

## City taking on railroad over downtown land

By Jim Bardwell

The City of Gladewater is planning to turn the tables in the Union Pacific Railroad, using the long-standing practice of eminent domain to gain ownership of downtown land that straddles the railroad tracks. The city council has been trying to work out a deal with the Union Pacific for more than a year on the downtown property owned by the railroad. The city has been leasing the land along the railroad tracks for many years. However, recently the Union Pacific chose to renew the lease with the city, but at a significant increase. The previous agreement called for a \$1,000 annual payment for 35 years. But the new deal proposed by the Union Pacific called for a three-year lease at \$10,925 annually. The city was able to get that down to \$3,000/year. But instead of leasing at the higher price, the city would like to buy the property. Gladewater Mayor JD Shipp said railroad officials haven't been willing to get together and hammer out a deal. So, the city decided last Thursday night at the monthly council meeting to authorize its legal counsel to begin the process of eminent domain on the railroad property.

"With UP (Union Pacific) no longer considering long term leases and the frequency of ever increasing lease payments over time, we as a council felt it in the best interest of our city and citizens to pursue purchasing the land from UP," Shipp explained. "The land of interest is not being used by UP. We maintain it. As a result, we feel it is in our economic interest to buy it in lieu of leasing it. This is what has led us here today."

Railroads used eminent domain since the 1880s to gain right-of-way as it trekked across the country. But it is rare a city would use eminent domain on a railroad.

Eminent domain is the power of the sovereign (the government) to take property for public use without the owner's consent. In some cases, the power may be used by private persons or corporations who are authorized to exercise functions of public character. And the Texas Transportation Code provides that a "railroad company" may acquire property by condemnation if the property is required for certain purposes listed in the statute, such as the right-of-way, a roadbed, or the construction and operation of tracks.

The power of eminent domain is actually a holdover from English feudalism and has long been accepted as one of the inherent powers of government. The idea is even recognized in the Magna Carta.

In other business at Thursday's meeting, the council held public hearings regarding the demolition of various structures around the city. The properties discussed and the action were:

- 412 Johnson – the owner asked for more time to remove the structure and was given 30 more days to do so.

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## Local sales tax revenue up 22.98%

Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar sent cities, counties, transit systems and special purpose taxing districts \$893.2 million in local sales tax allocations for July, which was 20 percent more than in July 2020.

These allocations are based on sales made in May by businesses that report tax monthly.

Gladewater's local sales tax posted double-digit increases for the third month in-a-row, showing a 22.98-percent rise over the same period last year. Gladewater's sales tax posted \$103,045.91 in May 2021 compared to \$83,788.97 for May of 2020. For the year Gladewater moved from -1.72-percent below 2020 to a positive 1.28-percent.

## The Delta variant is spreading fast, especially where vaccination rates are low

With just 48 percent of the U.S. population fully vaccinated, and other countries struggling to secure vaccines, public health experts are concerned that the Delta variant—the most dangerous and transmissible form of the coronavirus to date—will trigger dramatic surges in cases and deaths in the U.S. and around the world.

First identified in India in March, Delta is now the dominant variant in the U.S. and accounts for more than half of new infections, according to the latest data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It has spread to more than 90 countries and is also the most dominant variant in India, the United Kingdom, Russia, Israel, Singapore, and more than a dozen others.

The Delta variant is 60 percent more transmissible than the Alpha variant—first identified in the U.K.—which in turn was about 50 percent more transmissible than the ancestral Wuhan strain. "It's a super spreader variant; that is worrisome," says Eric Topol, founder and director of the Scripps Research Translational Institute in California.

Delta has features that allow it to evade some of the body's immune system defenses, says Topol. "Plus, it has the highest transmissibility of anything we've seen so far. It's a very bad combination."

In the U.S., Delta is responsible for more than 50 percent of new COVID-19 cases, up from 26 percent the week ending June 19. In parts of the Midwest and the Mountain States, where vaccination rates are lower, genetic analyses of virus samples suggest Delta could account for more than 80 percent of cases, said CDC director Rochelle



Students from the Margaret and Robert Bell Adolescent Place Empowering Youth Center toured the town last week, stopping off at Gladewater City Hall and helping lead the prayer and Pledge of Allegiance, as well as the Gladewater Museum where they learned about the city's rich and diverse history.

Photos by Jim Bardwell and Lois Reed



## Upshur nixes pay raises for elected officials

By Phillip Williams

Upshur County Commissioners Court last Thursday voted not to change the salaries of elected officials in the forthcoming fiscal year, but County Judge Todd Tefteller said he was now proposing to raise the county's retirement match, and grant a federally-funded "stipend," for both elected officials and all county workers.

While the proposed increase in the retirement match—now 1 to 1—to 1 to 1.5—would come from county funds, Tefteller said the stipend funds would come from the county's share of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 which President Biden signed into law.

Tefteller said, however, he did not know the amount each individual would receive under the federally-

funded potential benefit. The county has received part of the \$8.1 million allocated to it under the act.

County Auditor Connie Williams said Monday that what Tefteller called a "stipend" is referred to as "premium pay" under the federal grant's guidelines, and is targeted for employees who worked through the COVID-19 crisis.

The court had recently voted to propose either raising elected officials' and workers' annual pay by \$1,200, or instead increase the county's retirement match to 1.5. Tefteller said at last week's meeting in Gilmer that it was the court's "consensus" not to raise salaries.

Continued on Page 4

## Free lunch for all GISD students

By Jim Bardwell

There's an old saying that goes - "there's no such thing as a free lunch." Well that may so elsewhere, but not in Gladewater.

Gladewater ISD board members were advised Monday night that the USDA will extend its free lunch program through June 2022, so all students pay "zero" this school year for breakfast and lunch.

Parents can still add to a student's lunch account for any extras that might be wanted.

In other business Monday night, the board approved a \$890,000 budget amendment from 2020-21 for the purchase and installations related to athletic facility upgrades at Gladewater High School. The purchase includes repairs to the tennis courts, Bull Waters Gymnasium, weight room and fencing and screen work for the baseball and softball fields.

A second budget amendment for \$27,000 from 2020-21 was approved for the purchase of band instruments and a third 2020-21 budget amendment in the amount of \$90,000 was approved for the purchases and installations related to the Gladewater High

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## Local man killed in Texas 31 accident

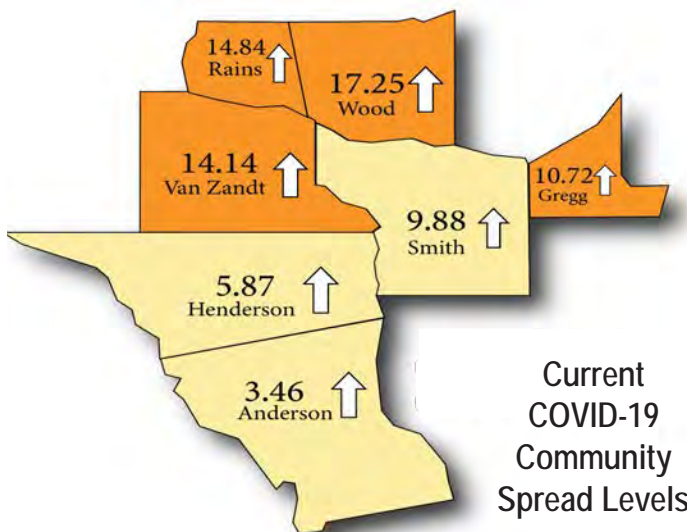
A Gladewater man was killed around 4:34 Sunday morning in an auto vs. pedestrian fatal crash on SH-31, approximately six miles west of the city of Kilgore in Gregg County.

