

Nick Foster not seeking third term on council

By Jim Bardwell
Four Gladewater council seats will be up for grabs in the upcoming May election. And so far one incumbent has decided two terms is enough.

Place 4 councilman Nick Foster announced Monday he will not seek a third term. He said he felt he had been able to accomplish a lot of good things for the city in his four years and after discussing it which his wife, decided to not seek re-election. Foster said he thought the city was on the right track and he felt honored to have had the privilege to serve the citizens for two terms.

Other councilmembers whose terms are expiring include Place 5 councilman Elijah "Sonny" Anderson, who also serves as mayor pro-tem; Place 6 councilman Rocky Hawkins, who was appointed to the council after former councilwoman Karla Byrd resigned in July of 2020; and Place 7 councilman Kevin Clark.

The requirements/qualifications to serve on the Gladewater City Council are: No person shall be eligible as a candidate for the Council unless he or she shall be eighteen (18) years of age or older on commencement of the term to be elected, a qualified voter, a citizen of the United States and a resident citizen of this State for a period of twelve (12) months prior to the date of the election.

The candidate for Mayor and Council must be a resident of the City, must have resided in the City for a period of six (6) months prior to the date of election, and must continuously reside within the City during his or her term of office.

The first day to file for the city council is Jan. 13 and the last day to file is Feb. 12, by 5 p.m.

Anyone wishing to file or needing more information should contact Gladewater City Clerk Judy Van Houten at 903-845-2196 ext. 4.

Also on the May ballot will be a request to reallocate some of the sales tax revenue collected by the Gladewater Economic Development Corporation (GEDCO) to "quality of life" projects.

This is not a vote for new taxes - just voters' authorization to use the existing tax money already being collected for a broader range of projects.

Currently GEDCO operates under "Type A" rules. Type A sales tax funding is primarily intended for manufacturing and industrial development. EDCs may use Type A revenue to fund land, buildings, equipment, facilities expenditures, targeted infrastructure and improvements for projects.

The Type B sales tax may be used for any project eligible under Type A rules and several other project types, including quality of life improvements such as professional and amateur sports and athletic facilities, tourism and entertainment facilities, convention facilities and public parks; related store, restaurant, concession, parking and transportation facilities; related street, water and sewer facilities; and affordable housing.

Type B EDCs can also promote and develop new and expanded business enterprises that create or retain primary jobs and may fund public safety facilities; recycling facilities; streets, roads, drainage and related improvements;

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A vintage fire truck carries retired GFD Fire Chief Wayne A. "Snuffy" Smith's coffin to his final resting place. Photo by Jim Bardwell

Chief Smith given a farewell salute

Funeral services for retired Gladewater Fire Chief Wayne A. "Snuffy" Smith, 65, of Gladewater were held at 2 p.m. at the New Beginnings Baptist Church in Spring Hill on Monday, Jan. 4, 2021, with Bro. Ricky Wallace officiating. Interment followed at Rock Springs Cemetery in Gladewater.

Chief Smith passed away Wednesday, December 30, 2020, in Gladewater at his home.

Firefighters and law enforcement officers from throughout East Texas paid their final respects Monday.

A procession of more than 40 emergency vehicles, lights flashing followed Smith's flag-draped casket which was placed atop a vintage Kilgore fire truck.

Once at Gladewater Cemetery, Smith was given a traditional fireman's "Last Call" as a fire bell was rung three sets of three, recalling a time when the fire bell rang to call firefighters to an alarm and then, again, to signal that the alarm had ended. Gladewater dispatcher then signed Smith out of service for a final time, acknowledging he had completed his task.



Chief Smith was born January 16, 1955 in Gilmer to the late Herbert Wayne Smith and Alice Marie (Jones) Smith. He married Cathy Lynn Hancock on September 1, 1978 and they spent 42 years together. He was a dedicated servant to the people of Gladewater and served as the Fire Chief for more than 27 years. He was named Gladewater Chamber of Commerce's "Man of the Year" in 2010. He also was a member of the Lions Club, where he served as president in 2012. Chief Smith was a friend to all and always ready to lend a helping hand.

Chief Smith was a Master Firefighter and also an instructor for the Texas A&M Fire School as well as an instructor at the Texas Municipal Fire School. He also served as President of the Kilgore College Fire Academy Board, Vice President LEPC, and was the Safety Officer at the Texas Eastman Fire School. He graduated from Gladewater High School in 1973 and studied at Kilgore College earning an Associate Degree of Applied Science.

