Gladewater Mirror

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"Your Hometown Newspaper Since 1928"

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Letters To Santa

The Jolly Old Elf has gone "Techno Santa" again this year and he knows you will really like it. That's what you told him last year!

All Letters to Santa, which use to be typed and run inside the paper and frankly were hard to read, are now on the *Gladewater Mirror* website.

The best part of this is moms and dads and grandmas and grandpas can now see all the great artwork that our young artists worked so hard to draw to impress Santa.

So pour yourself some eggnog and go to www.gladewatermirror.com or scan these QR codes, and flip through the digital Santa Leters and see what your youngster had to say to Santa this year.

Please help us thank all our great partners who make this project possible!

GLADEWATER ISD

WHITE OAK ISD

UNION GROVE ISD



In 1897, Philip O'Hanlon, a surgeon, was asked by his eight-year-old daughter, Virginia O'Hanlon, whether Santa Claus existed. His answer did not convince her, and Virginia decided to pose the question to the New York newspaper The Sun.

Sources conflict over whether her father suggested writing the letter, or she elected to on her own. In her letter Virginia wrote that her father had told her *"If you see it in The Sun it's so."*

O'Hanlon later told The Sun that her father thought the newspaper would be "too busy" to respond to her question and had said to *"[w]rite if you want to,"* but to not be disappointed if she got no response. After sending the letter she looked for a response "day after day".O'Hanlon later said that she had waited for an answer to her letter for long enough that she forgot about it. Campbell theorizes the letter was sent shortly after O'Hanlon's birthday in July and was "overlooked or misplaced" for a time.

The Sun's editor-in-chief, Edward Page Mitchell, eventually gave the letter to Francis Church. Mitchell reported that Church, who was initially reluctant to write a response, produced it "in a short time" during a single afternoon.

Church's response was 416 words long and was anonymously published in The Sun on September 21, 1897, shortly after the beginning of the school year in New York City. The editorial appeared in the paper's third and last column of editorials that day, positioned below discussions of an election law in Connecticut, a newly invented chainless bicycle, and "British Ships in American Waters".

Church was not disclosed as the editorial's author until after his 1906 death.[This sometimes led to inaccuracies: a republication in December 1897 by The Meriden Weekly Republican had attributed authorship to Dana, saying that the editorial could "hardly have been written" by any other employee of the paper.

The editorial is one of two whose authorship The Sun disclosed, the other being Harold M. Anderson's "[Charles] Lindbergh Flies Alone". Campbell argued in 2006 that Church might not have welcomed The Sun's disclosure, noting that he was generally unwilling to disclose the authorship of other editorials.

O'Hanlon wrote that some of her "little friends" had told her that he was not real.

Church's response began: "Virginia, your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the skepticism of a skeptical age."

He continued to write that Santa Claus existed "as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist" and that the world would be "dreary" if he did not. Church argued that just because something could not be seen did not mean it was not real: "Nobody can conceive or imagine all the wonders there are unseen and unseeable in the world." He concluded that:

You may tear apart the baby's rattle and see what makes the noise inside, but there is a veil covering the unseen world which not the strongest man, nor even the united strength of all the strongest men that ever lived, could tear apart. Only faith, fancy, poetry, love, romance, can push aside that curtain and view and picture the supernal beauty and glory beyond. Is it all real? Ah, VIRGINIA, in all this world there is nothing else real and abiding.

No Santa Claus! Thank God! he lives, and he lives forever. A thousand years from now, Virginia, nay, ten times ten thousand years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood.

We at the Gladewater Mirror wish a very Merry Christmas to all our readers!

WO wrangles strategy for strays to keep costs down

The City of White Oak reimburses Longview Animal Care & Adoption Center to the tune of about $25,000 per year – officials hope a new microchip scanning station and other efforts will keep the number down following a 24 percent increase in cost-per-critter.

In their December meeting, council members had no other option on the table but to approve a new contract with the shelter to cover services through Oct. 1, 2029. For each animal the city sends to the facility, the charge is going up from $201 to $249.

"As far as cost-wise, we are doing stuff to reduce the amount that we're giving the animal shelter," White Oak City Coordinator Jimmy Purcell explained. "We don't have any other options at this time to deal with our animal issues."

Fortunately, he told the council, recent efforts are having a positive impact – more pet owners in the community are getting reunited with their animals before they're sent down the road on the city's dime.

"In the past few months, things have been declining as far as how many are brought over to the shelter," Purcell added, praising the city's Animal Control Officer, Joe Theriot: "He's on top as far as also trying to collect any funds that we can."

The still-new microchip scanning station installed outside White Oak Police Department is also helping reunite strays with their owners faster.

"We're fixing to start having clinics to spread the word about having every animal in White Oak chipped free of cost."

Learn more at cityofwhiteoak.com/animalcontrol.

In other business this month, Purcell confirmed Republic Services' annual rate increase, from $16.98 to $18.56 (plus tax).

"Additional carts will stay

Continued on Page 8



A LIVING STORYBOOK

Gladewater Museum celebrates 20 years preserving the past

By Adrienne Brown
Special to the Mirror

The Gladewater Museum sits facing historic red brick streets, looking out over the Union Pacific Railroad tracks and the town's famous antique shops. A familiar fixture in downtown, the museum's full of well-cared-for and well-researched displays depicting Gladewater's 150-plus year history, a plain Art Deco masonry building inviting visitors to step inside and peer into the past through the loving lens crafted by its caretakers.

Functioning solely on donations and volunteers, Gladewater Museum works to connect the people of the past – those who helped develop Gladewater into what it is today – with current residents of the town. While many drift into the museum to soak up stories about this corner of East Texas, the museum itself has an interesting history of its own.

On Sunday, Nov. 9, Gladewater Museum celebrated its 20th anniversary. Elaine Roddy, the museum's director, was excited to show off a new exhibit chronicling the museum's history through the decades. While the museum was established in the early 2000s, efforts to create it began much earlier.

