action against the enemy. When an overwhelming enemy force broke through and isolated 30 men of his unit, he took command, established a perimeter defense and directed action which repelled continuous, fanatical enemy assaults. With his group completely surrounded and cut off, he moved from foxhole to foxhole exposing himself to enemy fire, giving instructions, and offering encouragement to his men. Later when the need for ammunition and grenades became critical he shot two enemy soldiers 50 yards outside the perimeter and went out alone for their ammunition and weapons. As he picked up their weapons he was attacked by three others and wounded. Returning their fire he killed all three and gathering up the weapons of the five enemy dead returned to his amazed comrades. During a later assault, six enemy soldiers gained a defiladed spot and began to throw grenades into the perimeter making it untenable. Realizing the desperate situation and disregarding his wound, he rose from his foxhole to engage them with rifle fire. Although immediately hit by a burst from an enemy machine gun he continued to fire until he had killed the grenade throwers. With this threat eliminated he collapsed and despite being paralyzed from the waist down, encouraged his men to hold on. He refused all food, saving it for his comrades, and when it became apparent that help would not arrive in time to hold the position ordered his men to escape to friendly lines. Refusing evacuation as his hopeless condition would burden his comrades, he remained in his position and cheerfully wished them luck. Through his aggressive leadership and intrepid actions, this small force destroyed nearly 500 of the enemy before abandoning their position. M/Sgt. Watkins' sustained personal bravery and noble self-sacrifice reflect the highest glory upon himself and is in keeping with the esteemed traditions of the U.S. Army.

of the events that recognize Master Sgt. Watkins here in Texas. We're hoping they'll be able to make it to the event when we do the rededication ceremony here in Gladewater."

Currently, there are seven veterans among Gladewater's fire personnel. Factor in the Bucket Brigade volunteers, and Palmer's hope-

ful the gravesite will have caretakers to share the duty for years to come.

"Eventually I'm going to get too old, but there's middle school kids that are in there – they'll keep the Bucket Brigade going, and hopefully 100 years from now it'll still be going strong and they won't forget who's out there."

# TRADES DAYS THIS WEEKEND

**Longview Trade Days** will be held **June 8-9** at the **Longview Fairgrounds** 1123 Jaycee Drive Longview

Saturday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Sunday 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

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# GNOME, SWEET GNOME

## Pint-sized posse takes up residence at local library



A few things are coming up short at Lee-Bardwell Public Library.

Not the books, of course, there are plenty of those. Not the staff, they're doing great. There's lots of activities, too, and there's no shortage of stock in the supply closet.



Some of the facility's newest denizens, though, will never be able to pluck a book from the top shelf – not Gnomesome Dove, The Gnome Ranger, A Game of Gnomes or even Gnomeo & Juliet.

The library's growing legion of garden gnomes congregate on the front desk, courtesy of Library Clerk Dotti McCoy and a growing cadre of well-wishers added to the grassroots collection.

McCoy said she never expected one impromptu addition to the library's décor to become a growing knot of gnome figurines.

"Oh, wow. I started buying them in November when we opened back up. I've got at least one for each month since November," McCoy said. "July kind of exploded."

There's currently a healthy throng of red, white and blue gnomes bringing some patriotic cheer to McCoy's station. Nearby, another gnome holds a birdbox and a robin. Just around the corner is a gnome in sunglasses and a starfish hat, ready for summer.

"Several people brought me gnomes. I only bought one of them!" McCoy said with a laugh. "There's one my mom got at an estate sale. She said, 'You have to take that to work!' Boss Lady got me a gnome during Gusher Days from one of the booths downtown."

For Library Director Brandy Winn, it's a whimsical way for McCoy to decorate her regular workspace.

"Everybody loves them. Everyone comments on them, especially the kids," she said, and they keep on the lookout

for new additions and seasonal changes. "They know. They know when things change."

"I lost count of how many she has."

It all started with a trip to Dollar General – a cute gnome figure became an impulse buy, and when a different one appeared a month later, it soon became 'a thing.' Each time the store adds a new holiday gnome, it makes its way to the library.

"I don't get paid a whole lot," McCoy joked, but a dollar store treasure's an easy thing to collect. "I have to take somebody with me because otherwise I'll spend too much money. I am all about keeping the desk decorated for the kids. They all like to see fun things."

When there was no themed gnome for Cinco de Mayo, McCoy hopped on Amazon, and a couple more soon showed up on West Pacific Avenue.

"I've just gotten to the point where I keep my eye out. If any gnomes are on sale, I go and get them. I don't collect them at home," she insisted. "I don't have any at my house, they're all at work."

Yes, a gnome unique to the local library is in the works, and McCoy already has a spot picked out next to the search catalog. Grated, it may take her some time to figure out the perfect design. In the meantime, her crowd of gnomes is growing steadily, too many to share the desk all at once.

