

# Gladewater Mirror

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1 Section, 8 pages

50¢

## McKnight indicted on Nov. 4 death of two sisters

By Phillip Williams

The Upshur County Grand Jury has indicted Alvin Charles McKnight, Jr., on a capital murder charge in connection with the Nov. 4 shooting deaths of two sisters.

McKnight's was among 21 indictments, six of them sealed, which jurors returned in Gilmer Feb. 1, Byrd's office announced Feb. 7. The suspect remained in county jail under \$5 million bond.

McKnight, 41, of Gilmer, is charged with shooting Mandy Ray, 35, and Dermetrica Dashaunda Waters, 37, at Ray's home in the 2800 block of south U.S. 271, near Bluebird Road south of Gilmer.

The case is considered capital murder, punishable in Texas only by lethal injection or life imprisonment without parole, because it involved killing more than one person.

McKnight was captured by San Bernardino, Calif., city police Nov. 15 when he exited a bus there. Authorities in Texas had learned he was aboard the bus, alerted California authorities, and he was returned to Upshur County in early December.

Byrd said last Thursday he wasn't announcing yet whether he would seek the death penalty "as the investigation is still not complete and I still have not received the final case from law enforcement."

McKnight is scheduled to be formally arraigned in 115th District Court on Tuesday, Byrd said.

In another matter, one of the sealed indictments returned Feb. 1 charges the unnamed defendant with two counts of manslaughter and two counts of criminal negligent homicide. (The identity of anyone charged in the sealed indictments wasn't disclosed because no arrests had been made in those cases, Byrd said).

Defendants, charges and dates of the alleged offenses in the open indictments were as follows, his office reported:

Trent Jordan Sasser, 40, of Gladewater, possession of controlled substance (methamphetamine) last July 2. He was released on \$25,000 bond.

Allen Ray Reppond, 60, of Gilmer, was charged in one indictment with both aggravated sexual assault of a child and indecency with a child last Aug. 1, and in a separate indictment with indecency with a child last June 1

A \$200,000 bond was set on the assault charge, but he remained in county jail "on other charges."

Derrick Walker Renfro, 42, of Jefferson, injury to a disabled individual on Dec. 31, 2022. He was released on \$50,000 bond.

Kenneth Kristopher Ferguson, 31, of Gilmer, injury to a disabled individual on Dec. 31, 2022. He also was released on \$50,000 bail.

Britoni Rose Morse, 29, of Ore

Continued on Page 8



To reach to garden, turn east on Smith County Road 3104 from US 271 seven miles north of its junction with Interstate 20. Drive a mile and a half, turn right on Smith County Road 3103, then continue one-fourth mile to the entrance sign.

## WELCOME TO MRS. LEE'S DAFFODIL GARDENS

Mrs. Lee's Daffodil Gardens has now opened with blooms spreading bright yellow color over 28 acres. The driving route is a 4-mile one way dirt road. There are 3 designated parking areas where you can park and get out and enjoy the flowers. Guests are asked to not do anything to damage the flowers, such as walk on them, lay down in them, pick them, etc.

The last parking area is where the cabin is located along with a brief historical write up telling about how Mrs. Helen Lee got all of her daffodils. The gardens is a non-profit and donations are accepted for keep the gardens mowed, maintained, and beautiful. Donation boxes are located at the entry gate, the cabin, and the exit gate.



IT'S STILL LOOKING A LOT LIKE CHRISTMAS - There's a new downtown Christmas tree coming to Gladewater for the 2024 holiday season. Meanwhile, the old tree has yet to make its exit.

## The Blight After Christmas

'Twas seven weeks since Christmas, in Gladewater town,  
And the towering tree still hasn't come down.  
In the heart of the city, right there at its center,  
The Tannenbaum still stands on the back end of winter.

Its season has ended, its time has long passed,  
In more ways than one, how long will it last?  
Valentine's is behind us with St. Paddy's ahead,  
Isn't it past time to put this poor thing to bed?

The decorations still delightful, though faded they be,  
Send a message quite clear for everyone to see:  
This tree has served well, year after year (after year),  
But its watch now has ended, and its farewell is near.

The greenery has dulled, the bows are a-bending  
After seasons of service it deserves a better ending  
Than to linger in place until a new one gets here  
As that's the plan before the end of the year.

For its successor is coming, the money's all there,  
Set aside for this purpose, with a little to spare.  
The Chamber's arranging a fitting replacement,  
One that requires less dust abatement.

In the meantime, 'til the new tree reaches town  
Can we go ahead and take this one down?  
It's a daunting task and requires going aloft,  
And with workers so busy, it's easy to put off.

And, sure, it's a drag to disassemble those parts  
Long after the holidays have faded from hearts.  
Better late than never, call it an early Spring Clean  
(and let the grass below get back some of its green).

Fortunately, we know, City Hall's full of great folks  
Who won't mind this little job - they've faced harder jokes.  
So with tongues-in-our-cheeks, we beg their good graces,  
And wish a Happy Feb. 15 to them all, with smiles on our faces.

## Man on trial for beating father to death

By Phillip Williams

Testimony was scheduled to open in Gilmer Wednesday (Feb. 14) in the murder trial of Michael Timothy Caffey, charged with the 2023 beating death of his father.

A 10-woman, 2-man jury was chosen Monday at the Gilmer Civic Center for the case in which Caffey, 46, of Gilmer, has pleaded not guilty to killing 66-year-old Timothy Allen Caffey last March 26.

The evidence portion of the trial is scheduled in 115th District Court at the Upshur County Justice Center in Gilmer, said Upshur County District Attorney Billy Byrd, who announced details of Monday's jury selection. Gilmer attorney Matthew Patton represents the defendant.

The elder Caffey's body was found March 27 outside his and his son's home in the 2400 block of Airstrip Road in Latch community, said sheriff's Chief Deputy David Hazel last year. Michael Caffey was arrested that day on an unrelated misdemeanor charge in Gregg County.

Upshur sheriff's deputies "responded to a dead body call" at the Caffey's home in southwest Upshur County about 9:30 a.m. March 27, said Hazel. Members of a crew which had come to do a roofing job there found the body and contacted the sheriff's office, he said.

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

## Gladewater continues to exceed last year's sales tax revenue numbers

Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar announced last week he will send cities, counties, transit systems and special purpose districts \$1.3 billion in local sales tax allocations for February, 1.6 percent more than in February 2023.

These allocations are based on sales made in December by businesses that report tax monthly; October, November and December sales by quarterly filers; and 2023 sales by businesses that report tax annually.

Gladewater continued to exceed prior year numbers by 7.05%, making it 26 months in a row.

County	City	Rate	Net Payment This Period	Comparable Payment Prior Year	% Change	Payment YTD	Prior Year Payment YTD	% Change
Gregg	Clarksville City	1.000%	\$10,082.00	\$11,305.22	-10.81%	\$17,786.48	\$17,853.70	-0.37%
Gregg	Easton	1.000%	\$5,286.82	\$5,056.85	4.54%	\$11,008.54	\$10,241.27	7.49%
Gregg	Gladewater	1.500%	\$184,400.23	\$172,241.50	7.05%	\$312,247.92	\$282,516.57	10.52%
Gregg	Kilgore	1.500%	\$899,675.14	\$947,748.58	-5.07%	\$1,636,878.27	\$1,773,046.33	-7.67%
Gregg	Lakeport	1.500%	\$24,763.52	\$28,918.12	-14.36%	\$44,421.77	\$51,432.67	-13.63%
Gregg	Longview	1.500%	\$4,537,321.67	\$4,806,911.52	-5.60%	\$8,153,502.63	\$8,503,116.35	-4.11%
Gregg	Warren City	1.000%	\$1,811.45	\$1,749.24	3.55%	\$3,093.93	\$3,586.02	-13.72%
Gregg	White Oak	1.500%	\$148,363.71	\$148,878.69	-0.34%	\$286,072.62	\$288,633.85	-0.88%
Upshur	Big Sandy	1.250%	\$28,492.07	\$30,336.18	-6.07%	\$52,155.06	\$56,222.28	-7.23%
Upshur	East Mountain	1.000%	\$6,805.97	\$7,401.94	-8.05%	\$12,847.14	\$11,494.18	11.77%
Upshur	Gilmer	1.500%	\$276,295.12	\$260,856.12	5.91%	\$522,883.65	\$484,940.97	7.82%
Upshur	Ore City	1.250%	\$21,476.88	\$18,247.58	17.69%	\$36,837.83	\$35,017.92	5.19%
Upshur	Union Grove	1.000%	\$910.61	\$566.39	60.77%	\$2,233.76	\$1,033.31	116.17%

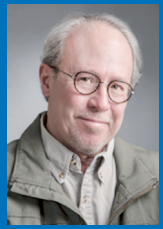




# OPINION/COMMENTARY

**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.

## Gary Borders Capital Highlights



### Pitch made for new power plants

Lt. Gov Dan Patrick joined with the world's largest investment firm to pitch investors on building natural gas power plants in Texas at a summit held last week in Houston.

