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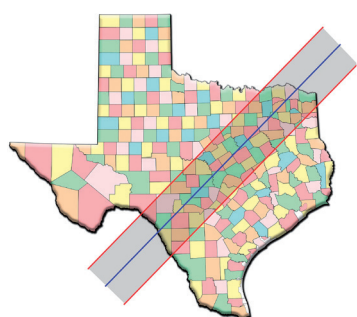


Thursday, March 14, 2024

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1 Section, 8 pages

50¢



TWO DOWN, ONE TO FLOW



It's Spring Cleanup Time

State parks day pass reservations for eclipse open

AUSTIN – State Park day pass reservations for April 8 will open 8 a.m. March 8 (CST).

Those hoping to view the total eclipse from a state park location can call the Texas State Parks Reservations Center at 512-389-8900 or go online for all parks except Enchanted Rock State Natural Area. Reservations for Enchanted Rock will need to be made March 11 by phone only.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) will take calls to the reservation line on a first-come, first-served basis, and the limited number of day passes are expected to go quickly. TPWD anticipates a high call volume on March 8 and March 11 and asks callers to exhibit patience as agents help answer calls in a timely manner.

To make the reservation process easier, members of the public should have their vehicle information ready, including license plate number, make, model and number of occupants broken down by adults and kids under 12 years of age. Reservations must be confirmed with a credit card, so callers and those reserving online will need to have that information available as well. Agents will be available to take reservations in Spanish.

Texas has 31 state parks within the path of totality, and a partial eclipse will be visible in other state parks. Parks in the line of totality are expected to reach capacity, and members of the public are asked not to visit unless they have a pre-purchased day pass or overnight reservation.

Meanwhile, hundreds of thousands of tourists are expected to flock to the Hill Country and other small towns in the prime viewing path of a rare solar eclipse on April 8. Some counties have already issued emergency declarations to help them prepare and respond to an expected strain on their infrastructure.

Bell and Kerr counties have already issued emergency declarations, and San Saba County is expected to do so as well. Hill Country officials are urging residents to stay home, avoid driving, refill prescriptions, buy groceries and fuel vehicles several days before the eclipse.

Some counties expect their population to double or even triple as folks flock to Texas to glimpse the rare phenomenon.



Photo By James Draper

Simultaneous equipment failure puts lone pump on overtime at water plant

By James Draper

There's sound logic behind Gladewater's double-redundancy at the water treatment plant, and precautions are currently being put to the test by a pair of malfunctioning pumps.

It puts the city in a precarious position for at least another week, maybe two, possibly more as the last of three pumps toils away to keep water flowing to residents.

Gladewater's million-gallon clearwell has a trio of mountings attached to the below-ground storage tank, but only one rack's in use after back-to-back breakdowns March 1. The water plant's operators are literally losing sleep over it, using their remote monitoring to keep round-the-clock watch on their last workhorse.

It's a tense end to Wendy Emmel's first year as plant manager at the East Lake Drive facility.

Putting it simply, "That's the pump we use to send water through town," and it won't get a break until backup's in place again.

All things considered, there are long-shot options should the surviving pump need help in a pinch – a mobile pumping unit's a possibility, if one can be tracked down, and other contingencies are being explored.

For now, though, it's a waiting game.

The community has one water source, Lake Gladewater, and one path to get that water treated, into the system and into homes. The city uses about 750,000 gallons

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Two out of three water pump mountings are empty right now at the city's water treatment plant following simultaneous equipment breakdowns earlier this month. It puts the community in a precarious position with just one pump working round-the-clock until repairs are completed.

Roll up your sleeves and roll out your tires – Gladewater's annual citywide Spring 2024 clean-up is a month out.

Along with trash pick-up, the April 13 event will once again include tire collection funded in part by a \$2,500 Solid Waste Reduction Grant from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality through East Texas Council of Governments.

Volunteers are appreciated and most definitely needed for the community cleanup, spearheaded by Gladewater City Hall and set for 8 a.m. to noon the second Saturday in April.

"Just show up," says Al Harrison, Gladewater's Building Official and interim Public Works Director. "Sometimes some of the school groups or Scouts will do special project, or the Beautification Committee will get a group together to do something."

Advance sign-ups aren't necessary – volunteers should gather at the Ken Bennett Pavilion on East Pacific Avenue by 7:45 a.m. April 13 so they can be dispersed throughout the community's neighborhoods and parks.

"Bring your gloves and we will provide the garbage bags," City Hall announced.

As the pick-up's underway, grant funds cover the cost of trailers for the annual tire collection while the city covers its employees' labor. This year, there will be multiple, smaller trailers instead of a single, large collector for residents' old rubber, Harrison said.

"They can just bring 'em," he added. "It's mainly residential tires, not commercial. Either we'll have someone loading them up for them, or they can drop them off, and we'll take care of it."

The City of Gladewater will also be providing
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JO Williams General Mgr Josh Johnston joins Union Grove High School athlete Ava Wightman, who was presented the Greater Texas Ford Dealers Female Athlete of the Month award for January on Friday at J.O. Williams Ford in Gladewater. They were joined at the presentation by Ava's father and mother, Casey and Christina Wightman, and Union Grove head coach J.B. Littlejohn.
Photo by Kim Hill

Monthly sales tax allocations from state continue increasing after 27-plus months

By James Draper

Another month, another sales tax boost for the City of Gladewater – it makes for more than two years' worth of consecutive gains at this point. Interim City Manager Charlie Smith's been digging into the numbers. They're encouraging, but they're also a bit of a mystery after so much good news month-after-month... after month.

"I went back and looked, and I counted 27," he said, "but honestly, I think there's more."

That's 27 months that Gladewater's sales tax allocation from the Texas Comptroller's Office has shown growth year-to-year.

For example, this month Gladewater's check is \$130,426.95 on its 1.500% rate. The allocations are based on sales in January by businesses that report tax monthly. That puts the number for March 2024 at 6.35 percent more than March 2023, which netted \$122,633.18 on sales two months prior.

So far this year, total sales tax allocations are almost 10 percent ahead of 2023's by this time, \$442,674.87 compared to \$405,149.75.