"In the Children's Department, I'm going to put them up there on the high shelves," McCoy said, "in the order of the seasons."

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## HEAT-RELATED ILLNESSES

## WHAT TO LOOK FOR

## WHAT TO DO

## HEAT STROKE

- High body temperature (103°F or higher)
- Hot, red, dry, or damp skin
- Fast, strong pulse
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Confusion
- Losing consciousness (passing out)

- Call 911 right away-heat stroke is a medical emergency
- Move the person to a cooler place
- Help lower the person's temperature with cool cloths or a cool bath
- Do not give the person anything to drink

## HEAT EXHAUSTION

- Heavy sweating
- Cold, pale, and clammy skin
- Fast, weak pulse
- Nausea or vomiting
- Muscle cramps
- Tiredness or weakness
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Fainting (passing out)

- Move to a cool place
- Loosen your clothes
- Put cool, wet cloths on your body or take a cool bath
- Sip water

## Get medical help right away if:

- You are throwing up
- Your symptoms get worse
- Your symptoms last longer than 1 hour

## HEAT CRAMPS

- Heavy sweating during intense exercise
- Muscle pain or spasms

- Stop physical activity and move to a cool place
- Drink water or a sports drink
- Wait for cramps to go away before you do any more physical activity

## Get medical help right away if:

- Cramps last longer than 1 hour
- You're on a low-sodium diet
- You have heart problems

## SUNBURN

- Painful, red, and warm skin
- Blisters on the skin

- Stay out of the sun until your sunburn heals
- Put cool cloths on sunburned areas or take a cool bath
- Put moisturizing lotion on sunburned areas
- Do not break blisters

## HEAT RASH

- Red clusters of small blisters that look like pimples on the skin (usually on the neck, chest, groin, or in elbow creases)

- Stay in a cool, dry place
- Keep the rash dry
- Use powder (like baby powder) to soothe the rash



## As temperatures topple record highs, firefighters work to get ahead of heat

As the state's heatwave hit a new peak earlier this week, meteorologists seized on a key angle – temperatures in Texas were expected to be hotter than 99 percent of the planet.

The mercury's definitely rising, with temperature records toppling across the state, forecasts climbing to 115 in Dallas and heat warnings sounding constantly from weather watchers.

In Gladewater, the community's emergency responders are coming off storm recovery and transitioning immediately to excessive heat mode.

"We're trying to get the message out to everybody to stay cool, stay hydrated, stay informed," Gladewater Fire Chief Mike Simmons said, adopting the hot weather mantra of the Centers for Disease Control. "So far, everything's going pretty smooth."

Working amid the fallout of the June 16 storm, the local firefighters were already a central location for select emergency supplies. That's continuing, at a lesser degree, while the heat puts some residents at risk.

"Preparing for it, we've accumulated water from Upshur County, Gregg County, State of Texas for the disaster preparations," Simmons said. "We've stored about three pallets of water at the fire station. We're still looking for more. There's a potential next week the state will release more supplies."

Fortunately, area utilities' power restoration efforts were complete and running air conditioners again before the worst temperatures arrived here. That said, there are plenty of people spending their summer vacations outside, and Simmons hopes everyone is keeping an eye on their exposure to the heat.

"We do have our July 4th event coming up on the 3rd" at Lake Gladewater, he said. "We certainly want the public to come out and enjoy, but come prepared – bring a cooler of water and other ways to stay cool."

Right now, the fire department is also in the early stages of a fan collection/distribution effort – GFD is looking for community partners to organize a box fan drive, especially for the elderly and underserved populations who may need an assist as the sun hammers down on the area.

If you're interested in contributing or helping a fan drive, contact GFD at the department's non-emergency number, 903-845-2484.

In the meantime, Simmons said, they'll field calls for people in need and try to connect them with a resource.

"It's like our smoke detector program. We get smoke detectors that are donated. If someone calls, we go out and replace them."

So far, there's been no measurable uptick in emergency calls linked to the heat, but the first responders are monitoring.

"This time of year, these things happen. We get a lot of 'difficulty breathings' or chest pain which could be stress-induced or heat-induced," Simmons said. "We're also just now starting to enter the hot part of summer where it's getting worse and worse. We do anticipate for that to pick up."

All of Gladewater's firefighters are medically-trained, and they're getting regular refreshers: "We've had discussions at the fire station about how to cool patients appropriately."

People should take a few minutes to familiarize themselves with heat-related illnesses and appropriate treatments, Simmons said, spotlighting the CDC's guide at [cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/warning.html](https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/warning.html).

"A lot of people will be pouring the water hose on them or dumping cold water on them. That's not the appropriate thing to do," he added. "Call 911. Remove the person from the heat environment, try to get them in the shade or an air conditioned environment. Slowly try to cool that person down with ice packs or other ways."