Patrick and BlackRock CEO Larry Fink shared the stage as they attempted to persuade investors to take advantage of \$10 billion in incentives and bonuses provided by the state after voters approved a constitutional amendment last November, kut.org reported.

"We estimate in this room there's \$2.2 trillion," Fink told the crowd. "We only have to put \$10 billion to work, so can we get it done? Can we start raising hands?"

While Patrick remained optimistic the plan would attract investors interested in building new power plants, others aren't so sure.

Ed Hirs, an energy economist at the University of Houston, told kut.org that the way the Texas power market is structured won't necessarily provide a steady return to power plant operators.

"If you've got \$2 trillion worth of investors and they're looking for a deal ... they wouldn't have had this summit; there would already be power plants being built," he said. "All of these guys are sharks. They're not going to miss an opportunity to make a profit."

### New law cracks down on human smugglers

A state law that increases the minimum sentence from two years to 10 years for people convicted of smuggling immigrants or harboring them illegally went into effect last week.

The Texas Tribune reported SB4 was one of three immigration-related bills signed into law late last year. Other measures provide state money for construction of barriers along the Texas-Mexico border and make it a state crime to illegally cross the border from Mexico.

The latter measure is being challenged in court by the U.S. Department of Justice, El Paso County and immigrant rights groups.

"This increase in policing and increased criminalization is going to further exacerbate the overcrowding of our jails," said David Stout, an El Paso County commissioner.

### Paxton attorneys seek dismissal of securities fraud charges

Ahead of a pretrial hearing this week, attorneys for Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton are seeking to have state securities charges dismissed, saying nine years of delay have denied his constitutional right to a speedy trial, the Texas Standard reported.

Paxton was indicted in July 2015 with a trial in Houston now set for April 15. Factors delaying that trial include repeated changes of venue and judges, disputes over pay for special prosecutors and the COVID-19 pandemic, among other factors.

One of the special prosecutors downplayed the motion. "I don't think there's much to it," Kent Schaffer said. "Many of the delays were caused by things that they did, whether it was appeals, working in conjunction with Collin County to cut off funding, which necessitated numerous court hearings, motions, and appeals. So, they kind of brought it on themselves."

Meanwhile, the state is on the hook for more than \$700,000 in legal bills in Paxton's whistleblower case. He is being sued by four former top aides for wrongful termination. Paxton has denied all wrongdoing in that case.

### Bitcoin mine prompts noise complaints

A 300-megawatt Bitcoin mine near Granbury is prompting a spate of noise complaints from the fans used to cool the huge network of computer servers used in the crypto currency process, the Texas Standard reported. Since the plant began operating last year, residents have complained about an "incessant din," Time magazine reported.

"My citizens are suffering," says Hood County Constable John Shirley.

According to earthjustice.org, five of the largest Bitcoin mines in the country are located in Texas. The largest is Riot Platforms in Rockdale, which has garnered attention for receiving multi-million-dollar refunds from the state for voluntarily reducing energy use during times of peak consumption.

## Words can be the best gift of all

The jewelry store ads have been telling the guys that the best way to show their love is with a nice hunk of ice, for a very hefty price of course. Hallmark says to 'say it with a card'. Those cards can now cost \$5 and up. Roses exceed some utility bills. Words however are priceless. And they can last a very long time tucked away in a special place or in our hearts.

A few weeks ago when I was at the family ranch, my childhood home, I was sitting in the living room when I picked up a Bible our son had given his grandparents for Easter in 1996. Josh inscribed it with "Love y'all a lot. God Bless!" And he had drawn a tractor beside those words.

Inside that Bible I found a late-in-life love note from my ailing father to his sweetheart.

In part it read: "You my Darling are my life, wife and Sweetheart. I miss you so much. I could not live without you. Yours forever...Daddy"

Written in pencil on yellow legal pad the gift of these words are worth more to my Mom, and now me, than any expensive necklace or ring. So much more.

Of course, Mom had to learn to live without her sweetheart. She misses him every single day. And those words of love still matter.

Also inside this Bible I found a recipe card with my name on it and a list of scriptures my Mother had apparently prayed over me. Another love letter of a different sort.

What a gift to find in a quiet moment alone. Priceless gifts. Gifts for a lifetime.

Love can write the story of our lives. If we let it. If we live it. If we mean it.

In between those two pieces of paper is a lifetime of troubles, trials, illnesses and heartbreak. In between those two pieces

## The Best of Suzanne Bardwell



of paper is a lifetime of joy, celebration, accomplishment and wisdom. In between those two pieces of paper are lives lived in love. In ways that mattered.

On this Valentine's Day take the time to write the loves of your life words that matter. Sometimes, often, those words, and certainly those actions will long outlive you.

And to my sweetheart, my partner and my best friend, no words can improve upon our wedding vows, "I love you as I love no other. All that I am I give to you. Now and forever."

To my precious son and daughter-in-heart, you are blessings who bring me the greatest joy.

To my Daddy in heaven and my prayer warrior Mother, thank you for the rock solid ground I stand on.

To my sweet baby brother, darlin' thanks for being the perfect brother. Always.

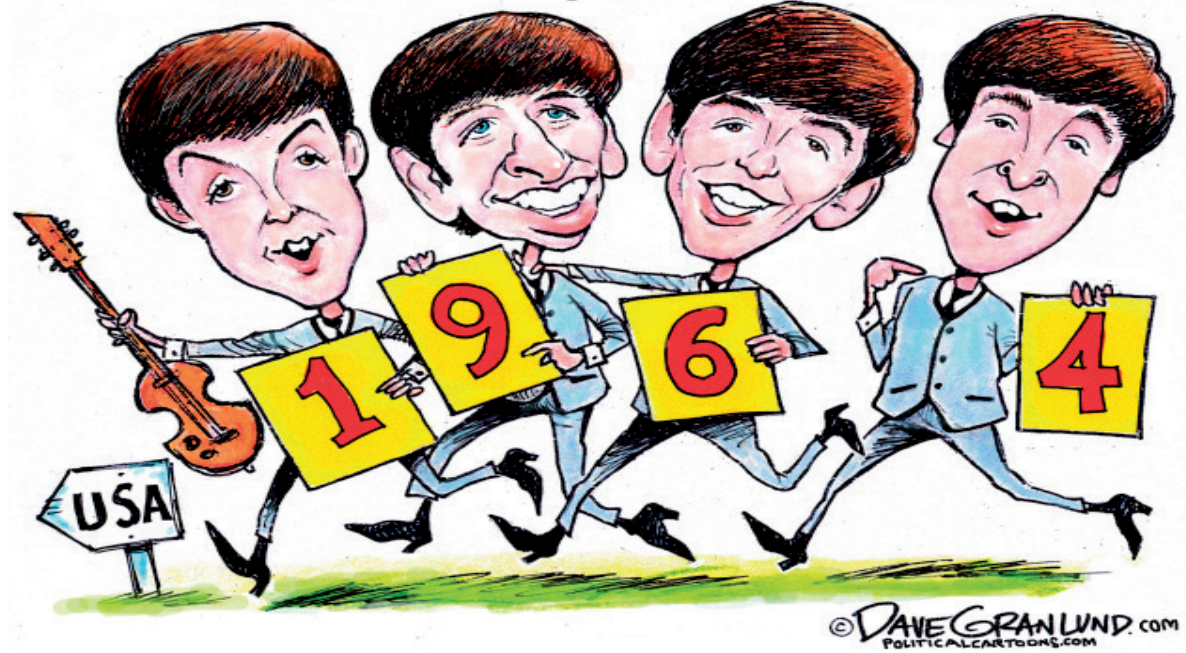
To my Mother- and Father-in-heart thank you for always being there. And of course, happiest of Valentine birthdays to Jim's Mom Carol, the most talented woman I know.

To you Valentine readers, thank you for your loyalty, your support and your encouragement.

And finally, Happy Valentine's Day to all the loving sweethearts out there.

Share your love with words. It can be the best gift of all.

## 60th Anniversary of Beatles invasion



# THE ECONOMIST

By Dr. M. Ray Perryman

## Mexican Trade ...

As the migrant crisis engulfs the border and the politics become increasingly complex and counterproductive, it is useful to remember the economic significance of our relationship with our southern neighbor. Let's briefly explore.

Trade between the United States and Mexico is crucial to both nations, and Texas has been the leading state for exports and imports between the two countries for decades. Through November, 2023 exports from Texas to Mexico totaled more than \$120 billion, with over \$132 billion in imports. Top exports include petroleum and coal products, computer and electronic products, chemicals, and transportation equipment. The largest import categories are transportation equipment, computer and electronic products, electrical equipment and appliances, and oil and gas.

In addition, complex supply chains are well developed, and components in numerous industries cross the border multiple times during the production process. Trade is beneficial to both countries, as comparative advantages with regard to costs, infrastructure, and workforce can be tapped to improve overall efficiencies, competitiveness, and growth. Consequently, prosperity both north and south of the border is enhanced.