The Gladewater Historical Society – later known as the Gladewater Museum Association – began collecting information about the town in the early 1970s in order to publish its history in book form. Later, in 1987, the organization began laying the groundwork for a museum to preserve Gladewater's history, storing shelves of nostalgic and historical items in various places around Gladewater. These items eventually found a home in the Ellen Bauman Community Center building when the Gladewater Museum officially opened on Nov. 4, 2005.

This historic building was completed in 1939, just before its next-door neighbor, the Gladewater Post Office. Originally belonging to Gregg County, the building was later given to the City of Gladewater. Over the years, the building has hosted Meals on Wheels, square dances, school events, weddings and

Continued on Page 10

OPINION/COMMENTARY

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

The Christmas table ...



When I was young Santa always visited my granny and granddaddy's house on Seven Pines Road (FM 1844 to anyone under 50) here in Gregg County. That is where we all gathered on Christmas Eve.

It was a glorious time for an only child and the only grandchild. Sure, I was spoiled and I loved every minute of it. Heck, it was Christmas and when it's that time of year, all's fair in love and war and presents.

I remember the aroma that floated from my granny's kitchen so many years ago as the smell of turkey and dressing and cherry pies mixed with the smell of rolls baking in the oven.

Then there was the overwhelming fragrance of the Christmas tree, which was always real and rather gangly. Best of all, I got to help cut down the tree with my granddaddy and that was pretty special.

I remember us drawing pictures with our fingers on steamed-up kitchen windows from all of the Christmas cooking. And I remember watching as my granny and great-grandma would use every pot, every skillet and every baking dish to prepare everyone's favorite dish. And sometimes I got to help make the cherry pie or cherry cobbler - my favorites.

Oh, how I loved shaking all the beautifully wrapped Christmas gifts that had my name on them. And then shaking them again just for good measure.

I remember watching the rare snowfall on Seven Pines Road with my mom, two aunts and uncle and loving every minute of it, even though my father would complain about snow causing hazardous driving conditions.

I guess the best thing I remember was when all the family would gather at the kitchen table for dinner - everyone was elbow to elbow around what I thought then was the biggest oak table in the world. I can see them to this day – granddaddy sat at the head of the table, with my chair scooted right up by his. Uncle George and my aunts Cheryl and Marilyn would be sitting by the windows, while mom and dad and my great-grandma would be on the opposite side, along with my step great-grandfather Mert. My granny – when she wasn't busy keeping food bowls and serving dishes full – would be opposite my granddaddy and me.

Then just as we were about to dive in to the best meal ever on my piece of earth, my great-aunt Belle and great-uncle Gene would come through the door – late as usual – and we would squeeze two more chairs around the table.

There we were in all our glory – everyone talking at the same time and everyone fidgeting trying to get some much-needed elbow room and not finding a spare inch around the table. We were squeezed in like sardines – but you know what - I really didn't notice and I really didn't care. I was all smiles - ear to ear - because I was in the happiest place on earth with the people I loved the most.

My granny and granddaddy passed away many years ago and as you all know I lost Suzanne almost four years now. My stepdad Gary is gone, as is my father and almost everyone else who mattered in my tiny corner of the world.

And that old kitchen table, which now sets in my mom's house, is pretty bare these days - just my mom and I are left from those fun filled crazy family gatherings.

My son Josh and daughter-in-law Jennifer now have their traditions and her family, and I recently got married and will spend Christmas with Abigail and my stepdaughters Julia and Jada up at our house in North Dallas. It will be my first time in 70+ years away from Seven Pines at Christmas.

It will be different but it will be family - different faces in different places with different traditions.

Maybe we'll watch *"It's A Wonderful Life"* like Suzanne always had us do or enjoy 24 hours of *"A Christmas Story"* like Josh loved to do each Christmas.

One thing is for sure - when I start to feel down due to so many lost loved ones - I'll just squint real hard so I can see that full table from when I was little and I will again feel my granddaddy sitting next to me and that's a pretty good Christmas present I give to myself each year.

Merry Christmas to you all and I hope you too have a happiest place on earth you can turn to this season - past or present.



The Best of Suzanne Bardwell



...reaching for Christmas

The last couple of years have brought isolation, loss and loneliness for many. As we approach Christmas Day let us be grateful for what we have, and for what we have had. Life is far too short to hold on to heartbreak, anger and grudges. Follow the light of the Christmas Star to the Prince of Peace and choose joy even in the midst of darkness. The light will come. Hold on, and if you feel that you can't, reach for someone who can. Soon you will find that you are the hand someone else is reaching for. May the light of Christmas fill your heart and feed your soul.

WHAT I CAN
AFFORD TO GIVE YOU

I can not give you an impressive gift.
Only wishes, which are in short shrift
in a world that values things above all else,
and is ever concerned with the fulfillment of self.

So on this day most holy,
my gifts to you are only--
the ones that from the heart springs
and have meaning only if you have the eyes to see.

I WISH FOR YOU:
--a sense of wonder your whole life through
so that life is ever new--
--the realization that the joys of life and good health
are not found in things and wealth.
Along with your health may you always keep
the knowledge that to see, and hear, to walk and talk, and think;
are miracles, gifts, not a promise that is cheap-

--I wish for you love and the ability not to take it for granted,
whether it is a mate, a child or friend,
for we must remember that hearts are the hardest things to mend--
--And finally, when you are overwhelmed with the cares and problems of this life,
May someone remind you that it really is
A WONDERFUL LIFE!
Merry Christmas!
Suzanne Brown Bardwell

Merry Christmas
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NEWSPAPERS DELIVER NEWS YOUR WAY
8 out of 10 Americans read print or digitally accessed newspaper content every month.
Telling Our STORIES
CELEBRATING NATIONAL NEWSPAPER WEEK | OCTOBER 6-12, 2024
Source: America's Newspapers 2024 Local Newspaper Study conducted by Coda Ventures

October scared up enough sales to send December over the line

Just in time for Christmas, Gladewater ends the calendar year with a little something extra in its sales tax stocking.