According to a March 6 release from Comptroller Glenn Hegar, this month his office is distributing \$981 million in monthly sales tax revenue to local governments, including cities, counties, transit systems and

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OPINION/COMMENTARY



SUNSHINE WEEK
MY RIGHT TO KNOW.
MARCH 10-16, 2024

Sunshine Week:

Taking a stand against public information blackouts

By Kelley Shannon
Freedom of Information Foundation of Texas

Shining light on our government through public information helps us ask questions of elected officials – and hold them accountable.

Sunshine Week, taking place March 10-16, recognizes the importance of open government and educates Americans about their right to public information. It's not an abstract notion. It's about what's happening in the real world.

You may be checking on the safety of roads and bridges in your community. Or wanting to know how your school board is spending taxpayer money. Perhaps there's concern about pollution or water quality in your neighborhood.

In each of these scenarios, the Texas Public Information Act, one of our state's main government transparency laws, allows us to request government records, get answers and demand action. The act presumes records are open unless there's a specific exemption in the law. This places power in the hands of the people, and rightly so.

What can block the way, though, is a government ignoring or stalling an information request, which defies the law's mandate to provide records "promptly," meaning as soon as possible "without delay."

Government's failure to respond results in an information blackout.

In most cases, a government agency in Texas cannot decide on its own to withhold records and must ask permission to do so from the attorney general's office, which rules on whether the law allows it.

Unfortunately, it's becoming more common for governments to abuse or overuse the attorney general ruling process; to charge outrageously high prices for producing documents; or to simply flout the public records law.

Since the May 2022 mass shooting at Robb Elementary School, the Uvalde Leader-News has made multiple records requests related to the tragedy. Among other roadblocks it has encountered, the newspaper has yet to receive the total compensation amounts paid to Uvalde school district administrators who were terminated or resigned after the shooting.

Other examples abound. A city in the Rio Grande Valley never replied to repeated requests for city manager applications until The Monitor newspaper reported the non-responsiveness. City officials finally said there weren't any applications. In San Antonio, bird enthusiasts complain they have not received all the city records they requested related to tactics used to remove migratory birds from a local park.

Craig Garnett, the Leader-News publisher, wrote in one of his columns that government entities have "learned to play word games with open records requests, to assert that they have no such records in their possession or simply lie about what they have turned over." He added: "They do so because there are absolutely no consequences for them to do otherwise."

The Freedom of Information Foundation of Texas and other members of the diverse Texas Sunshine Coalition have urged the state Legislature to close loopholes in the Public Information Act and add enforcement measures to the law.

Although many public officials understand they are the custodians of the people's records and are committed to carrying out the letter and spirit of the Public Information Act, others must be pushed in that direction.

The Texas Public Information Act, now 50 years old, states that the act shall be construed in favor of granting a request for information and that "government is the servant and not the master of the people."

Without the free flow of information, the people are in the dark. We need plenty of sunlight to ensure our government is answerable to us.

Kelley Shannon is executive director of the Freedom of Information Foundation of Texas, a nonprofit organization based in Austin that advocates for open government and free speech.

Sunshine, sousaphones & spring break memories...

The sun is shining on Main Street. Smiles are in abundance and friendly drivers are honking as they pass two young men playing their sousaphones (a kind of marching tuba) while walking down Main Street. If you have never heard a sousaphone duet, trust me, you are missing out.

Monday at the Mirror is deadline day. Usually our heads are down and our fingers are flying over our computer keyboards. Often we are behind schedule, just a hair tense and occasionally grumpy. Suddenly we heard music, very unusual music, which was floating down the street. Naturally I ran outside to accost the musicians with my camera.

Gladewater sophomores Kade Johnston and Jacob Robertson then serenaded me with their "Earthquake" duet. It was so good I had them play it again to post on our Gladewater Mirror Facebook so all our dear readers can see and hear two teenage boys who are not glued to a screen playing video games on their spring break...and who are darned good musicians.

I am still smiling from their impromptu mobile concert.

I have always had a soft spot for the 'tuba' players. First those kids get one heck of a work out carrying their instruments. Also, you don't realize how much depth those musicians add to the band until you hear a piece without their power playing. Second, I have yet to meet a sousaphone/tuba player that didn't have a great sense of humor. This was true of Kade and Jacob for sure.

Kudos boys on a great spring break memory. It reminded me of one of my favorite memories from my now, far distant past. I can remember walking on shiny spring and summer days, with my two best friends, the length of the very small town where we went to school. I can remember that warm sunshine, the silly giggles and harmless pranks of that long ago (now) golden youth.

I was reminded of those fun times walking Dawson's Main Street after meeting Kade and Jacob. My friends

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

The Best of Suzanne Bardwell



and our spring break prank was a little, okay, a lot, more ridiculous than strolling 'tuba' duets.

At 15 we piled into Joyce's car, after liberating a stuffed antlered deer mount from her Dad's man cave den. We put 'John Deer' behind the wheel of the car. One of us was on the floorboard working the gas and brake and one of us was eye level with the dash driving. And, one of us was in the backseat... probably praying for our safety while all of us laughed hysterically.

We slapped some of those giant sun glasses from our FHA trip to the State Fair on John Deer creating quite the dashing driver cruising Main Street Dawson. After surviving that stunt we took John Deer to Navarro Mills Lake where we all sun bathed. Of course we had brought our Deer John his own beach towel. So there we were side by side...Joyce, John Deer, Sara and Suzie.

We thought we were hilarious.

I still do! My musicians today reminded me of how much fun can be had on a sunny day with friends with a little imagination making memories that can last a lifetime. Carpe Diem boys!

You made the day a little sunnier and life lighter, and for that I thank you.

Never forget your day in the sun. It will bring laughter and joy to you long years from now.

Although friendships of our youth may grow distant with the miles they never have to become distant in our hearts or our memories.

Cherish those times and those friends. Memories really do last a lifetime. And boy, can those memories come in handy on a nose to the grindstone Monday when an infusion of joy can turn a gray day into a sunny one.