We have analyzed US-Mexico trade for many years (I built the first model even before NAFTA) and have developed comprehensive systems to quantify the total economic benefits. Briefly

stated, exports stimulate business activity in Texas to produce and transport the various goods. Imports generate downstream effects as they are transported and sold in retail outlets or used in additional production in Texas. There are also indirect effects throughout the supply chain and consumer impacts as wages earned across the production process are spent.

The Perryman Group estimates that trade with Mexico generates business activity across the United States of about \$998.7 billion in gross domestic product annually and more than 8.1 million jobs (including multiplier effects and based on 2023 trade levels). For Texas, the total benefits include an estimated \$471.4 billion in gross product and over 3.6 million jobs (again based on 2023 trade levels), with the border region comprising \$28.9 billion in gross product and more than 301,000 jobs of the state totals. About 25% of all activity in the vast Texas economy is thus tied to interactions with Mexico.

With the current situation at the border and the State policy response, inefficiencies in the flow of imports and exports have arisen, causing notable economic losses. We found that the slowdowns arising during 2023 led to aggregate losses in the border region alone of an estimated \$1.6 billion in output and about 16,750 jobs.

Mexico is now the top trading partner for the United States and has been perennially for Texas. By capitalizing on relative strengths, trade creates jobs and opportunities for both nations. The economic benefits are both enormous and expanding. Stay safe!

## WHAT LIVES MATTER?

We hear a lot today about "Black Lives Matter." It has become a slogan which is painted on signs for protest marches, with some cities even painting it on the streets. Actually, the "Black Lives Matter" organization itself, has become a scam, enriching its leaders. I want to go on record, saying that "All lives matter." But sadly, many people today want to dictate what lives matter, and certain categories are singled out as being of more worth than others. For example, the unborn, are not considered to be worth much in the eyes of many, and their lives can be snuffed out as a matter of course and convenience. These want to pick and choose which lives have value. This is actually what this little article is about.

Any intelligent person will admit that the unborn is a human life. So, the real question is not WHEN human life begins, but WHAT IS THE VALUE OF HUMAN LIFE, regardless of color or nationality, born or unborn. We cannot diminish the value of one category of human life; the unborn; the handicapped; the old; one's race, etc., without diminishing the value of all human life!

More and more, we are hearing people speak of "mercy killings," "death with dignity," and "quality of life." I am pleading for "mercy living," "life with dignity," and sanctity of life" Therefore, we must affirm and protect the sanctity of ALL human life, or embrace a social ethic where some human lives are valued and others are not. Concerning the killing of the unborn (abortion) Mother Teresa said: "Abortion is a crime that kills not only the child but the consciences of all others." Former President Ronald Reagan said: "Abortion concerns not only the unborn child, it concerns every one of us." Abraham Lincoln recognized that we could not survive as a free land when some men could decide that others were not fit to be free and should therefore be slaves. Likewise, we cannot survive as a free nation when some men decide that others are not fit to live and should be abandoned to abortion or infanticide. It is a progressive, subtle, slippery slope from abortion, to infanticide, to euthanasia We cannot diminish the value of one category of human life-the unborn-without diminishing the value of all human life!

Finally, don't forget that if ever there was a killing without mercy, and a death without dignity, carried out by sinful man, it was on Golgotha. Yet, from that killing, what an outpouring of love and mercy through the subsequent centuries! From that death, what a stupendous enhancement of human dignity! (Jn. 3: 16; Rom. 5: 8). Think on these things.

**Dennis C. Abernathy-White Oak Church of Christ**

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# WHAT'S HAPPENING

## ELITE Pathfinder awards Feb. 17

Red Rock Historical Association's 2024 ELITE Pathfinder Celebration is set for 2 p.m. Saturday as the organization confers awards for key virtues – Erudite, Leadership, Inspiration, Triumph, Example and Pathfinder – with eight locals to be honored at the RRHA Activity Center at 2629 S. Rodeo. The ticketed event is \$25 per person and seats can be reserved at redrockha.org. Proceeds benefit the association's ongoing fundraising for a new museum. Learn more from 903-734-5944 or via email to redrockha@gmail.com.



Gladewater Rotary's "Students of the Month" were Katelyn Biddle & Timothy Heashe.

## County library hosts storytime

Two books will be read to small children, and a Valentine's party will be held, at both of the Upshur County Library's "Storytime" sessions Thursday (Feb. 15).

"Here Comes Valentine Cat" by Deborah Underwood, and "Bad Kitty Does Not Like Valentine's Day" by Nick Bruel, will be presented at the 10 a.m. and 4:15 p.m. sessions, said Kari Dunn, children's coordinator for the library.

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

Youngsters have the option to bring small gifts or cards to exchange, but all candy must be store-bought and in its original package, not homemade, Dunn said.

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

For more information, call the library at (903) 843-5001 or visit its website at www.

## County Expo Feb. 24

"Promoting Healthy Living with a Mardi Gras Twist" will be theme of the Feb. 24 Upshur County Expo in Gilmer, an event formerly called the Upshur County Health Fair.

The event, sponsored by Texas A&M Agrilife Extension, is set from 9 a.m. to 12 noon at the Yamboree Event Center, located on Bob Glaze Drive by Walmart.

For more information, contact York at 903-680-8128.

## GHS Class of '84 holding reunion

The Gladewater High School Class of 1984 will hold its 40th Class Reunion June 7-8, and organizers are inviting the GHS Classes of 1981 through 1987 to join them alongside the teachers and staffers who broadened their minds through the years.

The two-day event kicks

off with a Class of '84 gathering during the Gladewater Roundup Rodeo Friday, June 7 (individual tickets are available for purchase from the rodeo). Then, Saturday (June 8) will include a Class of '84 Meet and Greet from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Kilgore ahead of a banquet for Classes '81-'87 from 6 p.m. to midnight at the Gladewater Former Students Association Building.

Ticket for the banquet are \$20 per person including a meal or \$13 without, and the deadline to purchase tickets is Friday, May 3.

For more information, call Jana Wynn Ryan at 318-465-4149.

## Contenders line up for city leadership

With a recent addition to the Spring 2024 ballot, Gladewater has a contested race for the mayor's seat, and the final ballot isn't set.

Incumbent Place 3 council member Brandy Flanagan filed early for the central spot

on the dais and has drawn a late challenger in a recent filing by Jim Valentine.

There are at least two more candidate packets out in the wild (council member Rocky Hawkins and Stoney Stone picked up the paperwork), but there have been no other new filings as of press time Tuesday. Elsewhere on the city's ballot, current Mayor Scott Owens is unchallenged in his bid for the Place 3 spot Flanagan is vacating, and council member Michael Weber has no contenders for re-election to Place 2.

Across several local entities, would-be office-seekers have until 5 p.m. Friday (Feb. 16) to toss their hat in the ring for the Spring contest. Early voting runs April 22-30 before Election Day polling Saturday, May 4.

To file for a local council post, candidate packets are available from City Secretary Judy Von Houten at Gladewater City Hall.

At Gladewater ISD, three spots are up, and the three incumbents have filed for re-election – Corina Arevalo

(Place 5), Danielle Budro (Place 6) and Jeff Cook (Place 7) are all seeking re-election as trustees. There were no other updates to filings Tuesday morning.

Applications for office are available from Board Secretary Melissa Dennis at the GISD Administration Building.

In White Oak, there are also three seats on the May 4 ballot – mayor, Place 4 and Place 5. Four application packets have been picked up, but only Mayor Kyle Kutch has filed, seeking another term in his post. The Place 4 incumbent is John Frazier, and Place 5 is currently held by Kevin Hood.

Candidate paperwork is available at White Oak City Hall.

With just Thursday and Friday left to file, White Oak ISD's ballot currently has two contenders for two available posts: incumbent Donna Stagner is seeking another term in Place 6 while Ricky Bodovsky has filed for Place 7 (incumbent Dr. David Ummel has stated he's not seeking another



Gladewater Middle School's Grace Belcher was selected as the Gladewater Lions Club's January Student of the Month.

term). Packets are available from the school's administrative office and due back to Administrative Assistant Julie Bodovsky (married to the Place 7 candidate) by the general deadline at end-of-business Feb. 16.



Gladewater Superintendent Dr. Sedric Clark read to Gladewater Primary School students during "World Read Aloud Day."