He is survived by his loving wife Cathy Lynn Smith; two sons Randy Smith and wife Chantel; their children Audrey and Christina, Brian Smith; his children Kyle and Chance; two sisters Brenda House and husband Randy, Beverly Tryon and husband Darrell;

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Mytrez Deunte Woolen was charged in Pastor Mark McWilliams' death.

Man arrested for pastor's shooting at Starrville church

Pastor Mark Allen McWilliams was shot and killed and two others were injured in a shooting at a Starrville Church.

Law enforcement were able to capture and arrest 21-year-old Mytrez Deunte Woolen of Marshall, in connection with the 62-year-old pastor's death. Woolen was charged with Aggravated Assault Use or Exhibit a Deadly Weapon, a 2nd degree felony - Bond: \$750,000, Aggravated Assault Causes Serious Bodily Injury, a 2nd degree felony - Bond \$750,000, and Capital Murder, a 1st degree felony - Bond \$2,000,000.

The investigation revealed that this all began on Saturday, Jan. 2, officers with the Lindale Police Department responded to several calls for service regarding a driver of a dark-colored Volkswagen Jetta near the intersection FM 849 and I-20 displaying a firearm out of the sunroof of the vehicle.

Lindale Police Officers never observed the vehicle but were responding to the area when minutes later, around 7:30 pm, a Smith County Sheriff's Deputy observed the suspect vehicle in the parking lot of the Chevron Convenience store at 303 S. Main Street in Lindale.

At this time, the Smith County Deputy attempted to stop the suspect, but he fled at a high rate of speed and a pursuit was initiated. The suspect fled west on South St. and eventually east on FM 16. He then traveled south on FM 849 before entering I-20 traveling east. The pursuit proceeded east on IH-20 with Troopers from the Texas Department of Public Safety assisting Deputies. The suspect exited I-20 at Hwy 271 and proceeded north on Hwy 271 before turning left onto FM 757. At the intersection of FM 757 and FM 16, the suspect vehicle ran off the road where it came to a stop on the property of the Starrville Methodist Church.

The suspect immediately exited his vehicle and ran into a densely wooded area. Speeds in the pursuit reached 100 mph.

A perimeter was quickly established as additional law enforcement responded to assist. The Sheriff's Office utilized K-9 Deputies as well as a drone in an attempt to locate the suspect. After several hours, the search area was expanded as it was felt that the suspect had escaped the perimeter. Evidence was located within the suspect vehicle leading law enforcement to a possible identity of the suspect. A shotgun was located within the fleeing vehicle which is believed to be the firearm that was brandished during the pursuit.

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New Gregg County Pct. 3 Commissioner Floyd Wingo was sworn into office and was joined by wife Karon at the ceremony. Wingo takes over for Gary Boyd.



New Upshur County Pct. 1 Constable Tim Barnett was sworn into office Jan. 1 and had his father John participate in the ceremony by holding the bible.

OPINION/EDITORIAL

...new year, old rules

Here we are in a brand spanking new year full of possibilities. First we have some mountains to climb. We are not done with fighting this insidious COVID virus. We are fatigued, we are weary of masks and raw hands, but we can't stop yet. We have several more months where we have to work together to keep each other safe.

I have been quarantining at home with the goal of going to visit my 93-year old Mom. I haven't seen her in over a year. She had gone for a six month visit to my brother's in Lubbock and it was past time for her to come 'home' to our house when COVID hit. She is in a much safer environment there since my brother and sister-in-heart both work in research and relatively protected work climates. And my hubby and I work with the public at large.

I am obviously no spring chicken, but I miss my Mom. A lot. And I am doing everything my doctor says I have to do to make sure I don't carry something awful with me when I eventually go to visit her. Hopefully soon.

Many of us have taken the dangers of the virus lightly. Many of us have been reckless and careless. And, frankly, it is hard not to be. I don't want to wear a suffocating mask. I want to visit with friends. I want to go to Dillard's big sale and shop to my heart's content. I want to cruise the aisles of Tuesday Morning and touch all the merchandise.

Suzanne Bardwell



I want to go to Sam's and sample the food items. I want to go out with friends. None of that is going to happen anytime soon. The problem is, we are spoiled. We are used to living our lives with abandon and doing what we want, when we want, how we want.