THE ECONOMIST

By Dr. M. Ray Perryman

The High Cost of the Texas Panhandle Wildfires

Recent wildfires in the Texas panhandle have burned well over a million acres, causing tragic loss of life and devastating local communities. In addition, the fires have destroyed livestock and grazing land in this region which is crucial to the US beef industry.

Although the high human cost and devastation are the primary concerns at this time, the fires also involve very large economic harms. The Perryman Group estimated the losses associated with the agricultural sector based on the acreage burned, farm and ranch land in the affected counties, and typical reductions in the level of output caused by fires. These preliminary estimates are for the current year only, as there will be ongoing losses going forward as the land recovers.



The Perryman Group estimates that when multiplier effects are considered, agriculture-related losses associated with the Texas panhandle wildfires will lead to a reduction in economic activity including \$219.8 million in gross product and 2,035 job-years in the region. For the state as a whole, losses include a projected \$264.6 million in gross product and 2,336 job-years (including results within the Panhandle Region as well as effects in other areas). (A job-year is one person working for one year, though it could be multiple individuals working partial years.) Industries which would be particularly hard hit by agricultural losses include not only agriculture itself, but also consumer-related businesses such as retail trade, restaurants, and others.

The recent wildfires have decimated livestock herds and grazing lands. They have also destroyed homes and businesses. Even worse, they have caused the tragic loss of human lives.

A Preliminary Estimate of the Impact of Agricultural Losses Associated with the Texas Panhandle Wildfires

| Region | Expenditures | Gross Product | Income | Job-Years* |
|-----------|--------------|---------------|------------|------------|
| Panhandle | -\$623.3 m | -\$219.8 m | -\$139.3 m | -2,035 |
| Texas | -\$723.6 m | -\$264.6 m | -\$163.9 m | -2,336 |

Source: US Multi-Regional Impact Assessment System, The Perryman Group

Notes: Losses for the current year only; effects will be ongoing as the land recovers. Monetary values given in millions of 2023 US dollars. A job-year is one person working for one year, though it could be multiple individuals working partial years. See page 2 for industry detail and page 3 for additional information on methods and assumptions used.




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Telephone: 903-845-2235

Email: gladwatermirror@aol.com

Owners:
Jim & Suzanne Bardwell

Publisher/Editor: Jim Bardwell
Reporting: James Draper
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Office Manager: Tiffany Harroff



SAVING FAITH IS OBEDIENT FAITH

Many passages could be cited to show that one must BELIEVE (have faith) in order to be saved. But there is more involved in believing than the sole mental act. Ultimately, to believe in the Lord is to DO WHAT HE SAYS, and a REFUSAL TO OBEY His will is an expression of DISBELIEF!

The thought of "obedience" and "works" has been brushed aside by many people, in deference to popular views of "grace alone" and "faith only." But the religion of Jesus is a way of righteous ACTION! It is the way of OBEDIENT service by FAITH.

Ben Bogard, denying that baptism is essential to salvation, said the following: "I am going to maintain that there is no act at all that any man in the Old Testament time or the New ever had to perform in order to be saved. Salvation is received by faith, and faith is the only thing you can do without doing anything. Faith submits to the Lord and doesn't pretend to do; as long as you attempt to do, you are working it yourself and not depending upon the Lord." Hardeman Bogard Debate p. 93. Is that a true statement? No it is not.

In many instances "believing" is a summary term that embraces all of the conditions inherent in God's divine plan of salvation, including the command to be immersed in water. This is crucial since many absolutely repudiate the idea that baptism is a requisite to forgiveness. So, when the New Testament speaks about saving faith, or belief that leads to salvation, it is not speaking about faith ALONE! It is talking about belief as the foundation of one's surrender to Christ, and the motivating factor in obedience to His will. For example, to the Romans Paul mentions "the obedience to the faith," and also "the obedience of faith." (Rom. 1: 5; 16: 26). Thus, we learn that "the faith" can, and must be OBEYED, and that one's personal "faith" can, and must lead to obedience! So, one's personal faith should, and it will, if it is genuine" motivate one to OBEY "the faith" i. e. "the system of faith, the Word of God, the gospel of Christ" (Rom. 1: 16-17).

Therefore, faith does not stand ALONE! Faith ACTS! Faith WORKS! Faith OBEYS GOD'S WILL! Saving faith will do what God says. In fact, faith does not save before it ACTS! Think on these things.

Dennis C. Abernathy-White Oak Church of Christ

P. O. Box 454 - White Oak, Texas 75693- 903-736-1822-dennis.abernathy845@gmail.com.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

WO Education Foundation Golf Tournament set

The White Oak Education Foundation's latest fundraiser is in full swing—the organization's annual golf tournament is set this year on April 5 at Wood Hollow Golf Course in Longview.

The 2023 event raised more than \$20,000 between contributions from players, sponsors and donors.

"As you may know, the WEOF provides a variety of support for White Oak ISD's students and teachers in the form of resources, time and money," Dr. William Paul noted in a Feb. 5 outreach to potential sponsors. According to the WOISD superintendent, "The school district budgets for the basic items that teachers need to help our students succeed, but periodically they may have a 'wish list' that the school may not be able to afford. This is where fundraising, the WEOF and you step in."

With a month-and-change until the event, both players and sponsors are needed. Sponsorships range from \$125 for an individual golfer's registration up to \$2,500 for the Lunch Sponsor.

For more information, contact Shelly Smith at (903) 918-8100 or email Bobby Fuller at bdfuller4@gmail.com. Find the event on Facebook via [tinyurl.com/WOEF2024](https://www.facebook.com/WOEF2024).

County library hosts storytime

Two books will be read to small children at both of the Upshur County Library's "Storytime" sessions in Gilmer on Thursday (March 14.)

"Raindrops to Rainbow" by John Micklos Jr. and "How the Crayons Saved the Rainbow" by Monica Sweeney, 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.)

While 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.youseemore.com/upshur.

Tyler's Discovery Science announces events surrounding upcoming eclipse

TYLER, — The Discovery Science Place will hold several family-friendly festivities and activities set for April 6–8, in anticipation of the upcoming solar eclipse event on Monday, April 8.

"We hope families and visitors to Tyler take this opportunity to join us the weekend before and the day of the solar eclipse for fun-filled activities at the museum," said Carol Whiteside, DSP executive director.