According to DPS Troopers, the preliminary report indicates that the driver of a 2011 Toyota Corolla was traveling east on SH-31 and struck a pedestrian that was walking across the roadway.

DPS officials said the pedestrian was identified as Marino Gunter, 45, of Gladewater. Gunter was transported to Christus Good Shepard Medical Center – Kilgore where he later died. The driver of the Toyota was identified as Christopher J. Toon, 27, of Kilgore.

The crash remains under investigation.

City	Rate	Net Payment This Period	Comparable Payment Prior Year	% Change	Payment YTD	Prior Year Payment YTD	% Change
<b>GREGG COUNTY</b>							
Clarksville City	1.000%	\$6,464.26	\$8,263.03	-21.76%	\$49,159.23	\$43,951.19	11.84%
Easton	1.000%	\$5,668.08	\$5,163.20	9.77%	\$28,823.82	\$26,176.78	10.11%
Gladewater	1.500%	\$103,045.91	\$83,788.97	22.98%	\$696,602.05	\$687,761.79	1.28%
Kilgore	1.500%	\$537,401.20	\$454,206.32	18.31%	\$4,096,893.18	\$4,267,645.50	-4.00%
Lakeport	1.500%	\$24,267.30	\$20,770.37	16.83%	\$141,838.06	\$128,608.27	10.28%
Longview	1.500%	\$3,034,620.85	\$2,570,752.49	18.04%	\$21,416,385.65	\$18,857,825.22	13.56%
Warren City	1.000%	\$1,299.03	\$1,358.62	-4.38%	\$9,368.41	\$9,868.34	-5.06%
White Oak	1.500%	\$100,561.48	\$105,660.87	-4.82%	\$636,865.95	\$624,232.83	2.02%
<b>UPSHUR COUNTY</b>							
Big Sandy	1.250%	\$25,153.93	\$24,999.13	0.61%	\$159,606.27	\$137,076.98	16.43%
East Mountain	1.000%	\$2,779.90	\$3,603.46	-22.85%	\$26,903.22	\$24,741.94	8.73%
Gilmer	1.500%	\$186,232.30	\$196,199.49	-5.08%	\$1,304,447.89	\$1,237,331.42	5.42%
Ore City	1.500%	\$18,175.74	\$20,312.02	-10.51%	\$131,383.91	\$128,692.35	2.09%
Union Grove	1.000%	\$261.00	\$599.66	-56.47%	\$2,609.61	\$2,620.54	-0.41%



Current COVID-19 Community Spread Levels

Walensky during a press briefing on Thursday. She also presented data showing that less than 40 percent of residents were vaccinated in the roughly 170 U.S. counties with the highest case rates. Data from the past few months suggest that 99.5 percent of people who died from COVID-19 in the U.S. were unvaccinated. "So deaths were preventable with a simple, safe shot," Walensky added.

Indeed, data show that a complete dose of a COVID-19 vaccine

is still effective at preventing serious illness from Delta infection. A study published yesterday in the New England Journal of Medicine showed that both the Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech mRNA vaccines will likely protect against Delta, though not as well as they did with previous variants.

A separate study estimated that two doses of the AstraZeneca or Pfizer vaccines will be 60 and 88 percent effective, respectively, against symptomatic disease caused by Delta. And there is direct and indirect evidence that the single-shot vaccine from Johnson and Johnson is effective against the Delta variant, according to Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

However, a single dose of either mRNA vaccine, or a previous natural infection, barely inhibited the Delta variant, write the authors of another study published yesterday in the journal Nature.

Alarmed by the reduced efficacy against Delta, Pfizer is planning to ask for FDA authorization for a booster dose of its vaccine within the next month. Pfizer and BioNTech also announced on Thursday that they had developed an updated version of their COVID-19 vaccine that would specifically target the Delta variant. The companies expect to begin clinical trials in August.

"The only conclusion one can reasonably come to ... is please, get vaccinated. It will protect you against the surging of the Delta variant," Fauci said at a press conference on Thursday.

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# OPINION/EDITORIAL

## Gary Borders Capital Highlights



### Absent lawmakers stymie special session

Nearly 60 Texas House Democrats left the state last Monday for Washington, D.C. in an effort to stop passage of a Republican-led elections bill. This in effect blocks all legislation since the House doesn't have a quorum present. As the Austin American Statesman and other media outlets reported, Gov. Greg Abbott has threatened to arrest the absent lawmakers upon their return. While in Washington, the legislators have met with Vice President Kamala Harris and several Democratic senators to push passage of a federal elections bill that is currently stalemated.

The House Democrats have vowed to stay in Washington until the special session ends on Aug. 7. They are using private funds as well as campaign accounts to finance their decampment to the nation's capital and are mounting fundraising campaigns. San Antonio lawmaker Trey Martinez Fischer, one of the leaders of breaking the quorum, said Democrats are spending \$10,000 a day for hotel rooms and meals.

### Abbott investigates of juvenile justice department

Abbott last week directed the Texas Rangers to investigate "multiple allegations" of potentially illegal behavior among certain staff members of the Texas Juvenile Justice Department. The department operates five secure facilities and six halfway houses across the state for youthful offenders. The move comes after numerous complaints that children in state lockups are subject to widespread sexual assault and other violations.

In late 2020, Texas Appleseed and Disability Rights Texas filed a complaint with the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice, claiming "grievous violations of children's constitutional rights." TJJD has been under criticism for more than a decade for what critics term chronic understaffing, abuse and scandal, according to previous published reports.

### Invasive silver carp found in Texas waters

Invasive silver carp has been found in Texas waters, according to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. The invasive species was found in last month in Choctaw Creek, a tributary of the Red River, about 15 miles downstream from Lake Texoma.

"These are the first reports of silver carp from Texas waters, although they have previously been found in other areas of the Red River including just downstream from Lake Texoma in Oklahoma waters in 2019," said Dan Bennett, TPWD fisheries management biologist. "Invasive carp pose a significant risk to Lake Texoma's ecosystem and boaters and there is adequate flow and upstream river area for them to become established and reproduce in the lake if introduced."