October sales weren't quite as kind to the City of White Oak, but the community still closes 2025 with a healthy surplus of 7.79 percent more than 12 months back.

Acting Texas Comptroller Kelly Hancock's office distributed $1.2 billion in monthly sales tax revenue to local governments across the state earlier this month. Reaching cities, counties, transit systems and special purpose districts, the statewide take was 7.5 percent more than in December 2024.

The allocations for the last month of the year are based on October sales reported by businesses that file monthly.

In Gladewater, December 2025's revenue came in at $142,865, a 6.02 percent gain on the same month in '24. It brings the total sales tax for the calendar year to about $1.75 million, a 1.35 percent increase compared to the previous period.

White Oak's final check for 2025 was $145,159, a 5.75 percent decrease compared to 12 months ago. That said, the city's total collections for 2025 exceed $1.77 million, falling a bit shy of 8 percent more than 2024's $1.64 million.

Clarksville City saw a 13.72 percent gain on December 2024 and is up 2.23 percent for the whole of 2025. Gregg County's allocation check was $1.85 million this month, an 8.59 percent gain on the same month last year that brings the total for 2025 to $21.23 million, almost 4 percent more than the previous 12-month period.

Upshur County, too, saw a 6.9 percent gain on December 2024 in this month's $168,363 check, bringing the total for 2025 to almost $2 million, a 3.84 percent year-to-year gain.

Union Grove's far smaller than its neighbors, but it did reap $759.60 in this month's allocation from the comptroller's office, a 35.57 percent gain on December 2025 that brings the year's total to $9,822.65 in sales tax revenues, 18.28 percent more than Calendar Year 2024.

City	Rate	Net Payment This Period	Comparable Pmt. Prior Year	% Change	Payment YTD	Prior Year Payment YTD	% Change
GREGG CO.	0.500%	$1,851,609.54	$1,705,116.52	8.59%	$21,231,425.84	$20,434,762.45	3.89%
Clarksville City	1.000%	$9,344.50	$8,216.50	13.72%	$116,041.54	$113,505.70	2.23%
Easton	1.000%	$4,034.67	$6,984.55	-42.23%	$62,392.13	$59,352.94	5.12%
Gladewater	1.500%	$142,865.58	$134,744.00	6.02%	$1,751,742.10	$1,728,341.56	1.35%
Kilgore	1.500%	$883,375.34	$857,773.15	2.98%	$10,370,081.12	$10,101,982.05	2.65%
Lakeport	1.500%	$24,882.03	$21,418.05	16.17%	$364,621.78	$287,460.47	26.84%
Longview	1.500%	$4,012,495.34	$3,661,109.18	9.59%	$46,658,350.74	$44,988,080.62	3.71%
Warren City	1.000%	$1,539.51	$3,352.77	-54.08%	$49,087.59	$25,350.83	93.63%
White Oak	1.500%	$145,159.02	$154,016.11	-5.75%	$1,773,139.69	$1,644,966.81	7.79%
UPSHUR CO.	0.500%	$168,363.72	$157,494.27	6.90%	$1,998,433.99	$1,924,419.84	3.84%
Big Sandy	1.250%	$22,076.57	$22,760.93	-3.00%	$314,634.16	$295,978.53	6.30%
East Mountain	1.000%	$4,283.72	$4,387.15	-2.35%	$59,181.32	$56,512.22	4.72%
Gilmer	1.500%	$233,729.84	$224,388.34	4.16%	$2,823,792.53	$2,766,319.64	2.07%
Ore City	1.500%	$22,994.10	$19,249.47	19.45%	$260,400.07	$204,593.13	27.27%
Union Grove	1.000%	$759.60	$560.30	35.57%	$9,822.65	$8,304.32	18.28%











REVENGE, OR "GETTING EVEN"

On an episode of the old Amos 'n Andy comedy routine, Andy was being bullied by a big fellow who kept slapping him on his chest. Finally, Andy decided to get even. He said: *"I'm fixed for him. I put a stick of dynamite in my vest pocket, and the next time he slaps me, he's gonna get his hand blowed off!"* Also. you may have heard about the fellow who was told by his physician *"Yes indeed, you do have rabies."* Upon hearing this, the patient immediately pulled out a pen and pencil and began to write. Thinking the man was making out his will, the doctor said, *"Listen, this doesn't mean you're going to die. There's a cure for rabies." "I know that."* said the man. *"I'm makin' a list of people I'm gonna bite."* These funny little stories illustrate a truth that's not so funny: revenge is dangerous business! You see, trying to get even with people who wrong us may cause us to end up destroying ourselves. God's Word has some good advice for us about revenge. Or perhaps we shouldn't call it *"advice"* at all. Bible teachings about revenge are commandments from God!

In the Old Testament, Proverbs 20: 22 says: *"Don't say, I will get even for this wrong. Wait for the Lord to handle the matter."* Proverbs 24: 29 says: *"And don't say, now I can pay them back for all their meanness to me! I'll get even!* In the New Testament, God tells us "*Never recompense (pay back) evil for evil for anyone. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable. Do your part to live in peace with everyone, as much as possible. Never avenge yourselves. Leave that to God. For it is written, I will take vengeance; I will repay those who deserve it, says the Lord," (Rom. 12: 17-19).* First Thessalonians 5: 15 says: *"See that no one pays back evil for evil but always try to do good to each other and to everyone else."* And 1 Pet. 3: 9 tells us: *"Don't repay evil for evil. Don't retaliate when people say unkind things about you. Instead pay them back with a blessing. That is what God wants you to do. And He will bless you for it."*

Yes, my friend, revenge is a dangerous business. Not only can hatred consume us, but revenge is sinful and we can be as quickly condemned for breaking God's law against revenge as the person who wronged us in the first place. Don't destroy yourself trying to *"get even"* with someone who has done wrong to you. What good can come from hurling insult for insult? Don't allow an offensive word, insult, or tasteless remark to lead you down the road of retribution as a code of conduct. It only leads to sin and chaos. Think on these things.