On Saturday, April 6, DSP will present its "Full STEAM Ahead: Celebrating Makers of Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics" Festival 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. at the museum, located at

308 North Broadway in Tyler. The festival includes maker booths, stage shows, the DSP traveling exhibit, "Expedition Egypt," as well as food trucks at cost. Festival tickets are \$15 for adults and \$12 for children and includes general admission to the museum.

On Sunday, April 7, DSP will offer two, hourly planetarium shows with general admission. Shows begin at 2 p.m. and 3 p.m.

On Monday, April 8, DSP will offer hourly planetarium shows with general admission, with the first show beginning at 11 a.m. Free parking lot activities will be 11 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. and include bounce houses, face painting and special eclipse-themed craft stations. Two "Innovative Juggler" shows featuring Greg Kennedy will be noon and 2 p.m. Eclipse glasses will also be available for purchase at the gift shop while supplies last.

For more information, contact Whiteside at 903.405.3714 or cwhiteside@uttyler.edu, or Tami Urias, DSP development director, 903.705.6813 or TamiUrias@discoveryscienceplace.org.

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.

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.

ET Research Conference April 12

Registration is open for the fifth annual East Texas Research Conference, set for Friday, April 12. This year's conference is co-hosted by The University of Texas at Tyler and the Tyler Area Chamber of Commerce.

The all-day event, which will be held at UT Tyler's main campus, features guest speakers, oral presentations and poster sessions. The conference is free to attend, but registration is required.

"Presenters will showcase research and scholarship that generate new knowledge, create entrepreneurship opportunities, improve educational, health care, and economic outcomes, and benefit the quality of life for East Texans," said UT Tyler President Kirk A. Calhoun, MD, FACP.

At the conference, pre-

senters and attendees can also network with both university and community members, and contribute to discussions about creating opportunities for research collaboration and partnerships.

"The Tyler Chamber is pleased to play a part in this important conference," said Henry Bell, chamber president. "The research and collaboration across the region are crucial to the growth of our community far into the future."

To register or for more information, visit uttyler.edu/etrc.

UCSO Citizen police academy slated

The Upshur County Sheriff's Office in Gilmer is now accepting applications from the public to attend the educational Fifth Annual Citizen's Police Academy, scheduled two nights weekly from April 16–May 23 in Gilmer.

The academy, featuring various speakers and free of charge to enroll, is scheduled from 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Stanley Jenkins Training Center in Gilmer, located just south of the Upshur County Justice Center.

On its Facebook page, the sheriff's office says the academy is aimed to "familiarize the citizens of Upshur County with their law enforcement and services available" from it.

Among others, topics include patrol procedures, criminal law, narcotics, estray laws, and family violence.

Applicants to attend must be at least 18 years old.

For more information on registration and course content, contact the sheriff's office at 903-843-2541.

US Rep. Moran to speak to local GOP

U.S. Rep. Nathaniel Moran (R-Tyler) will be guest speaker for the March 25 public meeting of the Cherokee Rose Republican Women's Club of Upshur County, announced club President Cynthia Ridgeway.

A free meal will be served at 6:30 p.m., followed by the 7 p.m. program, at the Credit Union of Texas' "Gilmer Gathers" room on U.S. 271. Admission is free.

Moran, who was unopposed for renomination in his party's March 5 primary and has no Democratic opponent in November, has part of Upshur County in his congressional district. He is serving his first term.

Situational awareness class for seniors

A "situational awareness" class, in which Upshur County sheriff's Chief Deputy David Hazel will train senior citizens on how to deal with finding themselves in "an active crisis," is set Thursday (March 14) at the

Gilmer Area Senior Center.

The free presentation is scheduled from 1-3 p.m. at the center, which meets at the old fire station on Harrison Street. Parking is behind the building, off of Silver Alley.

The group is sponsoring the event, open to the public.

Hazel said he will use Power Point in counseling what to do in such situations as being attacked or finding oneself around an active shooter.

For more information, contact Hazel at the sheriff's office at 903-843-2541.

Don't let spring break the blood supply

March is a challenging month for the blood supply in Texas.

According to Carter BloodCare, blood donations drop when students are on spring break in mid-March. Significantly, 25% of the community blood supply comes from high school blood drives alone.

For emergencies and daily medical procedures, blood is always needed, especially O negative. As the universal blood type, O negative can be used to treat any patient, including premature and unborn babies.

Eligible donors can give starting at age 16 with parental consent; those 17 and older may donate independently. There is no upper age limit.

Incumbents retain positions

By Phillip Williams

Three Upshur County officials won landslide victories for renomination, and former President Donald Trump easily topped the field in the presidential race, in the county's March 5 Republican primary.

Sheriff Larry Webb, Tax Assessor-Collector Luana Howell and Precinct 1 County Commissioner Gene Dolle all won by margins of well more than 2-1.

Webb is the only one who will have a Democratic opponent in the November general election. He is Brandon Williams, a former reserve deputy sheriff who was the only candidate for Upshur County office in his party's March 5 primary.

Webb, seeking a third term, received 68.82% of the vote in defeating former Gilmer Police Chief Mark Case, 4,529 to 2,052 in complete, unofficial returns.

Howell, also seeking a third term, drew 73.29% against one of her office's deputies, Andrea (Precious) Smith, winning by 4,686 to 1,708 in complete, unofficial returns.

Dolle, running for a second term, received 73.63% of the vote in defeating Lucrecia A. Davidson by 1,276 to 457 in complete, unofficial returns.

Trump, who won easily statewide, drew 87.64% of the Upshur vote--5,957 in complete, unofficial returns to only 576 (8.47%) for his only remaining major active challenger, Nikki Haley, who suspended her campaign the next day.

Six other names and "uncommitted" also appeared on the ballot, drawing a collective total of only 264 votes.

In the GOP primary for District 5 state representative, which included Upshur County, incumbent Cole Hefner defeated his two challengers without a runoff while taking 71.51% of the Upshur County vote.

Hefner, a onetime Upshur County commissioner now living in Titus County, drew 4,586 in Upshur to 1,049 for Jeff Fletcher and 778 for Dewey Collier in complete, unofficial returns.