## GPD Activity Report

CALL DATE	CALL DESC	CFSF	CALL TIME	BUSINESS NAME	ADDRESS
2/4/24	SUSPICIOUS NOISE	20240681	0:45		602 W PACIFIC PACIFIC AVE
	SUSPICIOUS PERSON	20240683	8:22	BOOM TOWN RV PARK	301 W COMMERCE COMMERCE ST
	MISCELLANEOUS	20240684	10:24	DOLLAR GENERAL	904 E BROADWAY BROADWAY AVE
	ILLEGAL DUMPING	20240685	10:53		383 SHEPPARD SHEPPARD DR
	EMS	20240686	10:56	LEGEND OAKS NURSING HOME	1201 FM 2685 FM 2685
	ANIMAL CONTROL	20240687	11:01		1107 MARY MARY ST
	CRIM MIS	20240688	11:38	CHICKEN EXPRESS	1101 E BROADWAY BROADWAY AVE
	EMS	20240689	11:46		1680 SCARLET OAK SCARLET OAK RD
	MISCELLANEOUS	20240690	11:52		2804 OTHELIA OTHELIA ST
	MISCELLANEOUS	20240691	12:28	ECONOMY INN	701 E BROADWAY BROADWAY AVE
	EMS	20240692	13:35		302 MAPLE MAPLE ST
	EMS	20240693	13:45		74 WELDON HOMES WELDON HOMES
	ANIMAL CONTROL	20240694	13:59	LEGEND OAKS NURSING HOME	1201 FM 2685 FM 2685
	EMS	20240695	14:10		1007 RICHEY RICHEY DR
	MISCELLANEOUS	20240696	14:55		2328 W WEST LAKE WEST LAKE DR
	EMS	20240697	15:12		519 MELBA MELBA ST
	MISCELLANEOUS	20240698	16:53		535 OMAHO OMAHO ST
	ABANDONED VEHICLE	20240700	22:12	LAKE GLADEWATER	1802 LAKESHORE LAKESHORE DR
	EMS	20240701	23:03		311 S MILL MILL ST
	MISCELLANEOUS	20240702	23:19	BODACIOUS BBQ	1105 W UPSHUR UPSHUR AVE
2/5/24	FIRE DEPT	20240704	2:31		710 TENERY TENERY ST
	RECKLESS DRIVING	20240705	6:13		N HWY 271 HWY 271
	ASSIST	20240706	10:03		1352 PHILLIPS SPRINGS PHILLIPS SPRINGS
	ALARM/OTHER	20240707	10:10		313 W SUNSET SUNSET AVE
	INCIDENT - NO REPORT	20240708	11:22	SWAMP RAT TOWING	1829 E BROADWAY BROADWAY AVE
	EMS	20240709	11:51		506 N POST POST ST
	MISCELLANEOUS	20240710	14:47	GLADEWATER POLICE DEPARTMENT	511 S TYLER TYLER RD
	MISCELLANEOUS	20240711	15:32		GAY GAY
	MISCELLANEOUS	20240712	16:47		2124 WEST LAKE WEST LAKE DR
	MISCELLANEOUS	20240713	16:52		SHELL CAMP SHELL CAMP RD
	RECKLESS DRIVING	20240714	20:34	JR WORKS	1827 E BROADWAY BROADWAY AVE
	MISCELLANEOUS	20240715	21:14		515 W MARSHALL MARSHALL AVE
	MISCELLANEOUS	20240716	21:24		515 MARSHALL MARSHALL
	EMS	20240717	23:28		408 W GAY GAY AVE
	MISCELLANEOUS	20240718	23:52	PENNYS FOOD & FUEL	807 S TYLER TYLER ST
	RECKLESS DRIVING	20240719	7:07		S TYLER TYLER ST
	10-50 MINOR	20240720	8:00		PACIFIC PACIFIC
	ALARM/OTHER	20240721	9:12	MCDONALDS	1100 E BROADWAY BROADWAY AVE
	EMS	20240722	11:09		1842 PHILLIPS SPRINGS PHILLIPS SPRINGS
	10-50 MINOR	20240723	12:41		1100 E BROADWAY BROADWAY AVE
	EMS	20240724	14:06	UNION GROVE ISD	11220 UNION GROVE RD POB 1447 UNION GROVE RD POB
	MISCELLANEOUS	20240725	14:56	GLADEWATER POLICE DEPARTMENT	511 S TYLER TYLER RD
	RECKLESS DRIVING	20240727	16:17		
	EMS	20240729	17:10	FAMILY DOLLAR	601 W UPSHUR UPSHUR
	CREDIT/DEBIT ABUSE	20240730	17:52	THE LEARNING ACADEMY	1600 W UPSHUR UPSHUR
	ABANDONED 911	20240732	21:43		515 CLUNTON CLUNTON ST
2/7/24	WARRANT	20240735	0:05		
	EMS	20240736	0:23		20 GARDEN GARDEN LN
	EMS	20240737	3:02	LEGEND OAKS NURSING HOME	1201 FM 2685 FM 2685
	CRIM TRESPASS	20240738	7:22		943 SANDERS SANDERS
	EMS	20240739	9:38	TRUMAN SMITH CHILDRENS CENTER	2200 W UPSHUR UPSHUR
	EMS	20240740	10:47		321 EDDY EDDY ST
	INCIDENT - NO REPORT	20240741	11:18	DOLLAR GENERAL	904 E BROADWAY BROADWAY AVE
	EMS	20240742	15:11	SENTINEL GARDENS	300 MONEY MONEY ST
	MISCELLANEOUS	20240743	16:01		2207 E HARROLD HARROLD ST
	EMS	20240744	16:09		206 S CULVER CULVER ST
	ANIMAL CONTROL	20240745	16:21		2516 GAY GAY AVE
	ALARM/HUMAN ERROR	20240746	16:30	DANIELLE'S HOUSE OF HOPE	1014 N LYNN LYNN ST
	SIMPLE ASSAULT "C"	20240747	17:27	BUMBLE BEE PARK	637 COACH COCKSEY ST COACH COCKSEY ST
	ALARM/HUMAN ERROR	20240748	17:32	NORTH LOOP CHURCH OF CHRIST	1000 N LOOP 485 LOOP 485
	ANIMAL CONTROL	20240749	17:43		W TENERY TENERY ST
	MISCELLANEOUS	20240750	18:59		NORTH NORTH ST
	SUSPICIOUS PERSON	20240751	19:32		13 GREENWAY VILLAGE GREENWAY VILLAGE
	DISTURBANCE-OTHER	20240752	20:27		690 BRIAR COVE BRIAR COVE LN

	FIRE DEPT	20240753	20:46		W PACIFIC PACIFIC AVE
	MISCELLANEOUS	20240754	21:54		703 CLAIR CLAIR ST
	MISCELLANEOUS	20240755	22:02	GLADEWATER POLICE DEPARTMENT	511 S TYLER TYLER RD
2/8/24	ALARM/HUMAN ERROR	20240756	7:24		306 W SHEPPERD SHEPPERD DR
	ASSAULT CLASS A	20240757	8:37		904 E MARY MARY ST
	MISCELLANEOUS	20240758	10:31	GLADEWATER POLICE DEPARTMENT	511 S TYLER TYLER RD
	FIRE DEPT	20240759	11:33	AUNT SANDRA'S SOUL COOKING	212 MILLER MILLER ST
	MISCELLANEOUS	20240760	13:34		1520 E SHEPPARD SHEPPARD DR
	EMS	20240761	14:41	TRUMAN SMITH CHILDRENS CENTER	2200 W UPSHUR UPSHUR
	FIRE DEPT	20240762	15:24		E LAKE LAKE
	INCIDENT - NO REPORT	20240763	16:15	CHRISTUS TRINITY CLINIC	1600 E BROADWAY BROADWAY AVE
	FIRE DEPT	20240766	19:41		2105 EAST LAKE DR EAST LAKE DR
	EMS	20240767	23:22	LEGEND OAKS NURSING HOME	1201 FM 2685 FM 2685
2/9/24	SUSPICIOUS PERSON	20240768	0:01		N TENERY N TENERY
	EMS	20240770	1:55		202 S CULVER CULVER
	SUSPICIOUS NOISE	20240771	2:40	ECONOMY INN	701 E BROADWAY BROADWAY AVE
	EMS	20240772	2:41	TRUMAN SMITH CHILDRENS CENTER	2200 W UPSHUR UPSHUR
	THEFT	20240773	10:31	YVONNE'S HAIR AND MORE	600 W UPSHUR UPSHUR AVE
	EMS	20240774	11:17	SENTINEL GARDENS	300 MONEY MONEY ST
	MISCELLANEOUS	20240775	14:55		HWY 80 HWY 80
	SUSPICIOUS PERSON	20240776	15:52	BROOKSHIRE GROCERY	1301 E BROADWAY BROADWAY AVE
	THEFT	20240777	16:12	GLADEWATER HIGH SCHOOL	2200 W GAY GAY AVE
	SUSPICIOUS PERSON	20240779	17:20		2801 HENDRICKS HENDRICKS
	RECKLESS DRIVING	20240780	17:28		HWY 80 HWY 80
	DISTURBANCE-OTHER	20240782	19:06		2804 BERNICE BERNICE
	ALARM/OTHER	20240783	19:14		865 E BROADWAY BROADWAY
	DISTURBANCE-OTHER	20240784	19:41		803 ANDERSON LANE ANDERSON LANE
	THEFT	20240785	20:03	EZ MART	400 W UPSHUR UPSHUR AVE
	ANIMAL CONTROL	20240787	21:15		1300BLK N LEE N LEE DR
	DISTURBANCE-OTHER	20240788	21:33		5555 WELDON HOMES WELDON HOMES
	MISCELLANEOUS	20240789	22:58	GLADEWATER HOUSING AUTHORITY	777 S TYLER TYLER RD
	SUSPICIOUS PERSON	20240790	23:32		N AMES AMES ST
	SUSPICIOUS VEHICLE	20240791	23:38		AMES AMES ST
2/10/24	MISCELLANEOUS	20240792	0:41	GLADEWATER HIGH SCHOOL	2201 W GAY GAY AVE
	ABANDONED 911	20240793	1:22		2205 PINECREST PINECREST DR
	ALARM/HUMAN ERROR	20240794	1:44	GLADEWATER MIDDLE SCHOOL	414 S LOOP 485 LOOP 485
	MISCELLANEOUS	20240795	4:03	LEGEND OAKS NURSING HOME	1201 FM 2685 FM 2685
	EMS	20240796	8:01	TRUMAN SMITH CHILDRENS CENTER	2200 W UPSHUR UPSHUR
	MISCELLANEOUS	20240798	10:35	CEFCO 79	1109 E BROADWAY BROADWAY AVE
	ASSIST	20240799	11:31	GLADEWATER POLICE DEPARTMENT	511 S TYLER TYLER RD
	FIRE DEPT	20240801	15:11		314 PR 1311 PR 1311
	MISCELLANEOUS	20240802	16:18		JEANNETTE JEANNETTE ST
	MISCELLANEOUS	20240803	16:29		1825 E BROADWAY BROADWAY AVE
	ABANDONED 911	20240804	17:44		801 EAST LAKE EAST LAKE DR
	EMS	20240805	18:30		140 PR 3479 PR 3479
	SUSPICIOUS PERSON	20240806	23:37		GAY GAY
2/11/24	FIRE DEPT	20240807	7:36	LEGEND OAKS NURSING HOME	1201 FM 2685 FM 2685
	FIRE DEPT	20240808	8:32		322 MELBA MELBA
	ABANDONED 911	20240809	9:48	ALFRED FAMILY DENTISTRY	418 W UPSHUR UPSHUR
	MISCELLANEOUS	20240811	10:31	GLADEWATER POLICE DEPARTMENT	511 S TYLER TYLER RD
	FIRE DEPT	20240812	11:29		PR 1301 PR 1301
	MISCELLANEOUS	20240813	13:11		2808 HENDRICKS HENDRICKS
	MISCELLANEOUS	20240814	13:50	POST OFFICE	101 N DEAN DEAN ST
	ABANDONED 911	20240815	15:42		317 N AMES AMES ST