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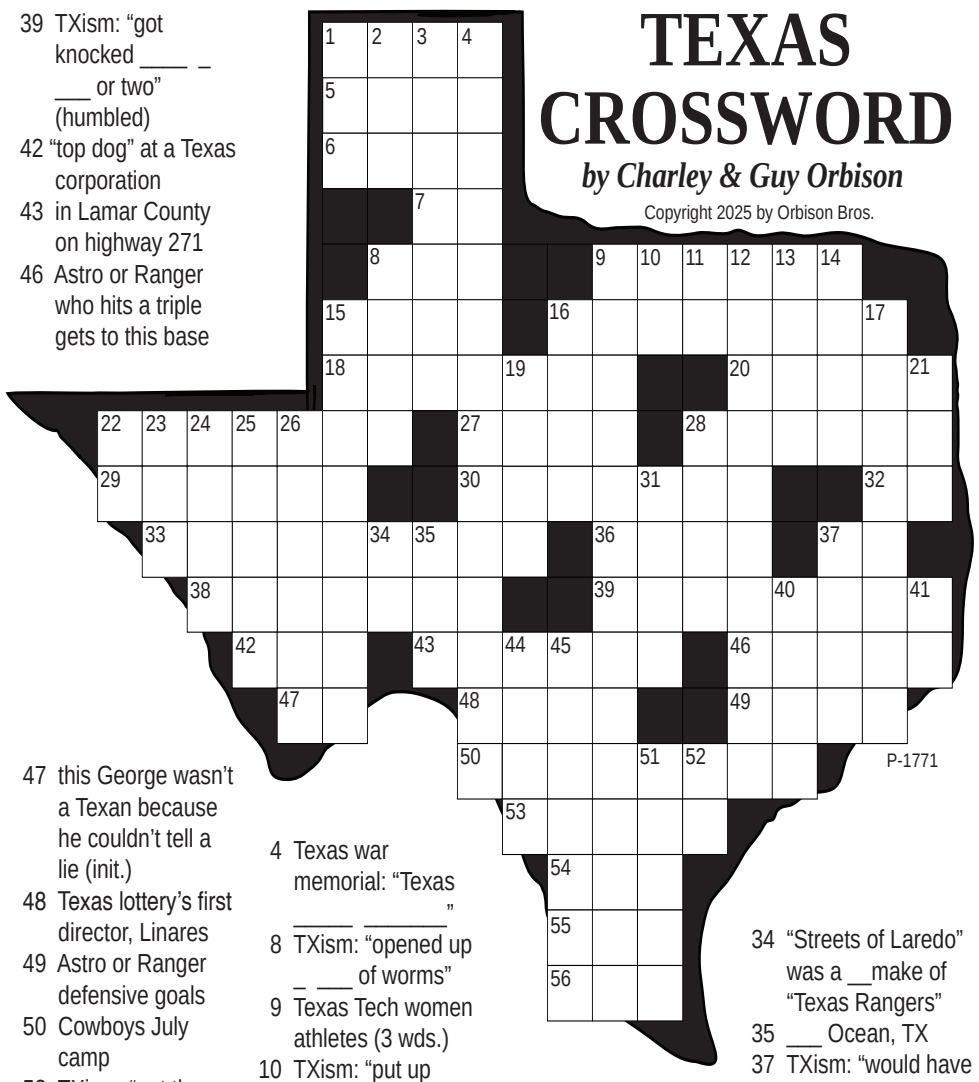
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by Charley & Guy Orbison

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P-1771

ACROSS

1 TXism: "eats ____ on the hog" (rich)
5 early Fort Worth lawless area: "Hell's Half ____"
6 TX Roger Miller's "Dang Me" was 1964 best country song of the ____
7 TXism: "pay him __ never mind" (ignore)
8 TXism: "in a coon's ___" (long time)
9 TXism: "porch sitter"
15 high cards
16 TXism: "packed like _____ in a can"
18 TX Willie Nelson benefit concert series (2 wds.)
20 TX Tommy Lee Jones was Woodrow _ ____ in TV series "Lonesome Dove"
22 TXism: "a _____ __ the pan"
27 TX Roy Orbison's "____ the Lonely"
28 rustled cattle
29 A&M's color, with white
30 with "sodium," it's fertilizer
32 Texas' __ Pepper
33 TXism: "_____ as lightning striking your zipper"
36 Gen. Robt. _ ___
37 former ABC reporter from Texas, Donaldson (init.)
38 San Antonio's King William Street was named after King _____ I of Prussia
39 TXism: "got knocked ____ _ ___ or two" (humbled)
42 "top dog" at a Texas corporation
43 in Lamar County on highway 271
46 Astro or Ranger who hits a triple gets to this base
47 this George wasn't a Texan because he couldn't tell a lie (init.)
48 Texas lottery's first director, Linares
49 Astro or Ranger defensive goals
50 Cowboys July camp
53 TXism: "got the short ___ __ the stick"
54 topaz: state ____
55 Astro or Ranger pitchin' stat.
56 fed. govt. ID no.

DOWN

1 horse morsels
2 Texas Blue Bell treat: ___ cream
3 ex-mayor of Fort Worth, Kay
4 Texas war memorial: "Texas _____ _____"
8 TXism: "opened up _ ___ of worms"
9 Texas Tech women athletes (3 wds.)
10 TXism: "put up __ shut up"
11 it can be classified
12 El Paso theater has a _____-___ Wurlitzer organ
13 name before Exxon
14 TXism: "____ McCoy" (genuine)
15 TXism: "that's _ ____ ___ do you do"
16 Red River sediment
17 tobogganers
19 rare birds seen at Bentsen State Park
21 Texas pitching legend, Ryan (init.)
22 not an AM station
23 Texas boy
24 TXism: "got _ ___ deal" (got cheated)
25 drive-in restaurant found in Texas
26 TXism for "pistol"
28 TXism: "____ in his own juice"
31 TXism: "got _ ___ of arrows in his quiver" (capable)
34 "Streets of Laredo" was a __make of "Texas Rangers"
35 ___ Ocean, TX
37 TXism: "would have to prime my mouth to ____" (thirsty)
40 embrace (2 wds.)
41 Dallas County was named for this George (init.)
44 sweat outlet
45 fruit grown in the Rio Grande Valley
51 TX Roddenberry line: "where __ ___ has gone before"
52 TXism: "__ he's a rooster, he'll crow" (inevitable)

See Answers On Page 5A

UIL conference cutoff numbers released

AUSTIN - The University Interscholastic League (UIL) released its conference cutoff numbers for 2026-28 last Tuesday.