So, let's make a resolution to try and keep each other, and our parents and grandparents healthy until we lick this disease. With the vaccines rolling out we are headed toward the finish line by next summer we hope. And while we are at it, can we resolve to do what our mommas taught us? Treat other people with respect and kindness. You know that good old Golden Rule business.

And don't forget what you have learned in this odd but dangerous war we are in, social distance, wash your hands, wear your masks and use hand sanitizer. When this is over we will hug, shake hands, have parties, festivals, rodeos and concerts. I can't wait...but I will, because I want all of you, and my Mom, there with me.

Josh Bardwell



Godspeed good and faithful servant

A competent firefighter or emergency responder doesn't just materialize out of the ether ready to serve during times of crisis. The formula to create a decent one requires a person that has the following: good moral fiber, strong work ethic, integrity, sense of duty, respect for their profession, and is a continual student of the fire & rescue arts. A person that has these characteristics has the hallmark traits to become a successful emergency responder that the public can trust to put their faith and lives into. Out of the countless thousands in the emergency response profession, few become legendary mentors who positively impact the profession as a whole.

Retired Gladewater Fire Chief Wayne "Snuffy" Smith was and will continue to be one of these rare legends that the fire gods blessed to carry the brightest torches showing the path for young firefighters to follow towards success.

As many know, Snuffy served the citizens of Gladewater as a firefighter and Fire Chief for decades. He maintained to keep a fulltime fire department with professional firefighters in service to the citizens of Gladewater and the surrounding area, oftentimes with a limited budget granted by the city's governing body. When the city wasn't able or willing to fund the needs of the fire department, he did his best to find a way to make things work so the public was served. He maintained a volunteer component to support the limited career firefighters, sought state and federal grants, held training to enhance skills, and maintained strong relationships with neighboring fire departments and cooperators.

What many folks not in the fire profession may not know is that Snuffy was an accomplished instructor at local, regional and national fire academies. Every year, he would lend his knowledge, time, and patience to ensure firefighters from all walks of life and experience level became better, safer, and more efficient emergency responders. Thousands of firefighters across the country have learned something from his mentorship, thus passing it along to their firefighters. He had a servant's heart.

I have been fortunate to know Snuffy as mentor, instructor and friend for many years. As a young lad almost 20 years ago who was a volunteer firefighter across the county line and working for the Gladewater Mirror as journalist and in the print shop part-time when not in school, I would oftentimes respond to emergencies to capture the story and photos for the paper. I had a bad habit of forgetting I was a journalist and would find myself helping pull hose, direct traffic, or whatever the short-staffed Gladewater firefighters needed me to do. Snuffy, a friend of the family, having taught me as a fire student, and knowing I was a volunteer firefighter, told me that I better start showing up with my fire gear if I wanted to get the good photos. I soon found myself signed up as a volunteer member of the Gladewater Fire Department with a pager, unlimited access to any and all emergencies in the city, and a newfound respect for Snuffy and his firefighters. Up until recently, Snuffy and his firefighters would perform skilled and dangerous responses with 2-3 firefighters, which many other cities do with a dozen. My time watching, learning, and applying the knowledge and skills of those guys has had a lasting impression on me now that I've been in the fire service over 20 years. Even though my career veered away from structural firefighting to wildland firefighting and aviation, I know the value of what a small group of dedicated professionals can accomplish when time and lives are on the line.

Snuffy accomplished so much because he loved the fire service. He loved the profession, sense of duty, and he loved the people he served. To me, he represents some of the best of the fire service and of Gladewater. Although I will sorely miss the chats we had about firefighting, the weather, chili judging, and what [insert almost any firefighter's name here] is up to these days, I am comforted to know that his memory will continue on through the thousands of firefighters' lives he's touched.

Godspeed good and faithful servant.

Josh Bardwell is the Texas A&M Forest Service Regional Fire Coordinator stationed in Longview

Man arrested for pastor's shooting at Starrville church

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Law enforcement personnel remained in the area for several hours in an attempt to locate the suspect. Additionally, the shotgun that had been displayed by the suspect was recovered at the scene of the crash during the pursuit.