## WHITE OAK POLICE

For the reporting period of February 5th through the 11th, 2024, officers for the White Oak Police Department responded to, or initiated, 181 calls for service and assistance. Some of the most common calls were; Traffic Problems (collisions, traffic control, reckless drivers, etc.), Animal Complaints, Burglar Alarms, Suspicious Activities, and Community Relations (burn permits, welfare checks, vacation home security checks, etc.).

Four traffic collisions were investigated which resulted in no injuries and no continuing criminal investigations.

No warrants, other than for traffic violations, were obtained.

One person was arrested by White Oak Police during this reporting period:

Ryan Joseph Sellers, 33, of White Oak for Driving While Intoxicated with 2 or more previous convictions.

## Woman arrested in 2023 fatal crash

A DeBerry woman was arrested in connection with a fatal crash that occurred last year. According to a crash report by the Texas Department of Transportation, on Sunday, Sept. 17, 2023, Emerald Melanie Ramirez, 21, was traveling westbound on Pacific Avenue in Gladewater when she lost control of the vehicle and collided with a culvert guard railing, which caused the vehicle to spin 180 degrees.

The vehicle came to a stop facing east on Pacific Avenue.

The report states that a passenger was not wearing a seatbelt and thus was thrown into the windshield. That passenger was transported to a local hospital and later died of their injuries. Ramirez and an infant were also transported to hospital for treatment of injuries.

Ramirez was arrested on Monday and charged with intoxication manslaughter and intoxication assault. She was booked into the Gregg County Jail with \$25,000 bonds for each charged.



# OBITUARIES



## BETTY H. BLACK HILL

Betty H. Black Hill, of Longview, passed away peacefully at Longview Regional Hospital on Sunday, February 11, 2024, after spending her last few years at Buckner Westminster. A chapel service will be held at The Cammack Family, Welch Funeral Home, 4619 Judson Rd, Longview, on Monday, February 19, 2024 at 10 a.m. with Dr. Rick Webb, officiating. A private scattering of the ashes for Betty will be held at a later date.

Betty was born April 11, 1933, in Hammondsville, AK, to the late Hosea Hearnberger and Elois Fowlkes Hearnberger. She was a devout member of Media Ministries of Pastor Teachers, R.B. Thieme, Jr., R.B. Thieme III, and Albert B. Hill, Jr. She spent many hours listening to Bible Doctrine and walked in the words of the Lord Jesus Christ as closely as humanly possible.

Betty was the epitome of grace with the never-ending poise of a lady. She always saw the good in people.

Graduating from Gladewater High School in 1952, Betty immediately attended Arkansas Baptist School of Nursing where she received her nursing training. She then received her Registered Nursing license in 1955. Betty practiced nursing for many years, the longest at Eastman (Kodak) Chemical Co. She was proud to have taken care of so many employees at Eastman and

knew many of their family. Betty married the love of her life, James H. Black on March 15, 1963. They were blessed with 45 years of marriage, with Betty caring for Jimmy until his passing in 2008. She then married Albert B. Hill, Jr. in 2010, whom she deeply admired and shared the same faith. Betty cared for Albert until his passing in 2018. She was also preceded in death by her brother, James Hearnberger, and her sister Geraldine Brookshire.

Survivors include sister Mary Wharton (Dr. Taylor), brother Phillip Hearnberger (Mary Grace), brother-in-law Don Brookshire and sister-in-law Diane Hearnberger, nephews Col. Brian Hearnberger, Brandon Hearnberger, John Hearnberger, Bruce Brookshire, and Larry Ford and nieces Amy Vanderhill, Tiffany Crona, Nanci Moon, Kristi Coriell, Tammy Sharpe, and Brenda Dolma, and many other great-nephews/nieces and great-great nieces. She also enjoyed the friendship of Albert Hill's sons and many family members.

Betty outlived her two husbands and many friends, but those who loved and remember her knew her as a very special and strong-willed lady, full of life until the end. Our Betty would have been 91 in just a few months. The Family will remember a life well lived as a blessing forever.

The family would like to thank Buckner Westminster Place staff for their expert care and compassion and her companion, Nelda Jackson, who helped make Betty comfortable in her last few months.

Please share a memory of Betty at [www.cammackfamily.com](http://www.cammackfamily.com)

In lieu of flowers, Betty requested a donation to your favorite charity. She would

also have appreciated your gift to Berachah Church or Berachah Church Tape and Publications, 2815 Sage Road, Houston, TX 77056.



## HUGHLEEN WILLIAMS BLAYLOCK GILBERT

Funeral services for Hughleen Williams Blaylock Gilbert, 80, of Gladewater will be held at 11 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 17, at First Baptist Church of Gladewater.

Viewing is set for 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Friday, Feb. 16, at Union Temple Church at 400 E. Johnson St. in Gladewater.

Hughleen is survived by three sisters – Ruby Henry and Ernestine Hawkins of Gladewater and Fattie Roberts of Angie, Louisiana – and three brothers – Wilbert Williams, Jr. of Longview, Willie Williams of Greenville and James Williams of Dallas.

## White Oak PD deputizes doorbells

*New database of contact information aims to streamline investigations*

Nowadays, the word ‘surveillance’ quickly conjures up dystopian visions of totalitarian regimes, that “Big Brother is watching” – or, at least, of hours of bad neighbor clips on social media.

Pump the brakes a bit, though, when it comes to White Oak Police Department’s new doorbell camera registration program. It’s mainly about saving time and shoe leather.

The PD announced the initiative on social media last week and quickly secured a score of homeowners eager to do their part and help law enforcement ID suspects who break the law in sight of their private recorders.

First things first – participation in the project doesn’t give the police instant access to a personal video feed.

“We’re not asking for that. We don’t want that,” WOPD Administrative Lt. Nick Bruton said. “We’re just getting a database of contact information.”

Tying those volunteered details – and camera angles – to a map creates a readily-accessible inventory that should save officers a little canvassing time when they’re investigating an incident.

Investigators already

collect footage regularly, several times a month at least, Bruton added; a little foreknowledge of available resources could make investigations flow even faster toward an arrest.

For example, “Every now and then we’ll have a string of car burglaries. They’ll come through one night and hit some cars in a neighborhood,” he said. Officers will go door-to-door or business-to-business to see if anyone conveniently caught anything on camera. In one incident that springs to mind, “We were able to get footage from a neighbor (who didn’t get burglarized) that ultimately led to us identifying them and arresting them.”