According to snapshot numbers received by the UIL, here are the conference alignments for East Texas football teams. Enrollment numbers are in parentheses. Other conference cutoffs are listed under the 1A Division II football alignment.

6A (2,215 and up)
Tyler Legacy (2,800)
Longview (2,400)

5A Division I (1,830-2,214)
Tyler High (2,083)
Lufkin (2,014)

5A Division II (1,305-1,829)
Nacogdoches (1,769)
Mount Pleasant (1,502)
Hallsville (1,483)
Whitehouse (1,422)
Marshall (1,407)

4A Division I (896-1,304)
Lindale (1,296.5)
Pine Tree (1,266.5)
Sulphur Springs (1,254.5)
Jacksonville (1,254)
Kilgore (1,127.5)
Livingston (1,107)
Chapel Hill (980)
Henderson (962)
Palestine (946)
Bullard (905)

4A Division II (550-895)
Gilmer (878.5)
Athens (864)
Wills Point (786)
Brownsboro (777)
Carthage (761)
Van (717)
Center (681)
Pittsburg (665)
Canton (647)
Rusk (594)
Spring Hill (593)
Jasper (582)

3A Division I (367-549)
Rains (508)
Eustace (497)
Mineola (483)
Gladewater (470)
Diboll (469)
Huntington (467)
Sabine (458)
Mount Vernon (450)
Winnsboro (438)
Kirbyville (430.5)
White Oak (418)
Tatum (402)
Malakoff (402)
Westwood (396)
Trinity (377)
Crockett (371)

3A Division II (246-366.9)
Woodville (363)
Jefferson (361)
Grand Saline (355)
West Rusk (347)
Quitman (344)
New Diana (339)
Daingerfield (323)
Hughes Springs (319)
Elkhart (315)
Troup (311)
Winona (304.5)
Edgewood (299)
Arp (286)
Harmony (258)

2A Division I (175.6-245.9)
Paul Pewitt (244)
Corrigan-Camden (242)
Alba-Golden (241)
Waskom (240)
Shelbyville (236.5)
Como-Pickton (235)
Frankston (235)
Hawkins (229)
Union Grove (228.5)
Groveton (226)
Garrison (220)
Ore City (212)
Elysian Fields (207)
Hemphill (204)
Harleton (198)
Beckville (197)
Cayuga (195.5)
Timpson (193)
Carlisle (191)
Joaquin (189)
San Augustine (186)
Lovelady (176)

2A Division II (105-175.5)
Linden-Kildare (173)
Big Sandy (173)
Cushing (163.5)
Grapeland (163)
West Sabine (160)
Overton (156)
Alto (151)
Cross Roads (141)
Tenaha (140)



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Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good ride!

Truman Smith Toy Run rolls again, bigger and happier with each year

By James Draper

The ride was most definitely good, once again, as a two-wheeled caravan of big-hearted bikers roared into Gladewater to drop off a sleigh-full of gifts at the Truman W. Smith Children's Care Center.

Unsurprisingly, the annual gesture by the men and women of Outlaws Longview Bar plucked heartstrings online, with tens of thousands of social media viewers tuning in to see twin columns of chrome and leather rolling down Highway 80 at the most wonderful time of the year. See the video via tinyurl.com/2025toyrun

We at the Mirror saved the story for today's issue because, well, we hope it warms your heart at Christmas as much as it did ours Dec. 13.

"It's awesome," said Brenda Kluttz, grateful mother of 40-year-old Jordan Gafford, who's spent the past 27 years of his life at the Truman Smith Center.

This year marked the riders' 33rd annual trek from Longview to Gladewater, welcomed with happy tears from parents and caregivers alike alongside big smiles and excitement from the kids and adults in care.

"These people are so kind every year," Kluttz said, gleeful as Santa, the Grinch and long-bearded, helmeted elves brought the Christmas spirit to the center with thunderous noise and tender greetings. Kluttz, looking toward her son and his fellows in their wheelchairs, was grateful for the gesture: "They get to be normal when this happens every year."

Linda Ramirez was all smiles, too, as her son, 37-year-old Bryan Carroll, also got warm attention from the visitors. Bryan's been in care at the facility for 28 years alongside Jordan.

It's pretty common to see the center's staff moved to tears alongside the parents, Ramirez said.

"You can see how well they take care of them. This is place is very special, like no other," she added. Thanking the happy horde of gift-givers, "It's just a true blessing, year after year.

"They love listening to the revving of the motorcycles."

Outlaws owner and toy run lead organizer Lynn Kelly, clad in red with white fur trim, bubbled over with excitement as her merry band reached the venue. She gripped facility director Rhonda Rolen-Welch in an ecstatic embrace as the riders formed two lines to unload their trailer full of gifts.

"Thank you, everyone that came today," Kelly shouted over the din of excited voices of scores of men and women who made the annual trek. In addition to the pile of presents, she handed Rolen-Welch a white envelope: "We all pitched in and we got the kids one of those big, big ball pits. It'll be here in January."

Truman W. Smith Activity Director Cassandra Hall received a warm embrace, too, for her efforts in coordinating the facility's Angel Tree.

"It was a team effort," she insisted.

"It was incredible," Rolen-Welch added.

It's all about giving the medically-fragile "kids" – youngsters and adult patients, as well – the very best Christmas possible.