## Hefner holds town hall meeting

By Phillip Williams

State Rep. Cole Hefner told a town hall meeting at the Gilmer Civic Center last Thursday night that the state's two legislative bodies "are still a long ways apart" on how to lower property taxes, and "I can't tell you what's gonna happen."

Hefner (R-Mt. Pleasant) said the Texas House of Representatives' proposal would compress the maintenance and operations part of the tax rate for school taxes, while the state Senate's bill would compress that by less, but grant a higher homestead exemption than the House's.

"We're arguing over how to best put that back in the pockets of the people," he told about 30-35 attendees. Under the House bill, the state, which has a \$30 billion budget surplus, would make up the school funding lost by compressing part of the school tax rate, he added.

Hefner said he thought the House bill is better as it lops 16.2 cents off the M&O portion of school taxes.

Property taxes are "the single most talked about issue that I run into. . . That's why we're in special session right now," Hefner said.

A former roommate of impeached state Attorney General Ken Paxton, Hefner also discussed his vote for impeachment, saying it was the most difficult he had cast in his six years in the legislature. The Senate is scheduled to hold Paxton's trial for removal from office in August.

Hefner said Paxton had wanted the state to fund a \$3.3 million lawsuit whistleblowers brought, but that the AG's office wouldn't answer questions about it and that Paxton didn't come to 12 meeting he could have attended to discuss the matter.

Hefner said nobody's done more to help Paxton than him, that "I still consider him my friend," and that "I hope he's innocent."

## Courthouse issues under discussion

By Phillip Williams

Upshur County Commissioners Court on Friday opened four bids for "construction manager as constructor" on the forthcoming historical renovation of the county courthouse, but delayed acting on them until its July 14 meeting.

The court decided to study the bids, and have Rick Sacy of Komatsu Architecture rate them. All four bidders agreed on a maximum guaranteed price of \$12,297,239 for the project, but their timelines varied from 600 to 733 days.

The 86-year-old five-story courthouse in Gilmer will be restored largely to its original appearance. Several county offices in it will move either to leased modular buildings across the street, a rented office building on nearby Titus Street, or the former Gilmer ISD administration building on Trinity Street.

The state and county are financing most of the project cost. The court meantime, approved the "seating chart" for the modular buildings, subject to change.

In other business Friday, the court heard County Emergency Management Coordinator Marc Nichols and County Road Administrator Andy Jordan report on the effects the June 15-16 major storm had on the county. Numerous residents lost electric power service for days.

Nichols said Upshur-Rural Electric Cooperative, which serves multiple counties, suffered \$1 million in damage in Upshur County alone. Jordan said cleanup was "around 20 to 25% complete" and that "I think in about another two weeks, we can have the safety aspect completely solved."

## Man killed in lake diving accident

On Saturday, July 1, 2023, at approximately 4:20 p.m., Gladewater dispatch received a 911 call to respond to the Gladewater Lake located at 1602 Lakeshore Dr. in reference to an unresponsive male subject. Emergency services were dispatched and when they arrived, started life saving measures.

Approximately 7 witnesses stated to the first responders that a male subject who was 34 years of age, dove headfirst from an embankment approximately 40 feet high into a pool of water that was approximately 4 feet deep.

The location of this was off the main lake at an area where people go and swim that is surrounded by tall embankments, shallow water, and a rocky bottom.

Witnesses that observed the victim dive into the water helped pull him from the water and began to render aid. Gladewater Fire, Christus EMS and Gladewater Police worked diligently to resuscitate the victim, but he succumbed to his injuries due to the severity.

The initial investigation revealed that alcohol may have been a contributing factor in this unfortunate incident. Upshur County Justice of the Peace Wyone Manes was notified, and she responded and held the inquest.

Next of kin of the victim has been notified by the Gladewater Police Department, but the victims ID had no been released at presstime.

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- ACROSS**
- 1 Andrews County is in \_\_\_\_ Texas
  - 5 "Orange County Convention & \_\_\_\_ Center"
  - 6 therapeutic baths
  - 7 pecan: state \_\_\_\_
  - 8 TXism: "\_\_\_\_ dog lie"
  - 17 TX cosmetics queen Mary Kay
  - 18 ad on KHOU-TV
  - 21 state no. of OK
  - 22 TXism: "he ain't got both \_\_\_\_ in the water" (slow witted)
  - 23 TX Robert Fulghum book: "All I \_\_\_\_ Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten"
  - 24 Tex-Mex dish
  - 29 apt radio station for a F-150?
  - 30 TXism: "he could out \_\_\_\_ six-legged bobcat"
  - 31 actress Lois of "The Honkers" with Slim Pickens (init.)
  - 32 TX singer Buddy's widow: "Maria \_\_\_\_"
  - 34 TXism: "mighty \_\_\_\_" (okay)
  - 35 TXism: "\_\_\_\_ arm wrestle King Kong"
  - 36 TX Jeffrey Jacquet old TV show: "Mork \_\_\_\_"
  - 37 TX Quannah Parker's father
  - 38 edible starch obtained from a palm
  - 39 food poisoning
  - 41 an illegal \_\_\_\_ improperly crosses the Texas border