The carp are not native to the United States but have become prolific primarily in the Mississippi River Basin. They compete with other species, such as shad and buffalo, and can even pose a risk to humans. They can jump up to 10 feet out of water when startled by boat engines, sometimes injuring boaters. Some can reach more than 4 feet in length and weigh nearly 90 pounds.

Anyone who catches either silver or bighead carp in Texas waters is asked to report the sighting with location information and photos to AquaticInvasives@tpwd.texas.gov. Silver and bighead carp are prohibited exotic species in Texas and must be killed upon possession by beheading, gutting, gill-cutting or other means or placed on ice. Neither species can be possessed live.

### Federal funding for behavioral health services

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission is receiving more than \$210 million in federal emergency funding for mental health and substance abuse prevention services in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The pandemic has created much higher demand for mental health and substance use disorder services across Texas," said Sonja Gaines, HHS deputy executive commissioner for Intellectual and Developmental Disability and Behavioral Health Services. "The federal emergency funding will allow us to address challenges associated with the impact of COVID-19 and help get Texans who need behavioral support on the road to recovery."

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that drug overdose deaths set a record in 2020, driven primarily by opioids. HHSC is using the emergency funding to create and implement a number of initiatives, including expanded access to treatment and recovery programs and diversion services that keep folks with mental health or substance abuse issues out of jails and emergency rooms.

### New COVID-19 cases rising sharply

Largely because of the delta variant of COVID-19 and a large percentage of unvaccinated Texans, the number of new COVID-19 cases in Texas rose sharply in the past week, with 22,773 new cases reported by the Coronavirus Resource Center at Johns Hopkins University. That's close to double the number of cases the week before, and deaths reported also increased to 192. The Centers for Disease Control reports that 99% of deaths attributed to the virus are people who have not been vaccinated.

## "Momma said..."

"Momma said there'd be days like this"...the road is just a little rough today. It is raining buckets. Our son left for Spokane, Washington this morning at 6:30 a.m. to lead helitack (helicopter crews in fighting the big fires in the Pacific Northwest.

My beloved daughter-in-heart, who is a nurse practitioner in a cardiac care center, has both her parents hospitalized in Ft. Worth with COVID. My daughter-in-heart wants all of our readers to know the importance of being vaccinated. Her dad was swayed by false internet information about vaccination. Now, her much loved parents are both struggling to overcome this deadly beast of a virus and Jenn is helpless to do anything about it.

My hubby's mom is recovering from knee replacement surgery and struggling with rehab and pain. My mother had a 'heart event' last night at my brother's home in Lubbock. She gave me 'the speech' this morning by phone about 'getting along without her'. She is almost 94 and has been giving me 'that speech' for, oh, about 15 years.

Here's the deal, I will never be without her because of all she has taught me. Just like I am never without my Dad. We lost him in 2010. And in his case, it was a relief and a release after suffering for years the effects of a mentally debilitating stroke. My 'John Wayne' of a dad whose work was his center was lost emotionally without it. We used to ride for hours in the truck and Daddy would tell me his dreams and goals for that rich black land. Almost all of those dreams were lost in the haze of that pernicious stroke.

Work ethic, along with faith, were at the center of Mom and Dad's parenting. I take after Dad. Work centers me...until it doesn't. I often bite off more than can be juggled when the ruts in the road deepen, then I have to lean into my faith...and the knowledge that I do a lot of this to myself. I know the good Lord just shakes His head, and hopefully laughs, at some of my stunts.

Currently I am writing high school UIL practice prompts for fall meets along with my newspaper reporting. I am judging the Virginia Scholastic Press Association's high school newspaper contest. I am following up on two Lee Public Library grants I have put everything I have, know, and feel, into. I have two school board meetings tonight, my hubby will help ride that trick pony. It is time to sell the ads for

## Suzanne Bardwell



the fall sports posters for Gladewater and White Oak and Lord knows, I need to be out selling advertising in all of our papers. That means we can stay in business and keep you informed and entertained with our weekly community journalism.

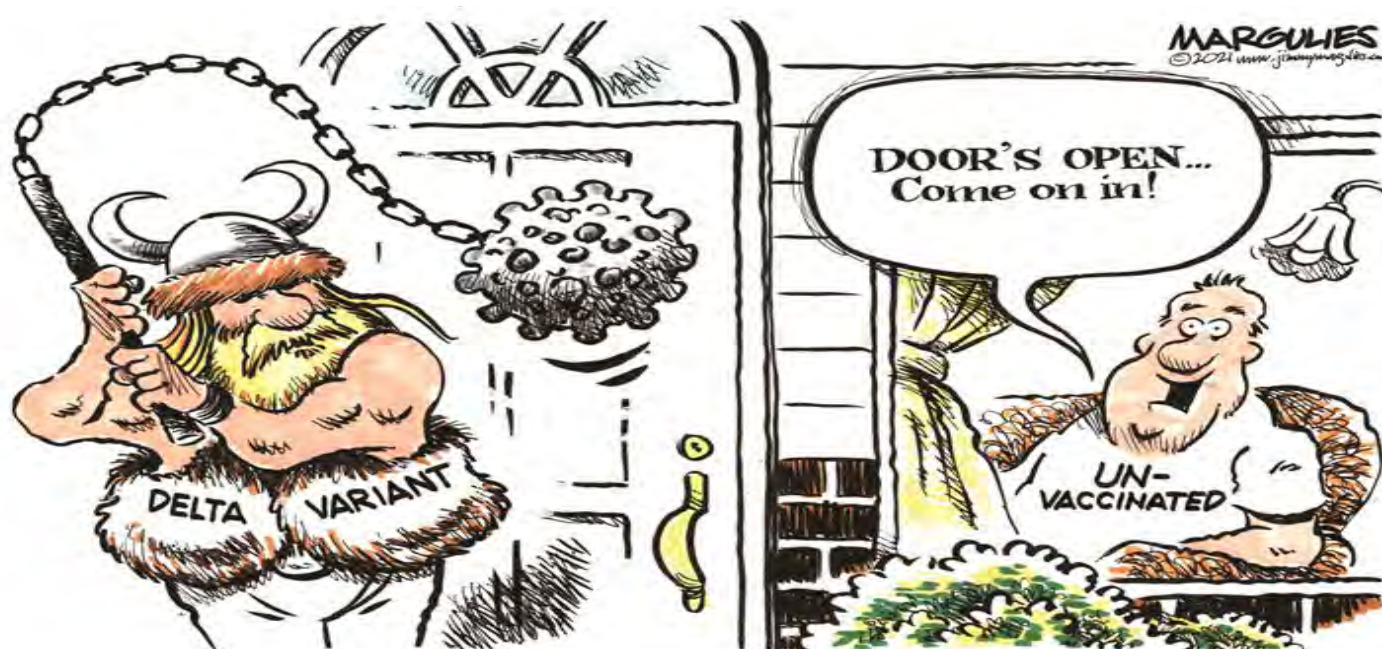
See the problem? Too many "i's" and not enough 'me'.