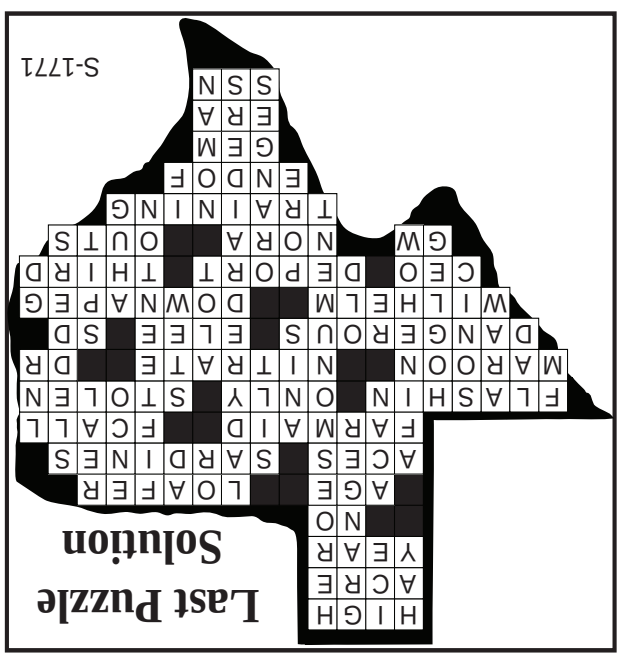
"I can tell you this, I feel like this was our most successful toy run. I really do, between gifts, people, bikes," Kelly said. "We had a lot of people supporting the toy run this year. We're hoping every year we're going to make it bigger."

And what does it mean to the riders?

"Everything. More than people realize. They jump out and really do it."



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What's Happening?

2026 MLK Gospel Brunch set for Jan. 19th

Christmas and New Year's get all the focus at end-of-year, but more holidays are ahead, and the Gladewater MLK/Juneteenth Committee is spreading the word about their annual Martin Luther King Day Gospel Brunch.

"Come and join us as we celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. King," featuring a new theme for 2026: "The Power of Unity Begins With us."

This year's event will be hosted at the Antique Capitol RV Park Event Center at 500 S. Loop 485. The 2-hour brunch and celebration begins at 10 a.m. Monday, January 19, on the federal holiday for the famed civil rights leader.

The guest speaker for the 2026 event is the Rev. Frederick Tennison of Gilgal Baptist Church in Gilmer, and the celebration will also feature a performance by the congregation's youth choir.

Tax payers urged to mail payments early in Upshur

Upshur County Tax Assessor-Collector Luana Howell's office warns taxpayers that waiting till or even near the Jan. 31 deadline to mail property tax payments could cause the payer to risk being assessed a penalty for late payment.

That's because the United States Postal Service has changed its procedure for postmarking mail, and doesn't always postmark it on the day the USPS picks it up, said the office's chief deputy, Johnny Villanueva. Therefore, a payment sent Jan. 31, or soon before that date, may be postmarked past Jan. 31, he explained.

Since a payment is considered late if postmarked after that date, the taxpayer must thus pay a penalty even if he/she actually dropped the payment in the mail by Jan. 31, the chief deputy warned.

Villanueva recommends mailing no later than Jan. 26, although he cautioned that even sending payments that soon doesn't guarantee they will be postmarked on time since mail from this area is now postmarked in Shreveport, La.

In a press release, he said experts recommend paying taxes online as an option for those who are worried about mailing them too close to the deadline and want to ensure the payments aren't delinquent.

To pay Upshur County taxes (including county, city and school taxes) online, Villanueva said, take these steps:

Visit https://www.countyofupshur.com.

Click on the "find it fast" portion of that home page, then "go down to tax information and select online tax payments."

"Search for your property by owner name, property address or account number." The tax office suggests using the account number as the "quickest and easiest way to find your account information."

Those paying online with a credit or debit card are charged a 2.5% fee, but those using echeck instead pay a flat $2 fee.

For more information, contact the main tax office in Gilmer at 903-843-3085.



LAST BUT NOT LEAST – A new microchip scanning station outside White Oak Police Department aims to reunite stray animals with their owners as soon as possible. Granted, it only works if the critters are chipped, so the City of White Oak is coordinating with animal advocates for free microchipping clinics in the months ahead.



January plans for county library announced

Although the Upshur County Library in Gilmer will be closed Jan. 1-5 and several other days next month, it has several activities scheduled in January.

The Friends of the Upshur County Library organization will meet at the library, 702 W. Tyler (which is also Texas 154) at 6 p.m. Jan. 6.

The library's book club for adult readers will meet there at 6 p.m. Jan. 13.

"Teen game night" for ages 12-18 is set for 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 24.

As detailed elsewhere in this issue, the format for the "Storytime" readings to young children on Thursdays is changing, and that activity won't be held due to the Christmas and New Year's Day holidays until Jan. 8.

The library closes at noon Jan. 16 and remains closed through Jan. 19, which is the Martin Luther King birthday holiday. The facility will also close some other days next month.

For more information, contact the library at 903-843-5001.

Kick start '26 with a' First Day Hike' at a Texas State Park

AUSTIN – Celebrate the beginning of a new year and the start of America's semiquincentennial (America 250) with a First Day Hike at a Texas State Park.

This annual tradition is a unique opportunity for people of all ages and skill levels to experience Texas' wild places through ranger-guided and self-guided walks, bike rides, paddling trips, polar plunges and more as part of the national initiative aimed at getting people outdoors.

Last year, Texas once again broke the historical record for participation numbers. Texas State Parks hosted 178 events where 9,484 participants hiked a combined 18,932 miles. The number of events, participants and miles are all new records for the fourth straight year. Texas also outpaced the nation with the most sites, events and participants.

"One of the many reasons that I love Texas is the nice weather that we can have even in the winter, and there is no better way to spend a beautiful January day than walking with friends and family at a Texas State Park," said Rodney Franklin, director of Texas State Parks. "Each year, Texas leads the nation as thousands of Texans turn out to a nearby state park to ring in the new year and celebrate with a First Day Hike. I always look forward to seeing the photos of smiling folks enjoying parks on January 1, and this New Year's Day is extra special as we also ring in America's 250th birthday. Hope to see you on the trail!"