Then on Sunday, Jan 3, at 9:21 a.m., Smith County Sheriff's Office 911 Communications Center received a call of a shooting at the Starrville Methodist Church. Smith County Deputies responded to the call and upon arrival located a deceased individual inside the church who had suffered gunshot wounds. They also located a separate gunshot victim outside the building who was conscious and had sustained non life-threatening injuries. A third victim sustained non-life threatening injuries as a result of the incident.

Smith County Investigators and the Crime Scene Unit responded to the location and began their investigation of this incident. The Sheriff's Office is also receiving the assistance of the Texas Rangers and the Texas Department of Public Safety Highway Patrol as well as Winona Volunteer Fire Department who helped tremendously with traffic control.

The suspect took one of the victim's vehicle, a 2018 GMC truck, subsequent to the shooting. Smith County Sheriff's Office dispatchers were successful in contacting OnStar who were instrumental in providing us the information as to the whereabouts of the suspect and vehicle. The dispatchers also were able to notify law enforcement personnel in Gregg and Harrison Counties regarding the direction of travel. Once DPS units got behind the vehicle, OnStar was notified to disable the vehicle. This occurred shortly after a brief pursuit.

Arrest warrant affidavits were presented to 241st State District Court Judge Jack Skeen. Judge Skeen issued warrants charging 21 year old Mytrez Deunte Woolen of Marshall, Texas as follows:

Aggravated Assault Use or Exhibit a Deadly Weapon, a 2nd degree felony – Bond: \$750,000

Aggravated Assault Causes Serious Bodily Injury, a 2nd degree felony – Bond \$750,000

Capital Murder, a 1st degree felony – Bond \$2,000,000

Smith County Precinct 2 Justice of the Peace Andy Dunklin arrived on scene and upon holding an inquest, Judge Dunklin ordered an autopsy on the 62-year-old Pastor Mark Allen McWilliams and his body was transported to a local pathologist for an autopsy.

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New year can't yet shake focus from COVID-19

It's a new year, but the news out of the capital continues to focus on COVID-19.

Gov. Greg Abbott tweeted last week that "a significant portion of vaccines distributed across Texas might be sitting on hospital shelves as opposed to being given to vulnerable Texans. The state urges vaccine providers to quickly provide all shots. We get plenty more each week."

Many health providers and county health department officials responded that they were working as quickly as they could to give shots to front-line health care workers and lacked the doses necessary to move to what Texas calls phase 1B recipients. According to the Texas Department of State Health Services, phase 1B recipients include those 65 and older and those 16 and older with medical conditions that would put them at greater risk from COVID-19.

Various state news outlets reported Texans in phase 1B could not find any vaccine available to them yet. The state health department encouraged the public to check its website weekly for updates on vaccine availability.

In the meantime, people should continue wearing a face mask when in public and follow all social distancing guidelines, health officials said.

AG blocks Austin

The city of Austin and Travis County tried to impose New Year's weekend restrictions on restaurants, but Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton and Gov. Abbott won the final round of a legal battle.

The local officials' order limited restaurants to drive-thru, curbside pickup, takeout and delivery services between 10:30 p.m. and 6 a.m. from Dec. 31 to Jan. 3. Austin Mayor Steve Adler and Travis County Judge Andy Brown imposed the three-day restriction to limit social gatherings over the holiday weekend after the state reported a record number of hospitalizations and new cases.

Nick Foster not seeking third term on council

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demolition of existing structures; general municipally owned improvements; and maintenance and operating costs associated with projects.

The ballot will ask voters to choose Yes or No on the following five propositions.

(A) "The use of a portion of the one-half (1/2) cent sales and use tax for land, buildings, equipment, facilities, and improvements found by the board of directors to be required or suitable for use for professional and amateur sports, including children's sports, athletic, entertainment, tourist, convention, and public park purposes and events, authorized by Section 505.152 of the Texas Local Government Code, as amended."

- For
- Against

(B) "The use of a portion of the one-half (1/2) cent sales and use tax for land, buildings, equipment, facilities, and improvements found by the board of directors to be required or suitable for the development or expansion of airport or railport facilities, including hangars, maintenance and repair facilities, cargo facilities, and related infrastructure located on or adjacent to an airport or railport facility, authorized by Section 505.1561 of the Texas Local Government Code, as amended."

- For
- Against

(C) "The use of a portion of the one-half (1/2) cent sales and use tax for land, buildings, equipment, facilities, expenditures, targeted infrastructure, and improvements found by the corporation's board of directors to promote new or expanded business development, authorized by Section 505.158 of the Texas Local Government Code, as amended."