But that's okay. I am healthy, happy and love to work. I also love what I do and who I do it with. I love my family dearly and want to be there for them when I am needed. You know why I know it really is okay? Momma said it would be. More importantly, she showed me.

My Momma had a severely handicapped child, two other flying monkey little kids, worked with Dad on the ranch and cared for ailing relatives. She also eventually added the job of middle school secretary to that list. Middle School! Only you school people know what that means. In her later years she cared for a broken man she loved more than life.

Yep, Momma said there would be days like this...and, she showed me how to handle them by her example. I will never do it with the grace she did, but I will manage it coupled with faith, the sense of humor I got from Dad, and with the support of my sweetheart. 'Days like this' are just a part of life. Daddy would say, the only way to deal successfully with the hard stuff is to tackle it head on and keep putting one foot in front of the other until you come out on the other side.

A whole bunch of you folks are dealing with overcommitment, trouble and heartbreak. Many of you are dealing with much harder things than I am facing this day. Many of you are in pain and looking for the light at the end of the tunnel. I promise you the Light is there. Keep going my friends. Put one foot in front of the other and keep going and you WILL get there. You will find the light. I will see you on the other side.



# THE ECONOMIST

By Dr. M. Ray Perryman

## Oil's well!

The energy sector remains a key driver of the Texas economy. It dominates state exports; drilling, production, transportation, and processing activity involve substantial investments; and the massive supply chain has been entrenched and expanding for over a century.

Although the Texas economy is diverse and multifaceted, oil and gas and related activity from exploration through shipping comprise about 13-14% of overall business activity.

The pandemic spawned sheer chaos in oil markets, with prices falling from the upper \$50s per barrel to the mid-teens just two

months later. In fact, futures prices even went negative for certain contracts. The decline was caused by a combination of plummeting demand (from over 100 million barrels per day to as low as 72 million) as economies and industries around the world ceased or curtailed operations and major producers initially failed to meaningfully cut production.

Needless to say, the industry soon went into rapid shutdown mode, with rig counts in the Permian Basin falling from over 400 to just 117 in August 2020. Unlike previous downturns, however, the debacle was caused by a health crisis rather than a major structural or market problem, and prices and activity began to pick up fairly quickly. The latest rig count in the Permian Basin stands at 237, and prices are around \$75 per barrel.

Oil prices are always volatile, but current patterns suggest they are likely to trend upward in the coming months.

Current conditions are sustainable and, indeed, profitable for producers, particularly given that production costs had been falling rapidly for years before the pandemic. In addition, the enormous supply glut has been largely worked through. Demand is already about 97 million barrels per day, and I expect a new record next year. Given this situation, the recovery is a bit more subdued than might normally be expected.

One reason is that OPEC can't seem to decide on future production levels. Even countries which are usually allies are disagreeing over potential supply increases and the best path forward. Although none of

the options under consideration would dramatically alter the market, the lack of cohesiveness breeds uncertainty. The uptick in COVID cases and longer-term concerns over climate policy are also making folks skittish.

Another contributing factor is that some firms are taking a breather to replenish cash, pay investors, or reduce debt with existing production before engaging in major drilling programs. The pandemic caused major financial losses and hindered capital availability.

Underneath all of this brouhaha, however, lies one fundamental and unalterable fact. While there will doubtless be bumps along the way, the world needs massive amounts of energy for future growth, and Texas will be a major source of supply for decades to come. Stay safe!

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**PREACHING JESUS**

We are told today that we need to "preach Jesus." With that sentiment I surely am in agreement. But that leads to a question: "What does it mean, or what is involved in preaching Jesus?" In Acts chapter eight we find two occasions where Jesus was preached. One account involved the Samaritans, and the other involved the Ethiopian eunuch. In chapter 8 and verse 5 it says: "Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them." We see the result of his preaching in verse 12: "But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized." Philip's preaching resulted in their being baptized. The fact that Philip's preaching resulted in their being baptized implies that as he preached Christ (v. 5), he must have taught them to be baptized. Thus, preaching Christ includes preaching the need for baptism. The Samaritans faith led them to do what Christ said to do for the forgiveness of sins. (Acts 2: 38).

The other account is in 8: 35, involving the Ethiopian eunuch, which says: "Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at the same Scripture, preached Jesus to him." Verse 36 says: "They came unto a certain water. And the eunuch said, See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized?" Upon the confession of his faith in Jesus (v. 37) "They went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him." (V. 38). Once again it is evident that preaching Jesus includes preaching baptism. One cannot preach Jesus without preaching what Jesus said to do in order to be saved. (Mk. 16: 15-16).

On both occasions where Jesus was preached the response was the same. Both the Samaritans and the Ethiopian eunuch were baptized. Sine many tell us that baptism has nothing to do with salvation from sin, have you wondered that when Jesus is preached people were told to be baptized? Think on these things.

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## National Day of the Cowboy: Remembering the Cowboys Behind the Saga of Lonesome Dove

Keep your saddle oiled and your gun greased because the “National Day of the Cowboy” – the fourth Saturday in July – is finally here. This day celebrates the lasting legacies of the cowboys that pioneered the American West as they worked cattle, beginning after the Civil War in the heart of Texas.

If you’ve read or watched Lonesome Dove then you know the intrepid tale of the two retired Texas Rangers, Augustus “Gus” McCrae and W.F. “Woodrow” Call, who traveled from the Rio Grande in Texas to Montana in the 1870s driving a herd of stolen Texas Longhorns. These two men are the epitome of this holiday and helped define the American cowboy experience. Their story is widely regarded as one of the most realistic portrayals of the Wild West.

It may come as a surprise that this tale of two rugged cowboys that once commanded the Old West was based on a true story that centered around two tough ranchers who charted a slightly different path. Charles Goodnight and Oliver Loving were the original men which inspired the stories of the hard-working Woodrow and outgoing Gus in Lonesome Dove on their famed journey that coined the Goodnight-Loving Trail. Their work would later earn them a spot in the “Hall of Great Westerners” at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City.

Like so many good ranchers, both of these brazen Texans had humble beginnings that shaped them to be the trailblazers who we remember on the National Day of the Cowboy.

Charles Goodnight is known as the “Father of the Texas Panhandle” and earned that title for his work as an ambitious cattleman, a Texas Ranger, and veteran of the Civil War. After famously rescuing Cynthia Ann Parker from the Comanches, he went on to invent the chuck wagon during his first cattle drive on the Goodnight-Loving Trail. He later founded the first Texas Panhandle ranch in the Palo Duro Canyon.

His partner Oliver Loving was a skilled rancher and known for being a hard worker. He was commissioned to provide beef to soldiers during the Civil War and by the time General Lee surrendered in 1865, the Confederate Government reportedly owed him over \$100,000 for his service. Loving’s legacy lives on through the eponymous Loving County in Texas, the town of Loving in New Mexico, and Loving Bend on the Pecos River.