White Oak’s improving on another agency’s idea – a patrol officer’s research found a Ring Doorbell program that solicited help via a printed form.

“No one has a printer,” Bruton quipped. “We took the idea and ran with it, made it a little more user-friendly,” directing volunteers to a Google form.

Interested participants are invited to register via forms. [gle/o5ztHkbDuLKosaBU6](http://gle/o5ztHkbDuLKosaBU6), providing contact information and details about the

recording devices at their home or business. Once that information’s been transferred into the police department’s database and cross-referenced with a map, White Oak’s investigators know their angles and coverage areas at-a-glance.

Barely a week in, the map’s filling up, each point representing a camera that could reveal suspects, stolen property or more: “We’ve got little icons all over town. They’re rolling in,” Bruton said. The potential footage, when it’s necessary, could be a game-changer. “We’ll know who has it, who to call, what kind of angle they have. We can speed up the process ourselves.”

Setups like Ring cameras are inexpensive enough today that they’re becoming ubiquitous,” he added.

“I have one at my house. It’s on wifi. I can pull mine up from my phone.”

Hopefully, too, the new program will become a deterrent – like everybody else, lawbreakers should have no expectation of privacy in public.

“Criminals have Facebook, too. They can see we have this program. Maybe they’ll change their mind before they come over to White Oak and do stuff.”

## Upshur commissioners to meet Thursday to discuss assessing and collecting school taxes

By Phillip Williams

Upshur County Commissioners Court on Thursday (Feb. 15) will consider the issue of interlocal agreements with school districts for the county assessing and collecting school taxes.

That matter is among 10 items on the agenda for the 10 a.m. public meeting at the temporary county courthouse in downtown Gilmer. One of the 10, however, includes several matters to be discussed in closed session, including the school issue.

The others are mostly related to the current renovation of the 87-year-old county courthouse, which is across the street from where the court will meet.

One item to be considered in closed session, though, is “payment of health-care related costs due on behalf of Upshur County employees and dependants through the county third party administrator.”

Another agenda item provides for voting in open session--as state law requires--on any matters discussed in closed session if the court chooses to act on one or more of them.

Among other business items on Thursday’s agenda are one to approve resolutions seeking grants for several items for law enforcement officers. The goods include body armor, radios and (for constables) bullet resistant shields.

The court will also open, and possibly act on, bids for the Road and Bridge Department’s fuel and materials.

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 Living Hope Fellowship • 903-261-2023  
 Love of God Church • 903-845-2623  
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# SPORTS



Monday night the the Lady Lions captured the Bi-District Championship after a 50-36 win over Overton at Pine Tree gym.



White Oak High School signees include: Calee Carter, daughter of Stephen and Angie Carter, signed a volleyball scholarship with Tyler Junior College for the fall of 2024; Larkin Daniels, daughter of Michael and Kristina Daniels, signed a softball scholarship with East Texas Baptist University; and Kylie Dugger, daughter of Angela Mayfield, signed a cheerleading scholarship with East Texas Baptist University.

Photo by Mike Peery

## Area basketball roundup ...

By Tyler Sutton

The playoffs were set for the girl's side and the boys' side regular season winds down in high school basketball for Gladewater, White Oak and Union Grove.

The Gladewater Bears basketball team fell on Tuesday, Feb 6<sup>th</sup> to Daingerfield then on Friday, February 9<sup>th</sup> they made the trip to New Diana and lost to the Eagles 70-39.

The 2 losses drop the Bears to 3-25 on the season and 1-8 in district play. They wrapped up their season on Tuesday, February 13<sup>th</sup> with senior night against rival White Oak.

The Gladewater Lady Bears wrapped up a perfect district run on Tuesday, February 6<sup>th</sup> with a 67-26 win over Hughes Springs. Calice Henderson filled the stat sheet with 27 points, four rebounds, six assists, nine steals and two blocks. Paytin Thompson added a double-double for Gladewater with 14 points, 12 steals, seven rebounds, two assists and three blocks. Ramya Ransom chipped in with seven points, three rebounds and three steals, Kyla Lincoln six points, two rebounds, seven assists and four steals, Ava Langford six points, two assists and three steals, Sarya Miles four points and Karlee Moses three points, five rebounds

and two steals. Gladewater finishes the regular season on a 12 game winning streak and 18-12 overall with a perfect 10-0 district record. Claiming their 4<sup>th</sup> straight district title.

The Lady Bears began their run for a state championship with a playoff game on Monday, February 12<sup>th</sup> against the Troup Lady Tigers at UT Tyler. Unfortunately the Lady Bears fell short to Troup, 51-35.

The White Oak Roughnecks continued to play-out the rest of their regular season as they fell to the Daingerfield Tigers 70-29 on Tuesday, February 6<sup>th</sup>.

Then they defeated the Hughes Springs Mustangs on Friday, February 9<sup>th</sup> 50-34. Scotty Breitenberg tossed in 18 points, Kanaan Moore and Gavin Sipes added 10 apiece for the RoughNecks. Moore added seven rebounds, and Sipes came away with four steals for White Oak, which led 20-13 at halftime. Kaleb Sorgee finished with seven points, Tysen McClain three and Henry Lattin and Jacob Sorgee one apiece The RoughNecks are now 9-22 on the season 3-6 in district play.

They wrapped up their season on Tuesday, February 13<sup>th</sup> with a road game at Gladewater.

The Lady RoughNecks

wrapped up the final spot in the playoffs in the district with a 46-35 win over Daingerfield. White Oak finished the regular season with a 10-20 record and 3-7 in district play.

They faced the Tatum Lady Eagles in the playoffs on Monday. But the trip into the playoffs was short-lived as Tatum rolled to an 80-20 win over White Oak.

The Lady Necks end the season with a 23-24 record.

The Union Grove Lady Lions finished up their great regular season with a 25-17 win over McLeod on Tuesday, February 6<sup>th</sup>. Jamie Webb and Jenna Scott scored six points apiece for Union Grove.

Ava Wightman had five points, Sarah Prince four, Mallory Calhoun three and Keira Taylor one. The Lady Lions finish the regular season at 10-2 in district play to earn the 2<sup>nd</sup> seed out of district 21.

Monday night the the Lady Lions captured the Bi-District Championship after a 50-36 win over Overton at Pine Tree gym. The Lady Lions are 24-6 on the season and Headed to round #2.

The Union Grove boy's basketball team fell to McLeod on Tuesday, February 6<sup>th</sup> 66-51. Jace Roberts scored 19 points, Peyton Laake 12 and Jax Daniels 11 in the loss for Union Grove.

Then on Friday, February 9<sup>th</sup>, the Lions inched closer to locking up a playoff spot as they defeated Harleton 42-38. The Lions are now 13-14 on the season and 6-5 in district play.

They wrapped up their regular season on Tuesday, February 13<sup>th</sup> with a trip to Linden-Kildare.

### WO Lifter Results from Roughneck Invitational

**Boys:**  
Jaiden Shadowen, 2nd Place 114lb  
Landon Hartman, 4th Place 114lb  
Owen Gee, 3rd Place 123lb  
Jayce Parker, 3rd Place 132lb  
Joey Langley, 3rd Place SHW  
White Oak also had 19 other boys participating in the meet with several of them improving their regional ranking

**Girls:**  
Morgan Gee, 5th place 123lb  
Alyssa Spurger, 2nd place 132lb  
Danica Vaughn, 4th place 198lb  
White Oak also had 11 other girls participating in the meet with several of them improving their regional ranking.



Union Grove's #15 Jace Roberts steals the ball from a Wildcat player, turning the ball back over to the Lions. Photo by Kim Hill



Gladewater High School's JT Maddox signed with Sul Ross State University last week on National Signing Day.

### "Coot's Corner" By Coot Putley

#### Two the voters missed ...

As promised a couple of weeks ago, I'm back on the Baseball Hall of Fame soapbox making a case for two players who came up short. Billy Wagner was 5 votes shy of the 289 necessary for election, but does have one more year on the ballot. The other glaring omission, Gary Sheffield, only had 246 votes in his final year of eligibility. He can only be elected now by a Contemporary Era player committee which meets every three years. The list of players is long, so this can be a difficult path to induction. Billy Wagner ranks #1 among all left-handed pitchers since 1920 in ERA, strikeout rate and opponent batting average. WHIP is the stat for walks and hits per inning pitched. Wagner's WHIP is .998, good for the third best of all time. He averaged 11.9 strikeouts for each 9 innings pitched and fanned 33.2% of all the batters he faced!

If Billy Wagner returned to the majors today and gave up 100 consecutive hits, he would have the same career opponent batting average as Mariano Rivera (.211). If he gave up 200 consecutive hits, he would still have a

lower career batting average than Lee Smith (.237).