The race for Upshur County Republican Party chairman was a different story from the lopsided other contests as incumbent Carl Byers narrowly won re-election to a second two-year term over former Chairman Cynthia Ridgeway by only 72 votes.

The count was 2,973 to 2,901 in complete, unofficial returns.

Although all the aforementioned candidates at the local and state level waged active campaigns, turnout in the GOP and Democratic parties combined totaled only 7,368 of the county's 29,551 registered voters, according to County Election Administrator Lory Harle's office. Of the 7,368, only 534 voted in the Democratic primary, the office said.



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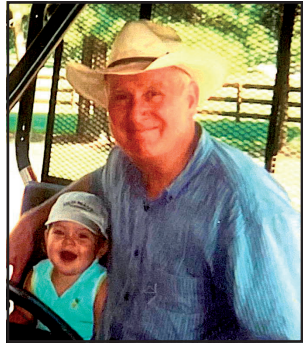
Students, teachers, staffers and parents fill the Weldon Elementary School Cafeteria March 5 for the first Science Fair organized by 5th grade Science teacher Stephen Reyes. Blaine Owens earned 1st Place with a 'Boats & Density' project followed by Makenzie Causey in second for 'Magnetic Fields' while Makenna Lee netted third with 'Fruit Power.' Landry Townsend earned an award for Best Hypothesis while Isabella Polanco scored Best Presentation and Keylin Mills received kudos for Best Display.

Courtesy Photos

OBITUARIES

DR. JAMES TAYLOR WHARTON, M.D.

Dr. James Taylor Wharton, M.D., of Houston, passed away peacefully in his home surrounded by family on Thursday, February 29, 2024, after a valiant battle with Parkinson's Disease.



A chapel service and Celebration of Life was held at Geo. H. Lewis & Sons Funeral Home, 1010 Bering Dr., Houston, TX on Monday, March 11, 2024, with

Pastor Jason T. Hughes officiating.

Born March 29, 1938, to the late Ivy D. Wharton and Era Taylor Wharton in Henderson. His pre-medical education was received from Stephan F. Austin University. In 1959, Taylor married Mary Louise Hearsberger. The family is so grateful that their paths crossed on the campus of SFA celebrating the culmination of 65 years of a perfect marriage. That same year, he entered the University of Texas Medical Branch, Galveston and graduated in 1963 with honors including The Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society.

Taylor completed a rotating internship at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio before returning to UTMB to complete residency in Obstetrics/Gynecology. He continued his training via a Fellowship in Gynecologic Oncology at the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston.

In 1971, after completing his duty in the United States Air Force Service as a Major, he joined the staff of M.D. Anderson Cancer Center as an assistant professor in the Department of Gynecologic Oncology and retired in 2008 after 38 years of service in patient care and research. Throughout his career Taylor published more than 240 peer-reviewed manuscripts and book chapters and edited six books. He was a highly skilled surgeon, professor, and researcher making significant contributions in his field. Taylor was an integral part of the MDACC Gynecologic Oncology Fellowship Training program and resident rotation training, all of which included residents from St. Josephs, LBJ, and Hermann Hospitals, also including

recipients of the Felix Rutledge Fellowship program annually.

In addition to various academic roles, Taylor served in the Department of Gynecologic Oncology as Deputy Chairman and as Chairman. He was so very proud of his department ranking Top Five nationally by the U.S. News and World Report ranking of "Best Departments in Best Hospitals in America" for 16 consecutive years. Taylor then served as Special Assistant to the President of Patient Affairs.

Throughout his career, he received numerous awards including the Charles B. Barker Chair in Surgery 1990-2003 and the Charles B. Barker Chair Emeritus from 2003-2007. In 2000, Taylor was recognized with the establishment of the J. Taylor Wharton M.D. Distinguished Chair in Gynecologic Oncology. In 2021, he was a proud recipient of the Ashbel Smith Distinguished Alumnus Award. Additionally, Taylor served as President of American Radium Society, President of Society of Gynecologic Oncology and served as President of the Felix Rutledge Society. He also served on the Board of Freeport-McMoRan Copper & Gold, Inc. and McMoRan Exploration Co and as Consultant for Medical and Health Affairs to the Office for the Chairman.

Taylor had many passions, and shared his love of hunting and fishing with all that knew him. He embraced family and friends while practicing the teachings of Pastor Teachers R.B. Thieme, Jr. and R.B. Thieme III at Berachah Church. Blessed with 65 years of marriage and many friends he considered "family", he will be greatly missed.

Taylor is survived by his wife Mary Louise, brother Arnold Wharton M.D. (Julia) and his three daughters: Amy Vanderhill (Jim), Tiffany Crona (Mark), and Nanci Moon (Todd), his grandchildren: Ceili Baxley, Shannon Collett, Meagan Cochran, Ryan Crona, Travis Crona, Todd Moon Jr., Bryleigh Moon and Linden Moon, his great grandchildren: Anna Baxley, Jennifer Baxley, and Elizabeth Collett, and numerous nieces, nephews.

The family would like to thank the staff of Houston Methodist Hospital for their expert care and compassion and his caregivers at Ultra Staff Health Care Staffing Services who helped make Taylor comfortable in his last few months.

Please share a memory of Taylor at <https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries>.

In lieu of flowers, please consider your favorite charity, Berachah Church/ Berachah Church Tape and Publications, 2815 Sage Road, Houston TX 77056, or of course, U.T. M.D. Anderson Cancer Center.



The shelves are looking good at Gladewater's Manna House right now, but volunteers are always looking ahead and preparing for lean times, just in case. According to Gary Hinds, the food pantry's particular needs right now are single-serve snacks and sweets for children as well as individual, easy-carry and easy-prepare meals like ramen.

Photo by James Draper



They're on vacation this week, but Weldon Elementary School students and faculty put in an extra burst of energy during their first Weldon Fun Run Thursday, March 7, ahead of Spring Break.

Courtesy photo

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SPORTS

By Tyler Sutton

The non district portion of the schedules came to a end this week for Gladewater and White Oak baseball and softball while Union Grove baseball and softball continued district play.