The two cowboys crossed paths about a year after the Civil War ended. Set on rebuilding their herds after the war, they formed a partnership to drive cattle on the Goodnight-Loving Trail.

Their famed journey began with 2,000 cattle near the headwaters of the Brazos River although in the film and novel, the cowboys begin



their ride at the Rio Grande in Texas and finished in Wyoming. From the Brazos they rode southwest to cross the Pecos River at Horsehead Crossing, and then followed the river north to Fort Sumner, New Mexico. The trail continued north through Colorado then finished in Wyoming.

The two men lost a whopping 400 cattle by the end of their first 700 mile trek north, but they still made \$12,000 in gold – more than they ever could have earned in the devastated post-war economy of the south.

Part of the Trail took them through the Comanche stronghold in the Staked Plains, near what we know today as Lubbock, and on their third cattle drive in their second year of their partnership, tragedy struck.

Traveling ahead of the herd, Loving and a fellow cow hand found themselves the target of a Comanche attack at Loving Bend on the Pecos River. Fatally wounded by arrows with gangrene, the poison began to set in and Loving scraped his way to Fort Sumner to spend his last hours with Charles Goodnight, his most trusted partner and friend.

Just like in Lonesome Dove, in real life Charles carried out his promise to Oliver that he’d bury him in Texas. On March 4, 1868, Loving was laid to rest at the Greenwood Cemetery in Weatherford, Texas. In the film, Captain famously jokes after the long journey to Texas, “I guess this’ll teach me to be careful about what I promise in the future.”

It is said that even years after Loving’s death, Charles Goodnight carried a photo of his friend wherever he went. Goodnight and other ranchers continued to use the route and it became one of the most prosperous cattle trails of the day.

Today, the trail lives on through Lonesome Dove and the many cattle drives that still take place all over our great state, like the unique, twice-daily cattle drive presented by the Fort Worth Herd at the Stockyards and the Longhorn Cattle Drive that’s a part of the annual Cowboy Capital Parade in Bandera, Texas.

If you haven’t already, take the time to read a classic western novel in the late Texas author Larry McMurtry’s honor and learn firsthand what the tough and hardworking individuals we call cowboys were really like.

As Gus McCrae would say, “the older the violin, the sweeter the music” and the same idea applies to these timeless tales.

## WHAT’S HAPPENING

### New Beginnings hosts Back-to-School Bash

LONGVIEW – New Beginnings Baptist Church is hosting its second Back to School Bash. The event is free with pre-registration.

Back to School Bash will take place July 31 from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. in both the Longview (2137 E. George Richey) and Gilmer (1977 State Highway 155 N.) campuses.

Participants will receive a backpack filled with school supplies, free haircuts, free food, snow cones and games. This is a family event you do not want to miss!

Please pre-register at [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd68b5E13LKIVLByPYsToZ1mRK\\_W2LpM\\_d\\_U31MaUJx2pRYOQ/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd68b5E13LKIVLByPYsToZ1mRK_W2LpM_d_U31MaUJx2pRYOQ/viewform)

### Blood drive set for UREC

Carter Bloodcare of Tyler will hold a mobile blood drive Monday morning at Upshur Rural Electric Cooperative in Gilmer.

Hours are 7 a.m. to 11 a.m. The cooperative is at 1200 W. Tyler (which is Texas 154 west.)

Donors will receive a voucher allowing them to buy one ticket, and get one free, to a Texas Rangers baseball game.

To schedule an online appointment to donate, go to [https://ww3.greatpartners.org/donor/schedules/drive\\_schedule/116158](https://ww3.greatpartners.org/donor/schedules/drive_schedule/116158).

Persons must be at least 17 years old to donate without parental consent, at least 16 to donate with it. A parental consent form must be completed for 16-year-olds.

For more information, call Carter BloodCare at 800-366-2834 or visit [CarterBloodcare.org](http://CarterBloodcare.org) online.

### Storytime held Thursdays in Gilmer

Two books will be read to small children at each of the Upshur County Library’s two weekly “Storytime” sessions Thursday in Gilmer.

“Welcome Flower Child” by B. Barrager, and “Bonjour Butterfly” by Jane O’Connor, will be presented at the 10 a.m. and 4:15 p.m. sessions, said the library’s children’s coordinator, Kari Dunn.

A craft will follow each Storytime, she added.

The library is at 702 W. Tyler (which is also Texas Hwy. 154.) The events are free to the public, but children under age 12 must be accompanied by an adult. For more information, contact the library at (903) 843-5001 or visit its website at [www.youseemore.com/upshur](http://www.youseemore.com/upshur).

## FRAUD ALERT: Beware of government impersonators

Some taxpayers have received fraudulent statements purporting to be from the Comptroller’s office. If you suspect any correspondence from our agency is fraudulent, email: [stop.spoofig@cpa.texas.gov](mailto:stop.spoofig@cpa.texas.gov).

As a reminder, the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts does not garnish wages or seize Social Security benefits. Any correspondence claiming such should be considered fraudulent.

The Comptroller’s office recently became aware of a telephone scam involving an individual falsely claiming to represent the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts. Caller ID spoofing is when a caller deliberately falsifies the information transmitted to your caller ID display to disguise their identity. Spoofing is often used as part of an attempt to trick someone into giving away valuable personal information so it can be used in fraudulent activity or sold illegally,

but also can be used legitimately, for example, to display the toll-free number for a business.

The Comptroller’s office, like other companies and government agencies, has unfortunately been the subject of a number of caller ID spoofing attacks, including, a caller falsely warning taxpayers they have a tax liability and requesting a credit card number.

Another phone scammer, also purporting to be with the Comptroller’s office and calling from a “spoofed” Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts phone number is asking taxpayers to send payment for government grants; a service the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts provides for free.

Government imposter scams made up nearly half of the 535,417 imposter scams reported to the FTC in 2018

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Pct 14 Robert Perry 903-402-9167	Pct 16 John Ussery 903-736-1192
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# City taking on railroad over downtown land

Continued from Page 1

- 1107 N. Rodeo – demolition approved.
- 506 Jeanette – tabled at this time.
- 1008 E. Broadway – 30 more days given for owner to have the structure removed.
- 611 Clearview - demolition approved.

The city has been tearing down abandoned houses and clearing overgrown lots for several years in an effort to clean up the city. The city pays for the demolition, then places a lien on the property so it can be reimbursed when the property is sold.

The city council also approved a Texas Department of Transportation Airport Corona-virus Relief Grant Program Grant Agreement for \$13,000 and authorized the city to seek a financial auditing service.

The city also granted a request for a lien forgiveness on property at 1000 N. Culver Street, with the stipulation the pending sale of the land goes through, the new owner pays off the lien, and work begins within one year on multiple houses on the property. The city will then credit the lien amount to the new owner.



Vandals broke five large planters in the downtown business district last week. The damage was discovered Friday morning. Anyone with information on this incident is asked to call the Gladewater Police Department at 903-845-2166.