So why would anyone not vote for someone with that record? There are a number of people who refuse to recognize the importance of relief pitchers, especially closers. There have been around 23,000 who have played in the major leagues, and only 273 have been elected to the Hall. Of that number, 9 were relief pitchers, and only 6 could really be considered closers. It's time to seriously consider the impact of the pitchers who get the last outs of a ballgame.

I've only heard 2 arguments against Billy Wagner. The first was that he doesn't have an impressive playoff record. Neither did Ernie Banks or Ken Griffey Jr. The second was that he only pitched 900 innings in his 16-year career. Well, that's what his job description called for. He retired at a relatively young age to spend time with his family. In his final season, Wagner was 7-2 for the Atlanta Braves, with a .143 ERA and struck out 104 in 69 innings. He was a classic example of an athlete who went out on top. I believe that there is no

bigger oversight in the Hall. Billy Wagner must be elected next year!

The other candidate for future committee voting is Gary Sheffield. I won't go into a lengthy argument for him, but I will state that he is one of only six players in history who had at least 2600 hits, 500 home runs and 200 stolen bases. The others: Aaron, Mays, Frank Robinson, Barry Bonds and Alex Rodriguez. Sheffield was a 9-time All Star who won 5 Silver Slugger awards and was one of the most feared hitters of his generation. Some people refused to vote for him because of his somewhat abrasive personality. Others thought he might have taken PED's, but he didn't fail a drug test. If we start disqualifying players because of their temperament or what we think they might have done, there might not be many left in the Hall of Fame!

There are other candidates who deserve consideration, and many other problems with the voting process. In another column we will discuss what is wrong and offer some proposals for solutions.

That's one man's opinion - what's yours?



Senior Union Lions were recognized last week - (L to R) Owen Matthews (Team Mgr), Will Wilson, Lane Turner, Rylan Roberts, Jamar Martin, Jaxson Daniels and Peyton Laake. They are coached by Coach Hunter Gray.

Photo by Kim Hill



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## Early voting foir March Primary starts next week

By Phillip Williams

Early voting in Upshur County for the March 5 Republican and Democratic primaries opens Tuesday at the Gilmer Civic Center.

No voting is scheduled Monday since that is the Presidents Day holiday.

Voting hours and dates are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Feb. 20-23, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Feb. 24, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Feb. 25, and 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Feb. 26-March 1.

The civic center is located at 1218 U.S. Hwy. 271 North, north of Walmart.

The Republican ballot in the county has three contested races for county public office, a contested race for county Republican chairman, and nine contested races for precinct chair seats on the county GOP's executive committee.

The only candidate for county elective office on the Democratic ballot is Brandon Williams, unopposed for the party's nomination for sheriff. In November, he will face winner of the Republican primary race between Sheriff Larry Webb, seeking re-election, and Mark Case.

In the other two contested races for county office, Precinct 1 County Commissioner Gene Dolle seeks re-election against Lucrecia A. Davidson, while County Tax Assessor-Collector Luana Howell is opposed for re-election by Andreaana (Precious) Smith.

GOP County Chairman Carl Byers faces Cynthia Ridgeway in his bid for re-election.

For more information on the Upshur elections, contact County Election Administrator Lory Harle's office at 903-680-8506.

### TEXAS CROSSWORD

by Charley & Guy Orbison  
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**ACROSS**

- Fort Worth theater: \_\_\_\_\_ Manana
- TXism: "got knocked down \_\_\_\_\_ or two"
- XIT Ranch covered \_\_\_\_\_ counties
- Anthony: "Leap \_\_\_\_\_ Capital of the World"
- month of Texas Poetry Day (abbr.)
- Halloween "treat" opposite (2 wds.)
- TXism: "never sign anything by the glow of a \_\_\_\_\_ light"
- TXism: "she could talk \_\_\_\_\_ of a ditch"
- Texas "Pretty Paper" singer, Orbison (init.)
- TX George Jones' "The Race \_\_\_\_\_"
- TX George H.W. Bush illness on 1992 Tokyo trip
- TXism: "\_\_\_\_\_ wet hen" (angry)
- old series: "Texas John \_\_\_\_\_"
- Davy's state (abbr.)
- TXism: "restless as \_\_\_\_\_ church"
- Alpine, TX is named for these mountains
- TX comedian and actor, Foxx
- Texas boomtown hotel: "a cross between \_\_\_\_\_ a flop-house"
- TXism: "scared the dickens out \_\_\_\_\_"
- "The Lone \_\_\_\_\_"
- ex-Mav. Alex (init.)
- greenish-blue color
- TXism: "a legend in his own mind" (big \_\_\_\_\_)
- TXism: "How \_\_\_\_\_ doing?"
- state park located in Gonzales County
- precedes Soto or Leon
- TX Jim Reeves tune: "\_\_\_\_\_ I Losing You?"
- yankee description of Texans?
- TXism: "wobbles like a \_\_\_\_\_ calf"
- "rise and \_\_\_\_\_"
- TXism: "in a coon's \_\_\_\_\_" (long time)
- Texas high tech city: \_\_\_\_\_ Colinas road curve
- prickly heat
- TXism: "\_\_\_\_\_ sheared like a spring lamb" (swindled)
- one name for the Texas bluebonnet: "Ei \_\_\_\_\_"
- ex-Cowboy LB Norton (init.)
- Texas pitching legend (2 wds.)
- TXism: "pick \_\_\_\_\_ the litter"
- TX Cindy Garner book: "The \_\_\_\_\_ Joke-book About Men"
- TX Tommy who won ten Tony Awards
- "\_\_\_\_\_ Ferguson: first female governor
- also known as (abbr.)
- TXism: "shin \_\_\_\_\_" (big event)
- loved
- Texas forage crop
- TXism: "he's all show \_\_\_\_\_ go"
- Texas-based "Steak and \_\_\_\_\_"
- TXism: "woke \_\_\_\_\_ bear" (in trouble)
- TXism: "fast as a rat up a \_\_\_\_\_"
- 1952 western: "The Texan \_\_\_\_\_ Calamity Jane"
- Texas singer, Gilley (init)
- that is (abbr.)
- female church leader
- Yo \_\_\_\_\_ Digo Creek
- Texas or Iowa town
- Texas traditional knowledge
- TX Jules Bledsoe's "Old \_\_\_\_\_ River"
- SeaWorld San Antonio has this in its "Orca Encounter"
- TXism: "got a heart as \_\_\_\_\_ Texas" (kind)

**DOWN**

- Palo Duro \_\_\_\_\_
- TXism: "just down the road \_\_\_\_\_"
- Cruz & Cornyn
- Texas sun sometimes?
- Ozona High class
- Cannonsnap Creek was misnamed for this in 1837 (2 wds.)

See Answers On This Page

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**LEGAL NOTICE**

(Longview, TX) The Longview Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) has scheduled a Policy Board meeting on Wednesday, February 28, 2024, at 2:00 p.m. in the Longview City Council Chambers located in the Jo Ann Metcalf Municipal Building, 300 W. Cotton Street, Longview, TX 75601 to consider approval of the Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT) Safety Performance Measures (PM1) and a discussion on the Longview MPO boundary changes. The public is invited to attend and will be given an opportunity to provide comments at the meeting. The meeting will be live streamed on Facebook Live, on CityView Municipal TV at LongviewTexas.gov/CityView and on Longview Cable TV, Channel 10.1 or 215. After the meeting, citizens may view the recorded meeting online in the CityView Video Library. Comments and questions may be sent to the Longview MPO, P.O. Box 1952, Longview, TX 75606 or emailed to MPO@LongviewTexas.gov. Persons with disabilities who may need auxiliary aid or services at the meeting and persons needing a translator or interpreter are asked to contact the Longview MPO at 903-237-1062. Para información en español, por favor comuníquese con Marisela Henson en 903-237-1300. #FGR6510001-651-Pub Notice

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of Shirley D. Mackey, Deceased, were issued on January 10, 2024, in Cause No. 2023-0394-E, pending in the County Court in and for Gregg County, Texas, to: Kimberly Lindsay Lumpkin, Independent Executor.

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

c/o: Courtney Anne Harris  
Attorney at Law  
P.O. Box 4373  
Longview, TX 75606

DATED the 8th day of February 2024.

/s/ Courtney Anne Harris  
Courtney Anne Harris  
Attorney for Kimberly Lindsay Lumpkin  
Independent Executor  
State Bar No.: 24060434  
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Longview, TX 75606

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**Pictures: DivideAndConquerOfEastTexas.com**

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Members of Gladewater's Beautification Advisory Board (back row, from left) Farrell Alexander, Judy Von Houten and Todd Clifton present Nicole and Brian Seymour and staffers with Business of the Quarter Feb. 9, grateful for the team's efforts to keep Seymour's Quick Stop looking nice, especially the public flower beds at the corner of Hwy. 80 and the loop.

## McKnight indicted on Nov. 4 death of two sisters

Continued from Page 1

City, possession of controlled substance (methamphetamine) last Oct. 20. Although she posted \$5,000 bond, she was re-arrested and remained in county jail on a "release of surety" (meaning that whoever posted her bond went off it.)