- For
- Against

(D) "The use of sales and use tax proceeds for infrastructure relating to water supply facilities."

- For
- Against

(E) "The use of sales and use tax proceeds for infrastructure relating to water conservation programs."

- For
- Against

GEDCO was formed in 1995 and is funded by a 1/2 cent sales tax which brings in about \$350,000 per year.

Chris Cobler

Capital Highlights

"Mayor Adler and Judge Brown do not have the authority to flout Gov. Abbott's executive orders by shutting down businesses in Travis County and our state's capital city," Attorney General Paxton said in a statement.

District Judge Amy Clark Meachum denied Paxton's motion, saying the state had not shown "imminent and irreparable harm." The AG immediately asked the 3rd Court of Appeals to block the order, but that court rejected his appeal. Paxton then went to the Texas Supreme Court for an emergency stay of the order. The high court granted the injunction late Jan. 1 without comment.

Food benefits increased

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission will provide \$204 million in emergency SNAP food benefits during January as the state continues its response to the pandemic.

Recipients of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program also will see an additional 15 percent in their total benefits in January because of recently passed federal legislation.

"As we continue through the new year, these benefits offer nutritious food to those who need it most, especially in these trying times" Wayne Salter, of HHS, said in a statement.

The state received federal approval from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to extend the maximum allowable amount of SNAP benefits to recipients based on family size. The emergency January allotments are in addition to the almost \$2 billion in benefits previously provided to Texans between April and December.

Beginning in January, recipients will receive a 15 percent increase in their total benefits, which will continue monthly until June 2021. The additional 15 percent increase and the emergency allotment amount should appear in recipients' accounts by Jan. 23. Administered by the

state agency, SNAP is a federal program that provides food assistance to 1.7 million eligible low-income families and individuals in Texas.

Texans in need may apply for benefits, including SNAP and Medicaid, at YourTexasBenefits.com.

'I know Chuck'

The new year brought another California company's headquarters to Texas.

Financial services firm Charles Schwab recently announced a \$26 billion merger with TD Ameritrade. As part of the merger, the combined company's headquarters officially moved Jan. 1 from San Francisco to Schwab's \$100 million campus in Denton County.

In a press release, Schwab said the Westlake location and facility in Denton were chosen and designed as a more centrally located hub for Schwab's nationwide operations. Before the merger, Schwab had more than 2,500 employees at its Westlake campus, and about 2,000 employees worked at TD Ameritrade's location in Southlake.

Gov. Abbott welcomed Charles Schwab in a tweet last week and reassured Texans that the influx of California companies wouldn't change the Lone Star state.

"I've talked to Chuck, I know Chuck," Abbott tweeted. "He wants to keep Texas, Texas."

Chris Cobler is a board member and past president of the Freedom of Information Foundation of Texas. He welcomes email at ccobler@texaspress.com.



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THE ECONOMIST

By Dr. M. Ray Perryman

2020: A Retrospective

Without question, 2020 will be remembered as the year of the coronavirus. The public health crisis and resultant economic calamity have had wide ranging implications throughout the whole of society. The encouraging trajectory of the US



economy as the year dawned was abruptly reversed, and a solid and lengthy expansion was halted as huge swaths of the business complex were severely curtailed or shuttered. Perhaps the most striking feature of the nosedive was its unevenness.

The pandemic has impacted individuals and families in vastly different ways. Some have faced unemployment or reduced hours.

Others in health care and essential jobs have both labored more than usual and faced increased risk. Many have transitioned to working and schooling from home.

Some industries are struggling to survive, while others are experiencing steady or even soaring demand. Airlines, hotels, and other travel businesses, restaurants and bars, and many types of firms have been devastated, while some have seen explosive growth (such as online retailers and delivery services). Energy was jolted, with oil prices plunging due to collapsing demand paired with a surplus of oil (which has been particularly challenging for the Texas economy). Small businesses struggled, while the tech giants propelled the stock market to new heights.

States have had vastly varying reactions and approaches to

dealing with the pandemic, for better or worse. Disparities between rural areas with limited health resources and major urban centers have contributed to a wide range of experiences during this tumultuous season.

No one has gone untouched by the pandemic, but COVID-19 has disproportionately impacted low income and racial and ethnic minority communities. From limited resources and inadequate access to health care and broadband to a greater likelihood of working in higher-exposure essential jobs or those lost during shutdowns, these segments have been hit especially hard.