## Texas Prepaid Tuition Program Newborn enrollment deadline approaches

Texas families have through July 31 to enroll their newborns in the Texas Tuition Promise Fund® and pay this academic year's rates for all or some future tuition and schoolwide required fees at Texas public colleges and universities, excluding medical and dental institutions. Newborns are children younger than 1 year of age at the time of enrollment.

"For parents of newborns, saving for college may not always be top of mind," Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar said. "That's why we're reminding new parents to take advantage of the opportunity to lock in this year's rates before next year's rates go into effect on Sept. 1."

Under the Texas Tuition Promise Fund, the state's prepaid college tuition program, participants can purchase tuition units and lock in the costs of undergraduate resident tuition and schoolwide required fees at Texas public colleges and universities based on today's prices.

For additional flexibility, the plan also can be used at Texas medical and dental institutions, private Texas colleges and universities, out-of-state colleges and universities and career schools or eligible apprenticeship programs, where tuition is not locked in and the benefits and payouts would be based on the Transfer Value.

Enrollment at 2020-21 prices closed on Feb. 28 for children 1 year of age and older. The next annual enrollment period begins on Sept. 1, with new contract prices based on Texas public college costs for the 2021-22 school year.

## Upshur nixes pay raises for elected officials

Continued from Page 1

The judge has also said the court does not plan to increase the current county tax rate of 61.5 cents per \$100 valuation.

At Thursday's meeting, Precinct 1 Commissioner Gene Dolle said he had polled county employees and found that 52 percent wanted the retirement benefit raise, while only 32 percent favored the pay increase instead. County Librarian Cynthia King said her staff told her it had not been polled, and Dolle acknowledged he had not

talked to every county worker.

Teffeller then said he thought he had a consensus to grant employees the stipend from what he called the "Joe Biden bailout." He said workers would receive more from that than a pay hike.

"I wouldn't have been for this (foregoing a salary increase) if it wasn't for the availability of the stipend," Teffeller said. He complained that Upshur County elected officials are the lowest paid in Texas' 254 counties, adding "I don't like that," and

said many on the county payroll have a second income.

"We're all due for a raise, period," said Teffeller.

Williams told the court it had to act on the matter of setting elected officials' salaries at Thursday's meeting in order to file the proposed overall county budget for 2021-22. Earlier this year, she told the court the county could not afford to increase both salaries and the retirement benefit at once because of the impact that would have on its emergency funds.

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# Texas Comptroller releases revenue estimate, projects a fiscal 2022-23 ending balance of \$7.85 Billion

Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar has provided an estimate of revenue available for the 87th Legislature, First Called Session, and now projects 2022-23 revenue available for general-purpose spending to be \$123.02 billion. Hegar projects a 2022-23 ending balance in General Revenue-Related (GR-R) funds of \$7.85 billion.



HEGAR

As state leadership prepares for a special session of the 87th Legislature, Hegar said the estimate is based on surging revenue collections, savings from state agency budget reductions during the recently gaveled Regular Session of the 87th Legislature, and the replacement of eligible GR-R appropriations with federal relief funds.

Hegar projects 2020-21 revenue available for general-purpose spending to be \$116.13 billion and the fiscal 2021 ending balance in GR-R funds to be \$5.01 billion.

"The Texas economy rebounded strongly during the spring as vaccination rates increased and the economy opened more fully, and we remain optimistic about growth in the near term as the state's economy continues to return to pre-pandemic patterns," Hegar said. "There remain reasons to expect strong revenue collections in the coming months. We have seen

exceptionally strong sales tax collections despite remittances from oil- and gas-related industry sectors remaining significantly below pre-pandemic levels. An increase in oil field activity resulting from the recent rise in oil prices could support continued sales tax growth. And personal savings remain elevated, providing potential support for continued strength in consumer spending.

"Rising case counts tied to the delta or other coronavirus variants in Texas, the U.S. or elsewhere could throttle economic growth, and as always, energy prices remain inherently difficult to predict," Hegar said. "On balance, however, the Texas economy appears poised for continued growth. Our economic outlook is cautiously optimistic, and this estimate reflects that forecast."

The Comptroller's office is expected to transfer \$1.4 billion each to the State Highway Fund and Economic Stabilization Fund in fiscal 2022 and another \$1.88 billion each in fiscal 2023. After accounting for appropriations made from the Economic Stabilization Fund by the 87th Legislature, Hegar said he now expects its balance to be \$12 billion at the end of the 2022-23 biennium.

## Texas Beef Council's 2021-2025 long range

The Texas Beef Council (TBC) has released its official 2021-2025 Long Range Plan. Developed over the past few months, this new five-year plan will guide the Texas Beef Council through 2025.

"In any industry, it's important to take a hard look at where you've been, where you are today and where you want to go in the future," said Brad Hastings, chair of the Texas Beef Council. "We reviewed the national Beef Industry Long Range Plan and used it as the foundation of our state plan. After much discussion and input, we feel that we've developed a useful tool with targeted growth strategies and tactics that will help guide the Texas Beef Council in the years ahead."

The Texas Beef Council board of directors worked together to create this industry blueprint, meeting in February 2021 to begin fleshing out the plan. The group continued working on the plan throughout the spring season and approved the final version at the Texas Beef Council's June 2021 board meeting.

The Long Range Plan is based on one primary

mission: to strengthen demand for beef as the world's most preferred and trusted protein. Keeping in mind the Texas Beef Council's commitment to promotion, research and education, the new plan reflects three core beliefs:

- The Industry Long Range Plan is the cornerstone of a strong state-national partnership.
  - Research is the foundation of all checkoff-funded activities.
  - Producer support, engagement and control of checkoff funds are essential.
- The Long Range Plan also includes:
- Grow consumer trust in beef.
  - Promote and capitalize on the multiple advantages of beef.
  - Drive growth in beef exports.
  - Grow stakeholder trust in checkoff programs. Use producer dollars to develop impactful promotion, research and education.



## WEEKLY PROJECT UPDATES

**TYLER** – TxDOT is planning to conduct the following construction and maintenance work in the district during the Week of July 19, 2021. Work schedules are subject to change due to weather conditions, equipment failure, or other unforeseen issues. Slow down and pay attention in work zones.

**Gregg County** – Longview Maintenance plans to continue bridge repairs on structures around the county. Lane closures are possible with flaggers directing traffic. Mobile operations for edge patching will be conducted on various FM roads utilizing a Truck Mounted Attenuator for traffic control.

### US 259 Improvements

Limits: Loop 281 north to curbed median  
Contractor: Longview Road and Bridge  
Cost: \$1.09 million  
Anticipated Completion Date: July 2021  
Night work is underway. Operations will be conducted from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m., Sunday through Thursday nights until completion. Expect lane closures. The project consists of constructing concrete curb and gutter in key locations in the median, asphalt work, new signs, and striping.