Joel Glenn Hervey, 67, of Bogata, driving while intoxicated--subsequent offense--repeat offender on March 2, 2022. He was freed on \$10,000 bond.

Debra Lynn John, 56, of Gilmer, possession of controlled substance (methamphetamine) on March 22, 2022. She was released on \$20,000 bond.

Kellene Sue Harris, 65, of Gilmer, possession of controlled substance (methamphetamine) on Aug. 25, 2022. She was freed on \$25,000 bond.

Bruce Wayne Clark, 58, of Winona, was charged in separate indictments with possession of controlled substance (methamphetamine) on April 6, 2022 and June 25, 2022.

He was freed on \$5,000 bond on the older

charge, \$10,000 bond on the later one.

Brandon Lee Wilson, 44, of Gilmer, possession of controlled substance (methamphetamine) last Nov. 19. He remained in county jail under \$35,000 bond.

Letraveon Kieran Arness Buchanan, 26, of Arlington, assault/family violence--occlusion last Dec. 9. He remained in county jail under \$10,000 bond.

Jose Pablo Moreno, 48, of Gilmer, aggravated assault with deadly weapon on Jan. 1. He remained in county jail under \$35,000 bond.

The sealed indictments, other than the one already mentioned, included one charging the defendant with both aggravated sexual assault of a child and indecency with a child.

The other sealed indictments included two for possession of controlled substance, and one each for delivery of controlled substance, and possession of controlled substance with intent to deliver. All involved methamphetamine.

## City council says no more Tik Tok

The City of Gladewater's poised to join a growing number of public (and private) entities restricting employee use of the TikTok app on issued devices.

The related ordinance on the Gladewater City Council's Feb. 12 agenda will, if approved this week, bring the municipality into step with Senate Bill 1893, signed into law by Texas Gov. Greg Abbott in June 2023 to codify his previous ban of the app on government-issued devices.

Meanwhile, there's a looming increase for the solid waste rates in the City of Gladewater (and other communities).

The new social media restriction is the first action item on Thursday evening's agenda after the meeting opens with regular comments from Mayor Scott Owens, recurring project updates from interim City Manager Charlie Smith, Citizens Comments and night's Consent Agenda.

The Texas Legislature acted on the TikTok issue last year and S.B. 1893 went into effect Sept. 1. Following standard language, the city's policy prohibits the

installation or use of TikTok (and other restricted applications) on any device owned or leased by the city. Any related apps already-installed must be removed, and municipal employees will be prohibited from using the platform for city-related business.

There are notable exceptions, according to the draft ordinance: "TikTok may be installed and used to the extent necessary for providing law enforcement or developing or implementing information security measures, and used in compliance with documented measures to mitigate risks to the security of governmental entity information."

Allied Waste's rate increase is on the night's consent agenda (items typically voted on with little or no public discussion) – council members will consider approval of a update to the waste contractor's Schedule of Rates.

Set to begin in April, a handful of fees will increase by just 2.7 percent and some by as much as 10 percent, but the bulk of costs will go up a little more than 5 percent.

Two other key consent agenda items Feb. 12 include consideration of a Financial Advisory Services Agreement between the City of Gladewater and Specialized Public Finance Inc. as well as an ordinance ordering a Charter Amendment Election for the community for May 4 – revisions have been in discussion by an appointed board for months but no draft has yet been presented.

In another action item Thursday, council members will consider revisions to local cemetery regulations. Besides a few custodial changes to the wording of the rules, a key addition will (if approved) add a 40 percent convenience fee of the sales price of current lots for a second burial (cremation) in a single lot.

The city's elected officials are set to close the meeting with an executive (private) discussion of "personnel matters regarding the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal" before reconvening into open session to take public action, if necessary, related to that closed door dialogue.

## GEDCO offering Emergency Relief Grant

It took some wrangling with the wording before Gladewater Economic Development Corporation's directors were ready to sign off on a new, one-off Emergency Relief Grant last week.

Ultimately, the group opted for an initial, limited assist for businesses directly-impacted by a recent multi-day road closure on Hwy. 271. They'll revisit the idea later as a long-term program.

According to GEDCO Executive Director Michelle Palmer, "The grant was written with the idea it wouldn't be just for these businesses, but, should something like this happen in the future, we have a plan for them."

GEDCO's board had a larger audience than usual for their Feb. 7 meeting including representatives from two of the three businesses impacted by the recent closure of 271 between the loop and Gay Avenue in the midst of major water main repairs.

The business owners weren't yet able to officially apply for relief, Palmer said, since no grant program was yet in place. Similar programs are regulated by Texas Local Government Code.

GEDCO's goal is to provide some form of assistance "in the form of working capital to local small business enterprises suffering from financial impacts caused by circumstances out of their control that prevent customers from getting to their places of business. Examples of these circumstances are primarily (but not limited to) severe weather, extended power outages and road construction or blockades."

From the initial idea, to be eligible to participate an applicant must be a Texas-registered small business (30 or fewer employees) that is located in the city limits of Gladewater and in full compliance with all applicable local development and building codes. It must also be

a business in which the majority of services or product contributes to City of Gladewater sales tax collections.

After providing a short update on the waterline work that caused the closure, interim Gladewater City Manager Charlie Smith offered notes on the developing grant program.

"Some of these things like this, I'm afraid you're going to open a can of worms. Depending on what the circumstances are," he said, such programs can become complicated quickly with limited funding available and a variety of reasons applicants may seek assistance. "I know you're going to evaluate those on any individual basis."

"I'm not for or against any individual business. I want them to succeed here in town. I just think you're going to have to be very careful how you handle these applications."

Several GEDCO board members expressed reservations as well, including Gladewater Mirror Publisher and board Vice President Jim Bardwell.

"I see this as an odd situation. I don't think we're going to have this very often. We're not going to have a leak like this every time," he said. "I think our job is to help people whenever we can. I think we have to be careful whenever another situation may occur."

There were similar programs locally (and across the state and nation) during the COVID-19 pandemic, EDC consultant Amanda Nobles added.

The board's final action Feb. 7 was to unanimously approve an emergency relief grant availability of up to \$3,000 for the select businesses impacted by the 271 closure.

"It's timely," board member Mark Carpenter said. "The people who need it are here."

"And I don't want to put them off," Bardwell agreed.



Mandie Shurley of Marketing With Mandie offers insights to local small business owners about ways to enhance their business through different promotional channels. Shurley and Brandy Flanagan of the SBDC of Northern Texas shared GEDCO's spotlight Feb. 2 during a breakfast workshop focused on equipping local entrepreneurs with more resources to help their businesses thrive.

## Hands-on workshop spotlights new resources for small business owners

PRESS RELEASE

A first time visit to Gladewater Economic Development Corporation was time well-spent for small business owner Clayton Lenoir earlier this month – the longtime auto repair technician realized he's barely seen the tip of the iceberg when it comes to resources for area entrepreneurs.

"I actually learned there's a lot of help out there for a small business, a lot more than what I knew was out there," the Lay Low Automotive owner/operator said. "I was really surprised there were all these different programs out there to help."

Lenoir was in the audience Feb. 2 for an early "Mitigating Unforeseen Circumstances" workshop featuring Brandy Flanagan of the Small Business Development Center of Northern Texas alongside Mandie Shurley of Marketing with Mandie. Coming from different directions of small business assistance, the pair offered their expertise in business strategy and marketing, respectively, to better equip their small business owner audience with practical resources

to thrive.

The workshop was another developing venture for GEDCO, a simple, practical outreach to the business owners who are the bedrock of this local economy.

"Thank you for sponsoring this," attendee Margaret Larkins said later. "Great information for business owners and well presented."

Lenoir launched his full-service mechanic shop at 801 N. Main St. in Gladewater in April 2023. He had years of automotive experience under his belt, but it was his first attempt going solo in the business world.

"I got tired of making everybody else money," Lenoir recalled, opting instead to hang his own shingle. Looking back, he recalls moving forward without getting some fundamental elements in-hand. That's in the past, however: "I didn't know anything about any of that until that breakfast event the other day. I'm fixing to take advantage of all of it."

"I want my business to grow and succeed. To know there's stuff out there that can help, I'm going to learn as much as I can and

follow-through on what I can follow-through on."

For example, February's workshop offered insights on local assistance like GEDCO's Grow Gladewater Grant Program.

"I've been looking into doing a facelift on my building because it blends in with the car wash that was built 20 years ago. The car wash is kind of an eyesore, so I wanted to repaint my building and do some advertising and different things," Lenoir explained. The Grow Gladewater may be able to defray some qualifying expenses.

He's keen to participate in similar events with GEDCO in the future, ready even to take a broader role to help other business owners be successful.

Perhaps, Lenoir suggested, take a page from a great event like Gusher Days: "Maybe do something like that's solely for small businesses, a one-day deal that small businesses can advertise what they do and bring the community out," he said, "Maybe to get some more of the small businesses together to see if there's a way we can help the community more."

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