The Gladewater baseball team began their week on Tuesday with a trip to Tyler to take on Cumberland Academy and jumped out early and cruised to a 8-2 victory. Then on Saturday they played a double header with Gilmer that was originally scheduled to be played in Gilmer, but due to bad field conditions from storms on Friday night was moved to Gladewater and the Bears came away with a double header sweep with wins of 5-1 and 6-3.

The perfect week has the Bears now at 7-6 on the season. They will be back on the diamond on this coming Saturday as they travel to Overton for a double header. Gladewater Lady Bears softball got a well deserved week off this week as they prepare to begin district play. Gladewater will begin their district portion of the season on Friday as they travel to New Diana.

White Oak baseball traveled to Bowie to compete in the Simms Bowie tournament on Thursday where on day 1 they Decatur Eagles 3-1. Then on Day 2 the RoughNecks fell in a pair of games to Boyd (13-1) and Grandview (7-3). White Oak is now 6-6 on the campaign and will be back in

action on Tuesday with a road game at Bullard. Followed by a home game on Friday vs Hooks. RoughNeck softball was also in action this week with a pair of games beginning on Tuesday as they knocked off Lindale 6-0. Addison McClanahan homered, singled and drove in two runs, Larkin Daniels tossed a one-hitter and recorded 16 punchouts. Daniels didn't walk a batter, using just 96 pitches in a seven-inning contest. Kara Kennedy, Graycen Sipes and Jaidyn Marshall all drove in runs, and Daniels doubled.

Then on Friday, White Oak had an absolute offensive explosion as they battered Spring Hill 27-2. White Oak had huge innings of 11, 8 and 5 runs. The LadyNecks are now 14-5 on the campaign and will begin district play on Thursday with a road trip to Sabine.

Union Grove baseball continued their start to district play on Tuesday as they hosted Overton and fell to them 11-7. Judson Groege doubled, singled and drove in a run, and Kayden Day, Jax Daniels, Rylan Roberts and Cason Cowan all added RBI for Union Grove. Carter Cooper struck out five and walked five in four innings, and Peyton Laake added four strikeouts and two walks in 2.2 innings on the hill. Moving over to Friday, the Lions made the trip to Overton and in a back and forth battle fell 5-4.

Union Grove is now 4-4 on the season and 1-3 in district play. They will be back on the playing field on Tuesday with a home contest against Big Sandy followed on Friday with a road game at Harleton. Lady Lions softball was also in action this week as on Tuesday they hosted Ore City and in a back and forth slugfest they fell 14-12. Jaycie Mullins tripled, singled twice and drove in a run in the loss for Union Grove. Jamie Webb had a double, two singles and an RBI, and Izzy Gregg singled twice and drove in two runs. Khaki Parr doubled, single and drove in two runs, and Marissa Wick and Daytona Vaughn also drove in two runs for the Lady Lions. Allie Calhoun struck out four and walked six in seven innings.

Then on Friday, Union Grove was back home to host Big Sandy and the Lady Lions fell in that game as well 15-8. Jaycie Mullins singled twice and drove in two runs in the loss for Union Grove. Jamie Webb doubled, singled and drove in a run. Izzy Gregg and Marissa Wick added a double and an RBI apiece, and Allie Calhoun and Khaki Pharr also drove in runs. Calhoun struck out four and walked nine in six innings in the circle for Union Grove.

The Lady Lions are now 2-11 and 0-2 in district play. They will be back in action on Monday when they host Overton then on Tuesday travel to Hawkins.

White Oak wins Harmony Big Red Relays, Union Grove takes third

By Kimber Smith

White Oak won first place overall and Union Grove third in Harmony's Big Red Relays on Thursday, March 7.

White Oak's Londyn Baker and Johanna Pennington placed third and fifth in the 100m dash, and Kylie Caraway and Baker placed third and fourth in the 200m dash. Addison Milligan placed second, followed by Aley Dixon in sixth in the 400m dash. London Bodovsky won the 800m run and teammates Gentry Whittington and Ally Tatum placed second and fourth. Bodovsky also won the 1600m run, where Tatum took second and Sophie Fisher took fourth. Tatum won first place, Fisher placed fourth and Kelsey Burch placed sixth in the 3200m run. Kylie Dugger took silver and Morgan Taylor bronze in the 100m hurdles, and Addison Saccoccio won the 300m hurdles, followed by Dugger in third and Lizzy Still in fourth.

The 4x100m relay team of Milligan, Caraway, Addison Clinkscales and Andee Bridges placed third, and the 4x200m relay team of Saccoccio, Sophie Carter, Clinkscales and Bridges placed second, as did the 4x400m

relay of Milligan, Clinkscales, Caraway and Saccoccio.

Abbi Nix placed fifth in the discus, Whittington placed fifth in the triple jump, and Clinkscales took silver in the high jump. Pennington and Still placed second and third in the pole vault.

Union Grove's Sophie Pyle placed third in the 800m run, followed by Hannah Coulter in fifth and Rachel Potter in sixth. Pyle placed third in the 1600m run, with teammate Jenna Scott in sixth, and second in the 3200m run, followed by Averi Cook in fourth. Rylee Aiken won the 100m hurdles and took silver in the 300m hurdles.

The 4x100m relay team of Kadence Frey, Keira Taylor, Karen Chavez and Natalie Woodard placed fifth, and the 4x200 team of Frey, Danica Vestal, Woodard and Ava Wightman placed third, as did the 4x400m team of Vestal, Potter, Aiken and Wightman.

Wightman placed fifth in the long jump. Savanna Clark and Addison Smith placed second and third in the shot put, Smith placed second in the discus, and Gracie Lawrence placed fifth in the pole vault.



Surrounded by family members, mentors, and friends, Gladewater High School Senior Hadassah Balcorta signs her letter of intent to run track for the University of Texas at Tyler during a special assembly in late February.

Photo by James Draper

"Coot's Corner"

By Coot Putley

Pistol Pete ...

Pete Maravich has been mentioned a lot lately because Caitlin Clark passed him to become the all-time scoring leader in Division I college basketball. Clark's accomplishments deserve to be celebrated, but I would like to present a proposal that Maravich should still be considered the best college scorer of all time.