- 42 honorary TX Ranger: \_\_\_\_ Stanley Gardner
- 43 TX King Vidor directed 1946 western "\_\_\_\_ in the Sun"
- 44 former Astro Caminiti played \_\_\_\_ base
- 45 sounds of hesitation
- 46 TXism: "don't give a hoot \_\_\_\_ holler"
- 47 TXism: "stretches your lips"
- 48 TXism: "he's \_\_\_\_ chicken" (old)
- 50 sentence ender
- 51 actress Adams of "Superdome" with TX Susan Howard
- 52 classified \_\_\_\_
- 53 TXism: "he couldn't \_\_\_\_ through a barbed wire fence"

- DOWN**
- 1 Austin western suburb (3 wds.)
  - 2 early Texas mail: "Pony \_\_\_\_"
  - 3 TX romance novelist Judith \_\_\_\_ McNaught
  - 4 TX Nimitz went \_\_\_\_ for a career
  - 9 TXism: "hair raisin"
  - 10 TX Kristofferson's "Why Me \_\_\_\_"
  - 11 type widths
  - 12 TXism: "round ' \_\_\_\_ up"
  - 13 name of SMU mustang mascot
  - 14 this Texas-born Ryan was "Granny" on "The Beverly Hillbillies"
  - 15 natl. collegiate sports grp.
  - 16 "Rawhide" trail boss, Favor
  - 19 assert without proof
  - 20 "L" of TX LBJ
  - 22 LBJ biography: "The Years \_\_\_\_ Johnson"
  - 24 pos. of Texans' Dalton Schultz

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Notice is hereby given in accordance with the terms and provisions of the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Code that Jeremy Montana dba Vice City has filed application for Package Store Permit. Said business to be conducted at 807 S Tyler St Ste 102, Gladewater (Gregg County), TX 75647 Jeremy Montana dba Vice City Jeremy Montana - Individual

**LEGAL NOTICE**

Notice is hereby given in accordance with the terms and provisions of the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Code that Seth Tanksley dba ACE Imperio LLC has filed application for BQ wine and malt beverage retailers off premises permit. Said business to be conducted at 807 S Tyler St Ste 101, Gladewater (Gregg County), TX 75647 Seth Tanksley dba ACE Imperio LLC Seth Tanksley - Individual

**LEGAL NOTICE**

Notice is hereby given in accordance with the terms and provisions of the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Code that Manjeet Ghuman dba Gladewater Liquor has filed application for Package Store Permit. Said business to be conducted at 1703 N Main St, Gladewater (Gregg County), TX 75647 Manjeet Ghuman dba Gladewater Liquor Manjeet Ghuman - Individual.

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

Notice is hereby given that original Letters of Testamentary for the ESTATE OF LINDA HARRIS ORMS were issued on, June 27, 2023, in Cause No. 2023-214-E, pending in the County Court at Law No. 2 of Gregg County, Texas, to: **Lacy Tranee Cox.**

All claims to be filed and served upon said Estate shall be served in the following manner, at the following address:

Lacy Tranee Cox  
c/o Kyle Kutch, Attorney  
211 E. Tyler St, Ste, 600-G  
Longview TX, 75601  
903/236-8788

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



The City of Gladewater is seeking applications from eligible financial institutions to be the Banking Services Depository. This includes the basic services of receiving deposits, paying items, wiring funds out, receiving wired funds in, stop payments, time deposits, and other normal business banking activities.

Sealed bids or proposals will be accepted until 12:00 p.m. on August 4, 2023. The official bid form may be obtained from Judy Van Houten, City Clerk, at Gladewater City Hall at 519 E. Broadway, Gladewater, Texas.

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**PUBLIC HEARING**

The Gladewater City Council will hold a public hearing Thursday, July 20, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. at Gladewater City Hall, 519 E. Broadway, Gladewater, Texas to consider issuing demolition orders for structures located at:

1. LTS 1A1 & 2 BLK 2 RAGSDALE, more commonly known as 322 Ragsdale St.
2. LTS 6 THRU 9 BLK 122 WOOD HEIGHTS (W 12 1/2 LT 6), more commonly known as 803 W. Pacific Ave.
3. LOT 19, BLK E1 GLADEWATER LAKE S178 (A427, A489, A8) & HOUSE, more commonly known as 1709 E. Lake Dr.

All interested parties are invited to attend and participate in this public hearing or send written comments to City of Gladewater, Judy Van Houten, City Clerk, PO Box 1725, Gladewater, Texas 75647.