Other 2020 events with potential long-term economic effects include the presidential election and its accompanying sharp polarization, which was particularly problematic during a time when the nation needed to

come together. On a brighter note, the new United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement went into effect in July and will enhance activity across North America with improvements to digital and agricultural trade regulations, intellectual property protection, and labor and environmental standards. In more normal times, that might well have been the biggest economic story of the year.

This year has been unprecedented, and its legacy will be scrutinized for decades to come. One thing that is already apparent, however, is that the pandemic's effects have been particularly burdensome for some regions, population groups, and industries. It will take concerted and ongoing efforts to deal with the continuing fallout, but I have every expectation that we will emerge stronger and more resilient. Stay safe!

2021

NEW YEAR'S GREETINGS!

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Happy 2021

New Year!

JAY DEAN

State Representative
 House District 7

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My resolution:

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THOUGHTS ABOUT 2021

With another year behind us, someone aptly wrote: "The New Year lies before you like a spotless tract of snow. Be careful how you tread upon it, for every mark will show." We don't know what lies ahead for us, in the upcoming months, insofar as this world is concerned. As 2021 is entered no one knows what will have happened when the end of this year is reached—decisions, new responsibilities, and disappointments perhaps.

Much can occur in a year's time, and that in itself, should have a sobering effect upon all of us, and cause us to kneel in prayer to God, asking that we might have a happy and contented year ahead. Not by shielding us from all sorrow and pain, but by strengthening us to bear it if it comes. Not by making our path easy, but by making us sturdy enough to tread any path. Not by taking hardships from us, but by taking all cowardice and fears from our hearts when in the midst of hardships. Not by granting us unbroken sunshine, but by keeping our face bright even in the storm clouds and shadows. Not by making our life always pleasant, but by showing us where we are needed the most, and by making us zealous to be there, and to help. Not by keeping us from battle, but making us more than conquerors through Christ!

As this New Year begins, we need to be reminded that we are one year closer to the day of our death, or to the day the Lord returns. That day, when we all will stand before Him in judgment (2 Cor. 5: 10). That day, when He will either say: Come you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt. 25: 34), or "Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25: 41).

Since we are one year closer to that day, when our final destiny will be forever determined, don't you think we ought to give serious thought about our soul? Think on these things.

Dennis Abernathy-White Oak Church of Christ
 P. O. Box 454-White Oak, TX 75693-903-845-6139-preachab@suddenlink.net

Chief Smith given a farewell salute



A fire bell rang three times to signal the Chief Smith had completed his task.

Continued from Page 1
 three brothers Jerry Smith, John Smith and wife Lynn and Roger Smith and wife Joanne; numerous nieces, nephews and other loving family and friends.
 Gladewater Mayor J.D. Shipp said Smith was "very much loved by the community and will always be given the legacy of his work. Chief Smith was a wonderful man."
 "There is not a Fire Department in East Texas that hasn't been touched by chief Smith," Shipp added. "He mentored countless firefighters in the region and was an instructor at the Texas A&M Fire School. Therefore, his tenure within the fire service has had an impact statewide."



Photos by Jim Bardwell



Chief Smith's wife Cathy was presented the American flag by current GFD Chief Cory Crowell.



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Morning Service 11 a.m.	
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Turning challenges into triumphs

Happy 2021 BEAR NATION! My hope is that you and your family had a great Christmas break and you are ready for a great second semester. 2020 brought unforeseen challenges to our world, nation, state and community. The Gladewater Independent School District was able to turn many of those challenges into triumphs because, as an educational community, GISD is truly focused on Achieving Excellence Together!

When we went home for spring break in March, no one knew that we would not return to end the 2019-2020 school year. No one knew the eventual impact that COVID-19 would have on our lives. However, in response to the situation, our district quickly set up and implemented a virtual learning plan for all students. Our teachers and administrators worked together with students and parents to continuously improve this plan making it a viable and effective learning option. During that time, we were able to provide meals for both our students and children and community. Continuity of learning and availability of meals for students were two factors that, I believe, helped make the early days of the pandemic bearable.