"Pistol Pete" starred at LSU, where his coach was his father, Press Maravich. He averaged 44.2 points per game in his 83 game career for a total of 3667, and added 6.4 rebounds and 5.1 assists per game.

With his long hair flopping and his baggy socks falling down around his ankles, he made electrifying shots and passes that very few before or since ever attempted.

Maravich finished his college career in 1970. Three-point shots weren't added in the NCAA until 1986 –

before then all shots counted two points. Dale Brown, who coached later at LSU, decided to do some research.

He reviewed the game logs from all Pete's games and found that an average of 13 shots each game would have counted as threes under today's rules. This would bring his scoring average to over 57 points per game. The extra points would add 1079, bringing the total to 4746. The other significant rule change took place in 1972 when freshmen were allowed to play on the varsity.

Before then, they could only play in freshmen games, and their point totals and other statistics weren't added. Maravich scored 741 points in 19 freshmen games. If these points are added to his 3667, his total grows to 4408 points. There was also no shot clock in college until 1985. Until then, opposing teams could con-

trol the ball as long as they wished, keeping Pete from additional scoring opportunities. No way to measure the impact on points scored but it definitely held down his totals.

Adding the extra 1079 from "3 pointers" and the 741 he actually scored as a freshman to Maravich's listed total of 3667 would bring his record to 5487! You could print that in the Guinness book in permanent ink.

You will remember we previously mentioned John Pierce, who is credited with the most points scored by any college player "4230".

I am not minimizing the great accomplishments of Pierce or Caitlin Clark or any other player, but I hope you will now agree that Pistol Pete Maravich stands alone at the top of the chart as our greatest college scorer.

That's one man's opinion. What's yours?

Women's handgun safety class set

By Phillip Williams

Upshur County Sheriff Larry Webb's office is offering a May 18 "women's handgun safety class" free of charge.

On its Facebook page, the office says participants in the women's class "will learn to safely handle, load and fire your handgun. Other topics discussed are safe storage of your firearms at home and carrying the firearm when away from home."

The class, set from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Stanley Jenkins Training Center in Gilmer and the county's firing range in Pritchett, is open to the first 28 women to register. Participants must be at least 18 years old, and legally able to own a gun.

Each also needs to bring her own firearm, 50 rounds of ammunition, and eye/ear protection to use at the firing range.

Webb will teach the class, assisted by several sheriff's deputies, said David Hazel, chief deputy of the office's patrol division.

The class will open at 8 a.m. at the Jenkins center, 152 E. Taylor. It is in the

parking lot just south of the Upshur County Justice Center, and located near the former motor bank for Gilmer National Bank.

To register, call the sheriff's office at 903-843-2541 and ask for Mrs. Hawthorne.

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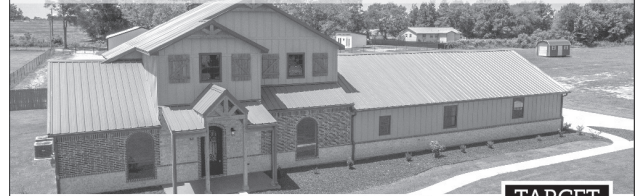
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- 1 home to giant catfish in east Texas: "Lake _ Pines"
- 5 TXism: "___ like I was chewed up and spit out"
- 6 TXism: "sounds like a dry ___" (bad singer)
- 7 TXism: "useless as panty ___ on a pig"
- 8 TX Charley Pride's "Then Who ___"
- 9 a question in 1991 College Bowl won by Rice: "vexillology" (study ___)
- 16 a Texas pond
- 18 refuses to follow accepted doctrine
- 21 great TCU lineman Charles "___" Aldrich
- 22 Texas or Nevada town
- 23 "The Turtle Lady," TX Loetscher building face
- 24 O. Henry story: "A Fog ___"
- 34 TXism: "chompin' ___ the bit" (eager)
- 35 Ranger Juan was ___ in 1999
- 36 big party at the governor's mansion
- 37 TXism: "wipe the slate clean"
- 39 once a source of gold in Texas (2 wds.)
- 43 TXism: "knocked my ___ off (amazed me)"

- 44 event at Luling's "Watermelon Thump": seed ___-___
- 45 Texas soda: ___ Pepper
- 46 ERA to TX Nolan Ryan
- 47 in Upshur County on U.S. 259 (2 wds.)
- 49 a fancy speech

- 52 TX Cassidy ("Lurch") of "The Addams Family"
- 53 TXism: "___ could strut sitting down" (big ego)
- 54 TXism: "skunk egg" Mexico
- 55 "the gorge" in
- 58 TXism: "he'd be ___ to his own funeral" (unreliable)
- 59 ___ Grande
- 60 flightless bird
- 61 TXism: "I reckon"

DOWN

- 1 TXism: "at the drop ___"
- 2 lake between Texas and Oklahoma
- 3 UT's Browning won gold medal in diving in ___
- 4 Gen. Robert ___

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Monthly sales tax allocations from state continue increasing after 27-plus months

Continued from Page 1 special purpose districts. Statewide, the number's 2.2 percent less than in March 2023. Elsewhere in Gregg County, other municipalities are seeing year-to-year declines, too. In March, only Warren City showed a gain alongside Gladewater's while other communities ranged from a 7.64 percent decrease (Clarksville City) to a 25.42 percent March-to-March dip in Easton. Nearby, the City of White