Trails at Texas State Parks range in length and difficulty. Some short, easy trails are perfect for family-friendly scenic strolls, while more strenuous ones can challenge experienced hikers. Trail maps for all Texas State Parks can be found on the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) website, the official Texas State Park app and individual park webpages.

"State parks across the country protect and provide access to the landscapes, stories and places that create the fabric of our country," says America's State Parks President Paul McCormack. "As our country starts to celebrate its 250th birthday in 2026, we invite you to start your year on a First Day Hike enjoying and celebrating our incredible public lands."

TPWD strongly encourages anyone planning a trip to a Texas state park to reserve a day pass in advance since some parks are expected to reach their capacity limit. Reserve day passes online through the TPWD reservation website or by calling the Customer Service Center during regular business hours at (512) 389-8900.

Anyone with the resolution of visiting multiple state parks in 2026 can purchase a Texas State Parks Pass (TSPP). The $70 TSPP waives entrance fees to all state parks for passholders and guests in their vehicle for a full year. Additionally, passholders get discounts on overnight reservations, state park store purchases and more.



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Sports roundup

By Tyler Sutton

The Gladewater Bears basketball team continued their non district schedule as they hosted the DeKalb Bears and in the battle of the Bears, it went to the home team as Gladewater 54-50. Micha Timmons continued his red hot streak as he went off for 23 points. Landen King chipped in 16 points and Amarion Minter had 14. The Bears then headed to Brownsboro to take part in the Great East Texas Shootout where they went 1-3 with a win over Pittsburgh (67-52) and losses to Tyler High (78-48) , Nacogdoches (60-49) and host Brownsboro (69-50).

The Bears are now 5-4 and will next be in action with a road game at Daingerfield and then head to Martin's Mill for a tournament.

The Gladewater Lady Bears also continued their non district portion of their season as they hosted Kilgore and in a back and forth game fell 46-38. Kilgore lead 10-7 after the 1st quarter. The game was tied 18-18 at the half. The 3rd quarter was the difference as Kilgore outscored the Lady Bears 12-4 to take a 30-22 lead to the 4th. That was followed by heading to Gary for a tournament where they went 0-3 with losses to Shelbyville, Timpson (53-34) and Henderson (54-38).

They now set at 1-12 and will next be in action when they open district play hosting Arp before Christmas break.

The White Oak Roughnecks continued their non conference schedule as they hosted Teneha and came away with a 34-33 win. Tysen McClain led a balanced White Oak scoring attack with 13 points. McClain also had five rebounds for the Roughnecks. Cal Jester added nine points, eight rebounds, three blocks and two steals, Campbell Sutton and Andrew Rector eight points apiece and Mac Smith four points and five rebounds. That was followed up by traveling to Brownsboro to participate in the Great East Texas Shooutout where they went 3-2 with wins over Henderson (52-49), Brownsboro (53-37) and Trinity (50-45) with losses to Whitehouse (44-22) and Nacogdoches (45-28) . Against Henderson, Cal Jester had 19 points, Tysen McClain 11 points and 10 rebounds, Mac Smith and Andrew Rector seven points apiece and Jackson Steele two points. Campbell Sutton had 18 points, Smith 14 points and six rebounds, Rector 10 points, McClain five points, Jester three points, Dominick Jackson two points and six rebounds and Steele one point against Brownsboro. Sutton and Smith both knocked down four 3-pointers. Against Whitehouse, Jester and McClain had five points apiece, Rector four, Sutton three, Smit hand Jackson two each and Steele one. Sutton drilled five 3-pointers and finished with 19 points against Trinity. Jester added 10 points, Rector nine, Jackson seven and Smith five.

White Oak now sits at 5-9 and will next be in action with a home game vs Mount Pleasant Chapel Hill.

The White Oak Ladynecks were in action as they hosted Jefferson and fell 57-31. White Oak now sits at 9-12 on the season will next be in action when they will play their first two district games as they travel to Troup and then host Tatum.

The Union Grove Lions hosted the Mount Vernon Tigers and came away with a 48-45 victory. Wrigley Roberts and Hudson Wightman scored 19 points apiece, That was followed by a trip to Cushing for a tournament where they went 1-2 with a win over Elkhart (34-33) and loses to Cushing (68-59) and Arp (60-27).

Union Grove is now 4-9 and will next be in action with a home game vs Overton and a road trip to New Summerfield.

The Union Grove Lady Lions continued their red hot start to the season as they traveled to Cushing and came back with a trophy as the won it with a perfect 4-0 record with wins over Joaquin (47-38), Martinsville (50-18), Rusk (43-24) and Cushing in the Championship game (44-26). The Lady Lions are now 15-1 and will next be in action when they open up district play heading to McLeod before Christmas break.

Bears earn accolades at banquet

The Gladewater community was out in full force at the Gladewater high school auditorium to celebrate all levels of Bears football at the 1st annual Gladewater Community football athletic banquet. Of course the varsity team was honored for their amazing season, but all levels were celebrated.



The 7th grade team won a district championship

Jr high awards were:

Co-offensive player's of the year: Cameron Flanagan and Marshawn Stevenson

Defensive player of the year:: Alex Filapondo

Most improved player: Jace Timmons

Bear Award: Dodge Sisek

High School awards:

All district honorable mention: WR Aubury Floyd, WR Caleb Balcorta, K Corbin Sergio, TE/FB Sean Burke

2nd team all district: RB Tra Watts, OL Trey Willis, OL Talen Robinson, OL Braxton Gordon, WR Kason Harris, DL Demarion Johnson

1st team all district: RB Carson Cooper, OL Monty Traylor, WR Maddox Vasquez, FB Jeremiah Flanagan, DB Destin Sherridan, DB Anthony Sanchez, DB Landon King, LB Mason Budro, DL Ja'kobe Crosby, DL Marquis Rutherford