**NOTICE OF DEFAULT AND FORECLOSURE SALE**

WHEREAS, on September 29, 2012, a certain Deed of Trust was executed by Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for New Day Financial, LLC, as Trustor(s), in favor of Lawanda G. Wilks, as Trustee, and Scott R. Valby as Beneficiary, and was recorded on December 18, 2012, in Instrument Number 201222873 in the Office of the Recorder of Gregg County, Texas; and

WHEREAS, the Deed of Trust was insured by the United States Secretary of Housing and Urban Development (the Secretary) pursuant to the National Housing Act for the purpose of providing single family housing; and

WHEREAS, the Deed of Trust is now owned by the Secretary, pursuant to an assignment dated August 17, 2016, and recorded on August 23, 2016, under 201613479, in the Official Public Records of Gregg County, Texas; and

WHEREAS, a default has been made in the covenants and conditions of the Deed of Trust in that payments were not made and remains wholly unpaid as of the date of this notice, and no payment has been made sufficient to restore the loan to currency; and

WHEREAS, the entire amount delinquent as of July 1, 2023 is \$200,005.26; and

WHEREAS, by virtue of this default, the Secretary has declared the entire amount of the indebtedness secured by the Deed of Trust to be immediately due and payable;

NOW THEREFORE, pursuant to powers vested in me by the Single Family Foreclosure Act of 1994, 12 U.S.C. 3751 et seq., by 24 CFR Part 27 subpart B, and by the Secretary's designation of me as Foreclosure Commissioner, recorded on May 27, 2021, under Document Number 202109516 notice is hereby given that, on August 1, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. local time, all real and personal property at or used in connection with the following described premises ("11Property"), will be sold at public auction to the highest bidder(s):

SEE ATTACHED EXHIBIT "A"

Commonly known as: 1108 Dennis Dr Longview, TX 75605  
Permanent Parcel Number: 63108

The sale will be in the Front Door-Patio area as designated by the county commissioner's office 10 I E. Methvin, Longview, Texas 7560 I. The United States Secretary of Housing and Urban Development will bid an amount to be determined. There will be no proration of taxes, rents or other income or liabilities, except that the purchaser(s) will pay, at or before closing, his (their) pro-rata share of any real estate taxes that have been paid by the Secretary to the date of the foreclosure sale.

When making their bids, all bidders, except the Secretary, must submit a deposit totaling 10% of the purchase price in the form of a certified check or cashier's check made out to the United States Secretary of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Each oral bid need not be accompanied by a deposit. If the successful bid is oral, a deposit of 10% of the purchase price must be presented before the bidding is closed. The deposit is nonrefundable. The remainder of the purchase price must be delivered within 30 days of the sale or at such other time as the Secretary may determine for good cause shown, time being of the essence. This amount, like the bid deposits, must be delivered in the form of a certified or cashier's check. If the Secretary is the high bidder, he need not pay the bid amount in cash. The successful bidder(s) will pay all conveyancing fees, all real estate and other taxes that are due on or after the date of closing and all other costs associated with the transfer of title. At the conclusion of the sale, the deposits of the unsuccessful bidder(s) will be returned to them.

The Secretary may grant an extension of time within which to deliver the remainder of the payment. All extensions will be for 15 day increments for a fee paid in advance. The extension fee shall be paid in the form of a certified or cashier's check made payable to the United States Secretary of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). If the high bidder(s) close(s) the sale prior to the expiration of any extension period, the unused portion of the extension fee shall be applied toward the amount due at closing.

If the high bidder(s) is/are unable to close the sale within the required period, or within any extensions of time granted by the Secretary, the high bidders' deposit may be forfeited, or the high bidder may be liable to the Secretary for any costs incurred as a result of such failure, and the Commissioner may, at the direction of the HUD Field Office Representative, offer the Property to the second highest bidder for an amount equal to the highest price offered by that bidder.

There is no right of redemption, or right of possession based upon a right of redemption, in the mortgagor or others subsequent to a foreclosure completed pursuant to the Act. Therefore, the Foreclosure Commissioner will issue a Deed to the purchaser(s) upon receipt of the entire purchase price in accordance with the terms of the sale as provided herein. HUD does not guarantee that the property will be vacant.

The scheduled foreclosure sale shall be cancelled or adjourned if it is established, by documented written application of the mortgagor to the Foreclosure Commissioner not less than 3 days before the date of sale, or otherwise, that the default or defaults upon which the foreclosure is based did not exist at the time of service of this notice of default and foreclosure sale, or all amounts due under the Deed of Trust agreement are tendered to the Foreclosure Commissioner, in the form of a certified or cashier's check payable to the United States Secretary of Housing and Urban Development HUD, before public auction of the property is completed.