Oak netted \$118,286.94 for March 2024, a 10.72 percent decline from its \$132,503.52 allocation check in March 2023. Year-to-date, White Oak's sales tax accrual has diminished by about 4 percent compared to the same time last year, netting \$421,137.37 so far in '24. Explaining the ups and downs often requires a crystal ball. A best guess will suffice, though, when it comes to looking a gift horse in the

| City | Rate | Net Payment This Period | Comparable Pmt. Prior Year | % Change | Payment YTD | Prior Year Paymet YTD | % Change |
|------------------|--------|-------------------------|----------------------------|----------|-----------------|-----------------------|----------|
| Clarksville City | 1.000% | \$7,921.29 | \$8,577.23 | -7.64% | \$25,707.77 | \$26,430.93 | -2.73% |
| Easton | 1.000% | \$3,331.71 | \$4,467.49 | -25.42% | \$14,340.25 | \$14,708.76 | -2.50% |
| Gladewater | 1.500% | \$130,426.95 | \$122,633.18 | 6.35% | \$442,674.87 | \$405,149.75 | 9.26% |
| Kilgore | 1.500% | \$704,427.88 | \$783,516.89 | -10.09% | \$2,341,306.15 | \$2,556,563.22 | -8.41% |
| Lakeport | 1.500% | \$19,132.27 | \$24,982.46 | -23.41% | \$63,554.04 | \$76,415.13 | -16.83% |
| Longview | 1.500% | \$3,183,662.79 | \$3,390,172.78 | -6.09% | \$11,337,165.42 | \$11,893,289.13 | -4.67% |
| Warren City | 1.000% | \$1,768.72 | \$1,147.71 | 54.10% | \$4,862.65 | \$4,733.73 | 2.72% |
| White Oak | 1.500% | \$118,286.94 | \$132,503.52 | -10.72% | \$404,359.56 | \$421,137.37 | -3.98% |

mouth. "I went back to '20 and looked to get some comparisons," Smith said, trying

to divine some kind of explanation for the long-term increase here. "I think a lot of it is probably going to be due to inflation, and we're getting more tax dollars

because everything is costing so much more. That said, "I'm seeing a lot more people in town than what I've seen in the past. You've got more people who

are buying homes and living here and come to town," with Gladewater reaping a piece of every hard-earned dollar that's spent in the city limits.

Vote responsibly!

Step #1
Become an informed citizen.

Step #2
Cast an informed ballot!



Sponsored by The Gladewater Mirror CANDIDATE FORUM

City Contested Races
April 4, 6 p.m.

At The Gladewater Chamber of Commerce
Meet the candidates in the May 4 election and hear what they have to say on the issues!



Some of the community's feathered folk take a breather on the shore of Lake Gladewater Monday afternoon.

Photo by James Draper

Mirror hosts candidate forum

With two contested races on the City of Gladewater's ballot for Spring 2024, the *Gladewater Mirror* will host this year's Candidates' Forum the first week of April.

Polling's fast approaching on the first Saturday in May, and the candidate lineup includes Brandy Flanagan and Jim Valentine in a race for mayor while Scott Owens and Stoney Stone vie for the Place 3 spot.

A month prior, the four challengers have been requested to participate in an open-to-the-public Q&A session, set for 6 p.m. Thursday, April 4, at Gladewater Chamber of Commerce. During the Q&A, *Gladewater Mirror* Publisher Jim Bardwell will pose a variety of questions to the group and moderate their discussion. Community members are invited to submit questions in advance

via jbardwell@gladewater-mirror.com. The candidates have been asked to participate in a printed Q&A as well. Each will have an allotted amount of space to respond for side-by-side publication with the other contender in an upcoming edition of the *Mirror* before early polling begins.

Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Election Day while early voters can cast their ballots on weekdays April 22-30.

Incumbent council member Michael Weber drew no challengers in his reelection bid to Place 2 on the council dais at Gladewater City Hall.

Likewise, there were no contested positions for Gladewater ISD School Board – incumbent trustees Corina Arevalo (Place 5), Danielle Budro (Place 6) and Jeff Cook (Place 7) were the only candidates to file and will officially begin new terms in late May.

It's Spring Cleanup Time

Continued from Page 1 curbside Spring cleaning trash pick-up for disabled individuals and senior citizens who schedule collection in advance. Anyone interested and qualifying should call City Hall's Water Utility Billing Department at 903-845-2196 before 3:30 p.m. Thursday, April 11.

Notably, the city cannot accept paint, shingles, batteries, refrigeration items, chemicals or commercial waste during the clean-up.

Meanwhile, in White Oak the city's annual Trash Off Days is set next week. Public Dumpsters will be located on Hwy. 42 behind the White Oak Water Treatment Plant, available for drop-offs from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursday and Friday (March 21-22) then 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, March 23.

The event cannot accept paint, oil, tires, shingles or appliances with compressors.

Simultaneous equipment failure puts lone pump on overtime at water plant

Continued from Page 1

on an average day; in addition to the clearwell's capacity, two water towers hold 300,000 and 350,000, respectively, at stated capacity.

All three of the plant's pumps were installed in 2010. All three have seen key upgrades in the past nine months, including new Variable Frequency Drives for two and a new VFD fan for the other. It came as a shock earlier this month when not one but two pumps locked up in turn. Both pumps and motors were pulled and sent off for repairs March 4.

"They are actually replacing the pump shafts in each one – the vibrations got so bad," Emmel said. "When they get back here, I plan to have them pull that last one just to check it out since it's been running this whole time."

She's a by-the-manual, best practices kind of person. Guidelines recommend rotating workload between the pumps to extend their lifespan through regular usage and regular downtime along with a consistent maintenance program. That wasn't necessarily the case in prior years, but it's become the new order of business for Gladewater's operation.

Emmel estimates the trio of pumps have another five to seven years left in them with regular TLC.

"Typically, they get pulled or replaced between 10 and 20 years. That's a big gap," she added. "You run them until you can't. You do that according to the availability of supplies, equipment, parts..."

It's not the kind of hardware where a backup can be waiting in the wings for use in an emergency.

"They don't have them on a shelf anywhere. Those pumps are built to order. Anybody can repair them, but you have to go to the manufacturer to get them made. If you're ordering a brand new one they have to build, that can be 8 weeks to 12," Emmel said. "That's the purpose of three – if you lose one, you still have one in use and one that's backup."

"They all wear at the same time. You can be proactive in trying to get them repaired before you have a problem."

Gladewater's plant is a 24/7 setup. While the current tech at the site doesn't allow for 100 percent remote control, Emmel and operator Nate Palmer can at least keep an eye on things from home and head in when necessary. They're connecting their mobile phones and laptops for after-hours monitoring right now and crossing their fingers for smooth running until, best case, the pump shafts are repaired and the equipment's put back in place at some point next week.

Needless to say, "I am ready for them to get here."



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