### Spur 63/McCann Road Bridge Project

Limits: From McCann Road, north to Glencrest Lane  
Contractor: Leland Bradlee Construction  
Anticipated Completion Date: November 2021  
This is part of the City of Longview's Guthrie Creek Trail project. It consists of building a bridge over Guthrie Creek to allow bicyclist and pedestrians to travel under Spur 63. Expect lane closures and delays as traffic is reduced to two lanes, one northbound and one southbound, to allow the contractor to build half of the bridge. Traffic will be switched later to complete the bridge construction.

### FM 2204, etc., Safety Improvement Project

Limits: US 259 Bypass to SH 322  
Contractor: Stateline Construction  
Cost: \$3.8 million  
Anticipated Completion Date: November 2021  
The contractor plans to work on drainage upgrades and driveways. Expect lane closures and delays. This project consists of culverts, safety end treatments, drainage upgrades, new metal beam guard fence and driveway asphalt.

### FM 2206/Harrison Road

Limits: From Loop 281 to Fisher Rd.  
Contractor: East Texas Bridge  
Cost: \$15.1 million  
Anticipated Completion Date: December 2021  
Current work includes extending culverts and constructing detours. Expect lane closures and delays. The project consists of widening the two-lane road to four lanes with a center turn lane. Work includes drainage structures, flexible base, curb and gutter, sidewalks, hot mix, and pavement markings.

## "Be Safe. Drive Smart." campaign now underway

AUSTIN – TxDOT is urging motorists to make safety a priority when they're behind the wheel, especially in areas where oil and gas activity often brings increased traffic and large trucks to rural areas and adjacent communities.

In 2020, nearly 70,000 crashes occurred in the state's five major energy production areas—the Permian Basin, Eagle Ford Shale, Barnett Shale, Anadarko Basin and Haynesville/Bossier Shale—resulting in 932 fatalities. Failure to control speed and driver inattention were the top reasons for crashes in these areas.

TxDOT offers these tips when driving in energy-production areas:

- Drive a safe speed, accounting for traffic, road conditions and weather.
- Focus 100% on driving and put your phone away: no talking or texting when behind the wheel.
- Give large trucks plenty of space, be patient and pass only when it's safe and legal to do so.
- Obey stop signs and traffic signals.
- Never drive under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.
- Always buckle up—drivers and passengers, day and night.

Drivers should also remember the "Move Over or Slow Down" law, requiring motorists to move over a lane or slow to 20 mph below the posted speed limit when approaching an emergency vehicle, law enforcement, TxDOT vehicle, tow truck or utility vehicle stopped with flashing lights activated on the roadside.

"Be Safe. Drive Smart." is a key component of #EndTheStreakTX, a broader social media and word-of-mouth effort that encourages drivers to make safer choices while behind the wheel such as wearing a seat belt and driving the speed limit.



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# The Delta variant is spreading fast, especially where vaccination rates are low

Continued from Page 1

Why is the Delta variant so scary?

Freely circulating viruses, especially coronaviruses and influenza viruses, which encode their genetic instructions using the molecule RNA, mutate frequently and randomly due to copying errors introduced as they replicate in their human host cells. Some mutations enable the virus to evade antibodies; some enhance its ability to infect a cell; others go unnoticed since they yield no benefits or can even weaken it.

The key to Delta's success is the collection of mutations the variant has accumulated in the spike protein, which covers SARS-CoV-2 and gives the virus its signature crown-like appearance. These mutations

have changed the spike, and, as a result, some of the existing antibodies may not bind as tightly or as often, explains Markus Hoffmann, an infectious disease biologist at the Leibniz Institute for Primate Research in Germany. Some synthetic antibody therapies, like Bamlanivimab, were unable to neutralize the Delta variant; but others such as Etesivimab, Casirivimab, and Imdevimab were still effective.

The Delta variant has mutations on the spike protein that alter how it interacts with the ACE2 receptor protein, which is found on the surface of lung and other human cells and is the portal to invade the cell. The mutation at location 452 of the spike protein, which is also present in some of the California variants, appears to make the virus more transmissible and helps it spread through the population,

explains Mehul Suthar, an immunologist at the Emory Vaccine Center. If a mutation gives a virus a fitness or reproductive advantage, that mutation tends to evolve independently around the world. Delta, its closely related variants, and the highly contagious Alpha variant all carry a mutation at position 681 of the spike protein, which is thought to be an evolutionary game changer that also makes it easier for SARS-CoV-2 to invade the host cell and spread. This mutation is fast becoming common in COVID-19 viruses around the globe.

In addition to these mutations a recent study, not peer reviewed, shows a variation at position 478 on Delta's spike that enables the virus to escape from weak neutralizing antibodies. This mutation is increasingly common in SARS-CoV-2 variants in the U.S..

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**CITY OF GLADEWATER**  
 PUBLIC NOTICE  
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 REQUEST FOR  
 PROPOSALS

The City of Gladewater is seeking proposals from qualified Certified Public Accountants for auditing services. The audit will be for fiscal years ending September 30, 2021, 2022 and 2023 for the City of Gladewater. Copies of the proposal requirements are available in the office of the City Treasurer 519 E. Broadway Gladewater, Texas 75647 or website www.cityofgladewater.com. Deadline for submitting proposals is Friday, August 20, 2021 at 12:00 p.m. For further information regarding the audit requirements, contact the City Treasurer, Juanita Fail, at 903-845-2196 Ext. 8 or jfail@cityofgladewater.com.

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**Mandatory PRE-BID:** July 27th, 2021 @ 10am  
**Location:** 325 West Pacific Avenue Gladewater, Texas 75647  
**Time of PRE-BID:** 10 a.m.

**Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference:** This PRE-Bid is **MANDATORY**. All interested proposers who may wish to submit a response to the city must attend this PRE-BID Meeting. **The PRE-BID will begin at 10am July 27th, 2021, at 10am. No admittance will be granted once meeting begins. Each attendee must sign the sign-in sheet and provide a business card for the Firm they will be representing.**

**Mandatory Pre-bid July 27th, 2021 at 10am at Lee Public Library Building.**

Sealed Proposals are to be submitted to the RFP Administrator:  
**Ricky Tow**  
 City Manager  
**City of Gladewater**

**RFP submissions to the RFP ADMINISTRATOR will be required by:**  
**August 3rd, 2021 no later than 3pm**  
**All RFP responses are to be emailed directly to Rick Tow & 4T Partnership LLC.**  
**RFP Responses to be sent to:**  
**[RTow@CityofGladewater.com](mailto:RTow@CityofGladewater.com) & [Scott.Franklin.4T@outlook.com](mailto:Scott.Franklin.4T@outlook.com)**  
*There will not be a bid opening / All Responses will be evaluated for best value and response.*

**Bid Proposals Will Be August 3rd, 2021, by 3pm.**  
*All respondents must meet all requirements and attend of the Mandatory Pre-Bid.*  
 RFP will be provided and will include Scope of Work, Insurance requirements, 100% Payment & Performance Bond project, Davis Bacon required and Specified Manufacturer Certifications, etc. Selection / Award of this RFP will be based on the responsive proposer who provides "Best Value" to the City as defined by the City Council at the time of its review.