In the case of a foreclosure involving a monetary default, the amount that must be paid if the Deed of Trust is to be reinstated prior to the scheduled sale is the entire amount of principal and interest which would be due if payments under the Deed of Trust had not been accelerated. In the case of a foreclosure involving a non-monetary default, the amount that must be paid if the Deed of Trust is to be reinstated prior to the scheduled sale is (i) all amounts due under the Deed of Trust agreement (excluding additional amounts which would have been due if Deed of Trust payments had been accelerated); (ii) all amounts of expenditures secured by the Deed of Trust; and (iii) all costs of foreclosure incurred for which payment from the proceeds of foreclosure is provided in 12 U.S.C. 3751, including advertising costs and postage expenses incurred in giving notice, mileage by the most reasonable road distance for posting notices and for the Foreclosure Commissioner's attendance at the sale, reasonable and customary costs incurred for title and lien record searches, the necessary out of pocket costs incurred by the Foreclosure Commissioner for recording documents, a commission for the Foreclosure Commissioner, and all other costs incurred in connection with the foreclosure prior to reinstatement.

Tender of payment by certified or cashier's check or application for cancellation of the foreclosure sale shall be submitted to the address of the Foreclosure Commissioner provided below.

Date: 6/08/2023  
**FORECLOSURE COMMISSIONER**  
Candace Sissac, Esq.  
JAMES E. ALBERTELLI, P.A.  
2201 W. Royal Lane, Suite 200  
Irving, TX 75063  
Phone: 469-804-8457 Fax: 469-804-8462  
[csissac@lalaw.net](mailto:csissac@lalaw.net)

**ATTACHED EXHIBIT "A"**  
**LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

ALL THAT CERTAIN LOT, TRACT OR PARCEL OF LAND BEING LOT ELEVEN (11), BLOCK NINE HUNDRED NINETY (99), OF THE RICHMOND TERRACE UNIT NO. ONE (1), LOCATED IN THE ALEX JORDAN SURVEY, A-262, CITY OF LONGVIEW, GREGG COUNTY, TEXAS. PLAT OF SAID ADDITION OR RECORD IN VOLUME 728, PAGE 385, DEED RECORDS, GREGG COUNTY, TEXAS.



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EAT LOCAL  
READ LOCAL**

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**OUT OF DATE RECORDS TO BE DESTROYED**

The Upshur County Shared Service Arrangement (UCSSA) which is comprised of the Big Sandy, Gilmer, Gladewater, Harmony, New Diana, Union Grove, and Union Hill Independent School Districts, proposes to destroy all out-of-date Special Education records contained in the eligibility folders of students who were dismissed from the program through July, 2016. Also included in this purging will be records of students who were tested and did not qualify for special education services as well as records of those who qualified but were not placed. These records are presently maintained in the UCSSA office located at 406 N Bledsoe Street, Gilmer, TX. 75644, and include referral information, educational, psychological, medical, admission review and dismissal committee minutes, individual educational plans, and classroom observation data. It is our responsibility to inform you that these records may be needed for social security benefits or other purposes and that it may be to your benefit to obtain them. Those who prefer that their records not be destroyed should send a written request to: Chelle Hammond, Compliance Specialist or Angie Hargett, Office Manager, Upshur County Shared Service Arrangement, 406 N Bledsoe, Gilmer, TX. 75644 before September 1, 2023. For additional information, call (903) 843-5575.



The 2023 White Oak Softball Camp 12U and 14U groups are pictured here with their assistant coaches. Coach Ninevah Blankenship organized the camp of future Ladynecks.

Photo by Mike Peery

## 'I wanted to remind you how important you are.'

... U.S. Rep. Nathaniel Moran

Continued from Page 1

moved to the equipment rental agency's sprawling yard.

"What's your biggest need? Is it workforce related?" Moran asked EquipmentShare District Manager Lee Lobbs.

"Yes," Lobbs said, adding he's eager to get more trucks on the move, and he's on the lookout for drivers and mechanics.

"They're hard to find."

The group moved on to downtown and the Gladewater Antique Mall, where Moran got a history of Gladewater's moniker, "The Antique Capital of Texas" from owner Margaret Larkins. After another drop-in at Antiques II and a tea-tour at Three Roots Boutique, the next stop was Lake Gladewater before lunch and a Q&A at the Stockyards Steakhouse.

Is the struggle over religion in D.C. as crazy as it seems? Simmons asked.

While a lot of issues are obscured in the media, Moran said, "The moral fight up there is the true fight you're seeing correctly back home. The moral divide is accurate. There is a huge, huge moral divide.

"Even within my own party... Even among those that purport to be conservative, moral Christians, there is a real slip. In a lot of respects, that's the boundary right there."

Gladewater Councilman Teddy Sorrells asked about Moran's number one focus as far as legislation is concerned.

"There are two main goals I have this session," Moran replied. "Build strong, deep relationships – across the aisle on both the Republican and Democratic sides – and, also, learn the process. In two years, my hope is that I know a lot of people in the district that I didn't know before... and that the people in Washington, D.C. know that I work," reading binders and transcripts, researching relevant subject matter and digging into bills.