Because the last quarter of their senior year was essentially cancelled, GHS' Class of 2020 did not experience many of the traditional elements of senior year. In an effort to compensate for that and truly celebrate the class, we partnered with the city to display individual graduate banners downtown and to have a graduation parade through the city. Though those events did not replace prom, spring sports and other senior celebrations, it gave our seniors memories that only they now have. Those events, combined with the limited attendance in-person ceremony, gave the Class of 2020 a proper send off.

During the summer, the District Leadership Team worked to create a return to school plan for the 2020-2021 school year that would, as much as possible, ensure the safety of both our students and employees. Using the guidance for national, state, and local authorities, practices and protocols were defined, advertised and implemented. Our return was, and continues to be, successful because the members of Bear Nation have adhered to the practices and protocols that were put in place.

Though in a pandemic, GISD experienced many positives during the fall semester. The focus on teaching and learning has continued and



Sedric Clark
Gladewater ISD
Superintendent

students have grown academically! We enjoyed a great varsity football season. Our band, FFA and other programs continue to win awards. GISD students continue to represent our district well in all programs! Additionally, the 2014 construction bonds were refinanced to a rate that will save the district and its stakeholders over \$200,000.00 per year.

This semester, our charge for excellence continues. We will continue to comply with national, state, and local guidance as it relates to the pandemic. We will continue to offer our students quality learning, co-curricular, and extra-curricular experiences in safe environments. We vow to continue to provide high quality programs to our stakeholders.

I want to extend my personal thanks to all GISD employees who have worked so hard to ensure both the safety and the education of our students. There is no way that we would have made it through the first semester successfully without you!

I also want to thank our parents and community as a whole for their understanding and support.

Upshur's sub-tax office opens, then closes again

Upshur County's Gladewater tax office opened Monday, January 4, as planned, but closed again due to another potential Covid exposure, and will remain closed for the remainder of this week...possibly longer, according to Luana Howell, Upshur County Tax Assessor.

"We apologize for any inconvenience for the residents of the Gladewater area; however, due to Covid, there are circumstances beyond our control. Tax payments and vehicle registration renewals may be paid online, by mail, or via the drive-thru lanes or walk-in at the Gilmer office."

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OBITUARY



CHUCK DAUGHDRILL

Graveside services for Chuck Daughdrill, 65 of Gladewater, were held Tuesday, January 5, 2021 at Gladewater Memorial Park with Artis Burney officiating under the direction of Croley Funeral Home in Gladewater. Mr. Daughdrill was born January 20, 1955, in Winnsboro, Louisiana to Charles A. Daughdrill, Sr. and Claudine Calhoun Daughdrill and passed away on Friday, January 1, 2021.

Chuck was a retired tug boat Captain from Enron and owned Captain Charles Shooters Guns for 20 years. He was a gun smith and enjoyed buying, selling and trading guns. He was also an avid outdoorsman and enjoyed hunting and fishing, playing the guitar and writing Christian music.

He is survived by his daughter Heather Fultz and husband Joey of Marshall. Also, Stacie Cameron and husband Corey of Lindale, Kristy Temple of Bradley, Arkansas, Billy Temple of Bradley Arkansas. Grandchildren: Jessica Fultz, Ally Fultz, Jayden Fultz, Emily Fry, Lukas Wilkerson, Brittany, Dakota, McKenzie and numerous cousins.

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Kelly Moore
 Union Grove ISD
 Superintendent

Recreating and rethinking the process

Happy New Year from Union Grove ISD! Thank you to all of our staff members, students, and parents for their willingness to adjust and make the best out of each situation we encountered in 2020. We found ourselves recreating and rethinking the process of teaching and learning, feeding our students, and so many other school related events and activities. We overcame many challenges in 2020 and turned obstacles into opportunities for learning. The cafeteria staff carted food outdoors for drive through food service and staff members created safe celebrations for students during the school closure in the spring. We made it work then and when we opened our doors in August we were prepared. Through careful planning and preparation, Union Grove ISD has had a great start to the 2020-2021 school year.

Staff and students have remained focused on working hard and that has paid off. The girls cross country team and the band have both had historical accomplishments during 2020. The girls cross country made school history by earning the title of Regional Champions! They competed very well at the state meet and finished 9th in the state. For the 31st consecutive year, the band earned a division one rating at the University Interscholastic League marching contest. At the state marching contest, the band made school history with an impressive third place finish. We are proud of these accomplishments and look forward to more in the future.