**PRE\_BID Questions / Clarifications**  
**All PRE-BID questions / Clarifications by attendees must be emailed by 30th regarding this RFP are to be directed (via email only) to the RFP Administrator by email only:**  
**Ricky Tow**  
**[RTow@CityofGladewater.com](mailto:RTow@CityofGladewater.com)**  
**City Manager**  
**RFP City of Gladewater-Lee Public Library Roof Replacement**

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**OUT OF DATE RECORDS TO BE DESTROYED**

The Upshur County Shared Service Arrangement (UCSSA) which is comprised of the Big Sandy, Gilmer, Gladewater, Harmony, New Diana, Union Grove, and Union Hill Independent School Districts, proposes to destroy all out-of-date Special Education records contained in the eligibility folders of students who were dismissed from the program through July, 2014. Also included in this purging will be records of students who were tested and did not qualify for special education services as well as records of those who qualified but were not placed. These records are presently maintained in the UCSSA office located at 406 N Bledsoe Street, Gilmer, TX. 75644, and include referral information, educational, psychological, medical, admission review and dismissal committee minutes, individual educational plans, and classroom observation data. It is our responsibility to inform you that these records may be needed for social security benefits or other purposes and that it may be to your benefit to obtain them. Those who prefer that their records not be destroyed should send a written request to: Angie Hargett, Compliance Coordinator, Upshur County Shared Service Arrangement, 406 N Bledsoe, Gilmer, TX. 75644 before September 1, 2021. For additional information, call (903) 843-5575.

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## GHS Senior 1971 Raffle All School Reunion Fundraiser

\$10 per ticket or 12 tickets for \$100

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Model: J30TZ18 - 12 Gauge - 28" Barrel length - True Timber DRT - 3 Gun Weight - Righthand  
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Drawing Sept. 25 - Need not be present to win

## County temp workers to tackle storm issues with roads

By Phillip Williams

After hearing numerous recent complaints from citizens about county-maintained roads' conditions, Upshur County Commissioners Court last Thursday approved hiring eight temporary employees for the Road and Bridge Department by using federal grant funds.

Under grant terms, however, the funding must be used only for work that will improve draining storm water from roads, County Auditor Connie Williams pointed out Monday. Examples would include installing culverts, cleaning ditches, and, when necessary for drainage, elevating sections of roads, she said.

Thus, the workers, whose employment would expire Dec. 31, 2024, cannot construct or repair roads--only perform work involving storm water that has caused much of the current damage to county roads as "we've had a lot of extra rains," Williams said. (During Thursday's meeting, County Judge Todd Tefteller said "a lot of our roads are falling apart" due to storm water.)

Williams told the court Thursday, and previously, the grant would not cover all types of road work.

County Road Administrator Andy Jordan asked the court for the workers, saying his

department will do more road work and "we've got to have more help."

He said the temporary workers' cost would be \$335,000 a year and they would be eligible for benefits. Williams then told the court the workers would be full-time and that the grant would fully cover their salaries and benefits.

In other business at the meeting in Gilmer, the court heard Union Grove Mayor Mallory Shelton announce she wanted to file a petition to have a November election for filling vacant city council seats, a matter which would require the court's approval.

Precinct 2 Commissioner Dustin Nicholson pointed out that the court could not legally act on the matter (since it wasn't on the meeting agenda), and Tefteller said he would put it on the agenda for the court's next meeting.

The court also approved requests by Gloria McLuckie, executive director of the Gilmer Area Chamber of Commerce, to light a Christmas tree on the courthouse lawn Nov. 11 and use county property for an "art walk" that day.

The court, however, did not immediately grant her requests to place Christmas lights on the courthouse roof and to use the courthouse lawn for an April 16, 2022 Easter egg hunt.

Concerning the roof lighting, Tefteller said the county has problems with water coming into the 84-year-old courthouse and that he would coordinate with county building maintenance supervisor David Womble and McLuckie concerning roof lighting. Tefteller also said he wanted to consider the egg hunt matter later, but gave no reason.

McLuckie indicated to the court the "art walk" would involve displaying county schoolchildren's art inside businesses, but possibly also at a vacant county-owned lot across from the courthouse's north lawn. She said food trucks would be present, and that she hoped the 5 p.m.-8 p.m. event would promote "economic growth."

McLuckie also said the chamber would contact art teachers in the seven school districts lying wholly or predominantly in the county concerning artwork by students in grades 7-12.

## Free lunch for all GISD students

Continued from Page 1

School track and pit area.

The board approved the use of \$500,000 in Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief III (ESSER III) pre-awarded funds to purchase 900 Chromebooks for all students in 2nd grade to 12th grade to support the instructional needs of the district. ESSER funds are provided to school districts to help safely reopen and sustain the safe operation of schools and address the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the nation's students.

The school board also authorized the use of ESSER pre-awarded grant funds to purchase instructional materials in an amount not to exceed \$65,000 to support the instructional needs of the district.

Three TASB Policy updates were approved. The updates dealt with purchasing and acquisition, facilities construction and compensation and benefits - leaves and absences.

The 2021-22 Student Code of Conduct and the 2021-22 Employee Handbook were approved Monday. Board members were told there were no major changes, just updates to match new legislation.

Dr. Sedric Clark, GISD Superintendent, presented the latest resignations and new hires and the school board approved the following:

Contracts were approved for Jacob Walker as a PE teacher and new head baseball coach, Kindergarten teacher Katrina Davis, second grade teachers Linda Pike, Selena Boyce and Casey Norris and GHS career and technology teacher Kristyl Hester. A resignation was accepted from CTE teacher Lauree Roberts.

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## Congressmen to speak to GOP rally

U.S. Reps. Louie Gohmert (R-Tyler) and Pat Fallon (R-Sherman) will be featured speakers, and two state legislators may appear, at a free "Make America Great Again Rally" Saturday afternoon at the Gilmer Civic Center.

The Republican Party of Upshur County is sponsoring the 1 p.m. event. Co-sponsors include the Cherokee Rose Republican Women's Club and Lone Star Republican Women.

Tickets are required, but are free at the door or in advance at Clients First Insurance in Gilmer or from members of the county's GOP Executive Committee.

## Abbott signs Heartbeat Act

Texas Governor Greg Abbott, joined by Senator Bryan Hughes (R-Tyler), signed SB 8, the Heartbeat Act. The bill protects unborn children by prohibiting an abortion once a heartbeat is detected.

"The Heartbeat is the universal sign of life. Senate Bill 8 recognizes the beauty and significance of that heartbeat. I was honored to carry this bill in the Senate and I am so thankful to Representative Slawson for her stewardship in the Texas House.

"I thank Governor Abbott, Lt. Governor Patrick, Speaker Phelan, and Chairman Cain for their unrelenting commitment to the sanctity of life.

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