"Because we've been doing that, now suddenly some

opportunities are opening up."

One is a rural broadband bill, he said, a priority for his constituency.

"We're confident that it's going to pass. We've got some crime bills that are going to help local law enforcement," and they're drawing support from Democrat lawmakers, too.

Councilwoman Brandy Flanagan asked about infrastructure and how developments will benefit Gladewater.

Starting with roads, Moran said, projects are unlikely to be funded unless an entire community gets behind it. Consider projects that have a federal nexus.

"I really think the vast majority of people want to see people get together and get things done," Mayor Scott Owens said.

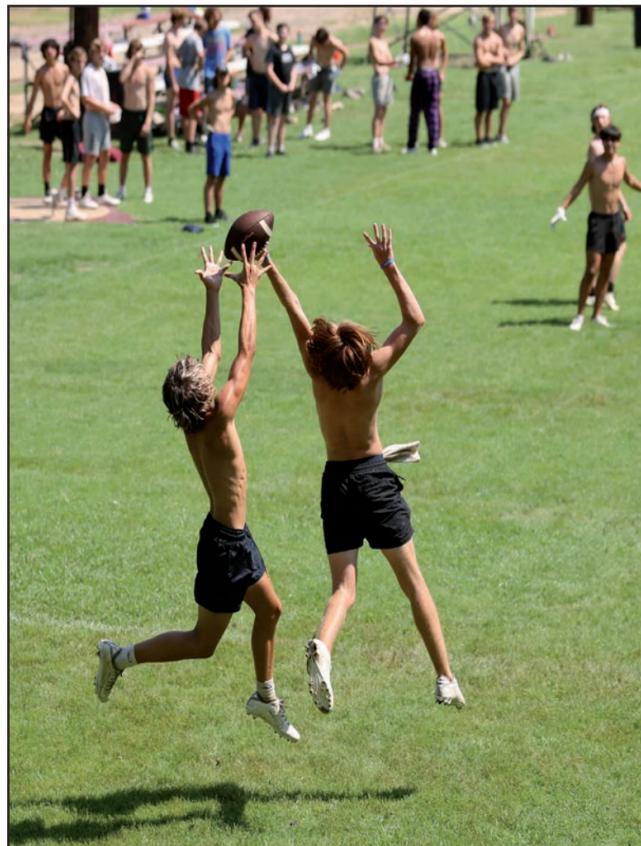
"Our founding fathers built things so it moves real slow," Moran replied, but consensus is possible. "It's not just Democrats versus Republicans. There's all this struggle going on in different areas; you've got to find a consensus. You can do that without compromising your principles."

Touching briefly on the Russia-Ukraine War, Moran said he was glad to see the recent rebellion by the Wagner group.

"We can't let Russia take it. We can't let it draw out," he said. "I think you're going to see a real civil crumbling in Russia."

In another conversation about international security, Moran said his face-to-face, closed-door meetings with officials in East Asia paint a scary picture.

"We haven't been in a real war in 20 years," he said, and China represents an ongoing military and economic threat to the region and to Americans. The country has to be prepared: "We're not making enough bombs. We're not making enough missiles. We're not making enough ships. We'd be out of ammunition in no time."



Tyson McKinney and Levi Sipes vie for the ball during a Roughneck summer practice.

Photo by Mike Peery



New White Oak Head Football Coach Michael Ludlow and his son Jaxen discuss the mornings practice routines. Jaxen Ludlow will be a sophomore quarterback for the Roughnecks this year.

Photo by Mike Peery

## GW, WO men indicted for drugs

By Phillip Williams

The Upshur County Grand Jury recently returned 21 indictments, including one for murder, said District Attorney Billy Byrd's office.

Twelve of the indictments returned in Gilmer on June 22 involved methamphetamine-related charges, his office said. Jurors also no-billed one case, passed another, and sealed three of the 22 indictments, Byrd's office added.

The murder indictment against Michael Timothy Caffey, 46, of Gilmer, charges he killed his father March 26.

Details of the other open indictments were as follows, and all bonds mentioned are surety bonds, Byrd's office said.

Adam Keith Williams, 27, of Gladewater, possession of controlled substance (methamphetamine) on Feb. 8. He remained in county jail under \$50,000 bond.

Destine Lashay Brown, 31, of Gladewater, possession of controlled substance (methamphetamine) on Sept. 30, 2022. She was released on \$10,000 bond.

Ashley Dominguez Macedo, 40, of White Oak, possession of controlled substance with intent to deliver (methamphetamine) on April 20. She was released on a \$50,000 bond.

Andrew Presley Mack, 31, of Longview, possession of controlled substance with intent to deliver (methamphetamine) on April 20. He remained in county jail at Gilmer under \$50,000 bond.