Reflecting on 2020, I would like to express my gratitude to the school board, staff, families, and community members. The unity and the strength of our school community has carried us through trying times. We look forward to a successful 2021, and wish everyone a happy, healthy, and prosperous new year!

With Lion Pride
 Kelly Moore

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Union Grove Lion Cooper Vestal (11) shoots over a DeKalb defender.

Photo by Chris Jones

Lions fall to McLeod, 70-51

The Union Grove Lions fell in McLeod 70-51 a day after suffering their first loss of the season in the Lion's Den.

The Grove has struggled in away games thus far and the Longhorns made sure there wasn't a reversal in that trend. UG had however been on point at home before DeKalb swung a 25-5 2nd period.

Despite a second half rally, the Lions were unable to overcome the deficit and fell at home for the first time 53-63 to the Bears.

Union Grove will look to get back in the win column at home Tuesday the 5th when they host Overton in their first district game.

Bears slip, 60-53, to Rusk

Despite 19 points from Gladewater Bear Kollin Lewis and 18 from DJ Allen, the Bears came out of an extended break a little too sluggish.

Making up for lost playing time, Gladewater picked up a previously unscheduled game against the Rusk Eagles. Rusk was able to put in just enough to get a 60-53 win over the Bears.

Eli Kates put up 7 points while Tyrone Maddox had 5 and K'havia Reese made 4.

Gladewater hopes to have things back on track as they begin district play at home against Hughes Springs on Tuesday.

Lady Lions beat White Oak

The Union Grove Lady Lions bounced back after falling to Carthage with a 56-40 win over White Oak.

Carleigh Judd led Union Grove with 21 points followed by Macey Alston with 19. The teams went into the half with just a 3 point difference that favored UG. The Lady 'Necks were outpaced in the third with help from Makena Littlejohn who had 9 points in the game. The Lady Lions didn't let up and extended their lead in the fourth. Macey Roberts continues to establish herself under the net and picked up 5 points while the high energy Gracie Winn added 2.

Absent the team's leading scorer (Alston) The Grove suffered its first loss of the season to 4A Carthage. With Alston out, the Lady Bulldogs were able to focus on and hold Judd to 14 points.

The larger school was able to use the depth of their bench to keep fresh legs on the court to outlast the Lady Lions 28-37. Littlejohn remained consistent with 7 points as did Winn with 3. Roberts and Bailey Clowers had 2 apiece. The Lady Lions are now 15-1 (2-0)



Lion Aubrey Woodard (12) slices through the defense for a lay-up.

Photo by Chris Jones



Lady Lion Gracie Winn (5) goes down hard in a battle for the ball.

Photo by Chris Jones

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Sedric Clark
GISD Superintendent
and staff

New Upshur elected officials sworn

By Phillip Williams
Seven of 8 newly-elected or newly re-elected Upshur County officials were individually sworn into office by County Judge Todd Tefteller at the county courthouse in Gilmer on New Year's Day Friday afternoon.

They included, in the order they took the oath for 4-year terms, Sheriff Larry Webb, Tax Assessor-Collector Luana Howell, Precinct 4 Constable David Thompson, Precinct 1 Constable Tim Barnett, Precinct 3 Constable Ronnie Mitchell, Precinct 1 County Commissioner Gene Dolle and Precinct 3 County Commissioner Mike Ashley.

Precinct 2 Constable Jason Weeks, re-elected without opposition in 2020, did not

appear. No explanation was offered at the ceremony for his absence, and this newspaper attempted unsuccessfully to reach him for comment at his office Monday.

All the holdover and new officials are Republicans, as are all other Upshur County elected officials.

Tefteller also administered the oath to numerous sheriff's deputies.

After the public ceremony in the courthouse's third-floor county courtroom, East Texans for Liberty hosted an informal catered reception for the officials, their families and friends across the street at Uncle Joe's, a coffee shop.

Webb and Howell were re-

elected, Webb without opposition, to second 4-year terms. The five others sworn in Friday are newly-elected.

Howell escaped opposition in last March's Republican primary, but was the only GOP nominee to face a Democratic opponent in the November general election, Jurel White.

Two of the three new constables ousted incumbents last year (Barnett escaped opposition), while the two new commissioners replaced incumbents who did not seek re-election.

Thompson defeated Larry Sewell in Sewell's bid for re-election in last July's GOP runoff, while Mitchell regained his old job by defeating appointed incumbent Ryan Ludvigson.



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