Amber Lynn Hunter, 27, of Atlanta, possession of controlled substance (methamphetamine) on March 12. She also remained in county jail under \$35,000 bond.

Lee James Taylor II, 59, of Ore City, possession of controlled substance with intent to deliver (methamphetamine)--habitual offender on March 23. He remained in county jail under \$35,000 bond.

Jessica Danielle Nicole Sellers, 31, of Longview, possession of controlled substance (methamphetamine) with intent to deliver on March 23. She remained jailed under \$25,000 bond.

Sandy Leon Brown, who turns 61 Saturday and is of Paris, unlawful possession of firearm by felon on March 17. Although he posted \$25,000 surety bond, he remained jailed on a release of surety who went off

the bond.

Todd Richard Smith Bentley, 30, of Pittsburg, unauthorized use of vehicle on March 26. He also remained jailed on \$10,000 bond.

Christopher Elijah Gilliam, 18, of New Waverly, unauthorized use of vehicle on March 31. He too remained jailed on \$10,000 bond.

Ronald Curtis McGee Jr., 46, of Winnsboro, theft of property of the value of \$2,500 or more but less than \$30,000 on April 9. He remained jailed on other charges.

Bryan Scott Cefalu, 55, of Winona, was charged in separate indictments with two offenses: unlawful possession of firearm by felon, and evading arrest/detention with vehicle, both on April 28.

He remained jailed under \$25,000 bond on the possession charge, \$10,000 bond on the evasion charge.

Dade Parker Arrington, 23, of Bryant, Ark., possession of controlled substance (psilocin) on April 28, 2022. He was freed on \$25,000 bond.

(Psilocin, a hallucinogen producing effects similar to LSD, is an active ingredient in magic mushrooms. According to a Canadian governmental website, psilocin can be produced and illegally sold as a powder, in tablets or in capsules.)

Haylee Rene Caudle, 25, of Gilmer, possession of controlled substance (methamphetamine) on May 9, 2022. She was released on \$10,000 bond.

Amber Nicole Barker, 40, of Big Sandy, possession of controlled substance (methamphetamine) on July 26, 2022. She was freed on \$10,000 bond.

Cody Gene Berry, 44, of Big Sandy, possession of controlled substance (methamphetamine) on Sept. 13, 2022. He was released on \$10,000 bond.

The name of anyone charged in the sealed indictments wasn't released since no arrests had been made in those cases, said Byrd.

They included two for possession of controlled substance (methamphetamine) and a single indictment on three counts of "intoxication assault with a vehicle with a deadly weapon," his office reported.

Natures of the no-billed and passed cases weren't announced.



## 'Most importantly, none of them will eat you.'

"Most importantly, none of them will eat you."

There's that moment when Amanda Galyean begins her presentation that the kiddoes don't quite believe her. She's the Creature Teacher, after all, and her young audience knows full well some of her furry and scaly friends come with claws and fangs.

Of course, in the White Oak Library this week – and in classrooms, community centers and other venues across the area – it takes just a moment for that hint of trepidation to disappear, replaced with the enthusiastic 'oos' and 'ahs' of an appreciative crowd.

"Flash may look a little scary, but he doesn't have teeth," she announced Wednesday, gently rotating her hand to show off the bearded dragon gripping it easily. "At 7 months, he's still only a baby."

Young and old, Galyean's living show-and-tell drew a healthy turnout to the library

Wednesday. Slinky the Ferret got plenty of attention, Pokey the Hedgehog wasn't too spiky, Buddy the Chinchilla took just a moment for a dust bath and Lucy the Lionhead Rabbit was ready for the runway courtesy of Galyean's son and assistant, Jed.

Of course, Boomer the Red Kangaroo stole the show.

It was a diverse lot, an opportunity for an array of fun facts and anecdotes.

"It's OK to be different because we all have our own role in the world," Galyean said, "just like animals do."

Newly-based in East Texas, the former English teacher left her post as a principal to take up the Creature Teacher mantle.

"I wanted to actually have fun with kids again," she said. "The opportunity came up, and I felt this was a good, open door for us to do as a family."

Library Director Lori Davis and her staff seemed

as excited to welcome the animal crew as their young charges were.

"I think it's vital," Davis said. "Not just the kids but also the adults are getting experiences that normally wouldn't happen in small-town White Oak."

"I love bringing the community in with things like this."

Galyean said she's looking forward to returning with the menagerie.

"I'm glad they're starting to do more of these types of things," Galyean said, crafting an opportunity for White Oak children (and parents) to get up-close with uncommon critters. "Even if you just go to the zoo, they don't get to be as personal with them."

It's especially important for the kids, she added.

"Anytime you have an opportunity for anything that's kinesthetic or they get to see a world they're not familiar with, it opens the door for imagination and reality."