Special team's player of the year: Grafton Morgan

Offensive newcomer of the year: Achillies Hess





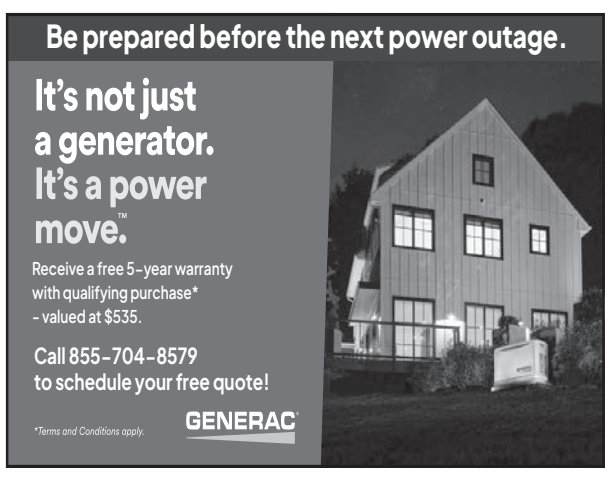












White Oak wrangles strategy for strays to keep costs down on animal control

Continued from Page 1

the same," City Secretary Kristine Toon noted, $4 for each.

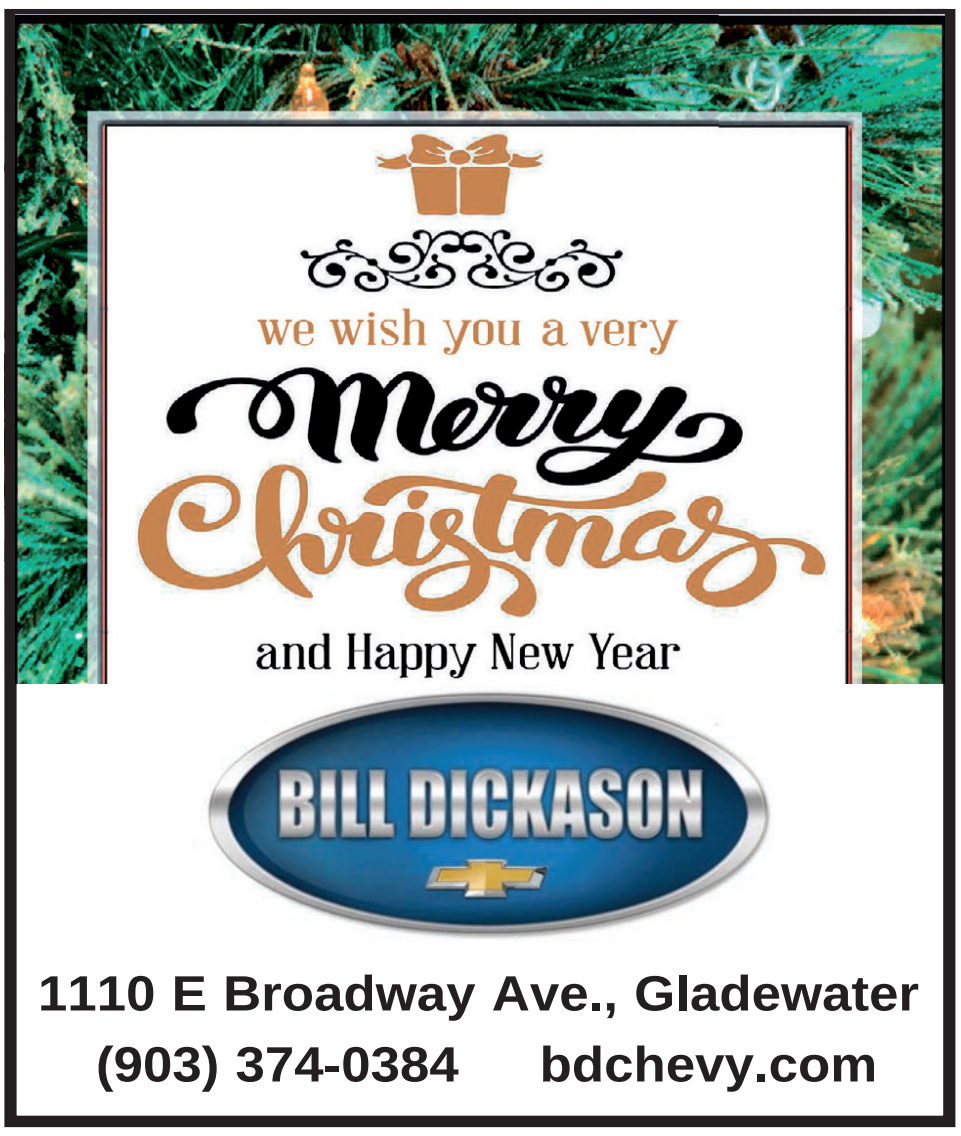
It's a jump, council member Kevin Hood said, but "They do an excellent job."

The council members also green-lit a payment plan for White Oak Volunteer Fire Department's new tanker and slip-in unit (see prior reporting) which will be covered in large part through a guaranteed reimbursement grant. Delivery is expected in about 200 days.

The VFD also received a $25,000 grant for new fire and rescue equipment.

Council members signed off on budget adjustments (with no net effect on revenue and expenditures) and heard positive news regarding new water registers – 'missed reads' in the last scan dropped by almost 70 percent.

Meanwhile, "We're thinking about doing another town meeting," Purcell said, a broad, open Q&A for residents. "I'd like to do that every three or four months, any time we can show them what the city's doing, where we're headed and answer any questions."





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Notice of Application for Fluid Injection Well Permit

East Texas Salt Water Disposal Company, 1209 Industrial Blvd., Kilgore, Texas 75662 is applying to the Railroad Commission of Texas for a permit to inject fluid into a formation which is productive of oil and gas. The applicant proposes to inject fluid into the Austin Chalk and Woodbine, Suman Lease, Well Number 7. The proposed injection well is located 2.5 miles Northeast of Gladewater, in the East Texas Field, in Upshur County. Fluid will be injected into strata in the subsurface depth interval from 3625 to 3800 feet.

LEGAL AUTHORITY: Chapter 27 of the Texas Water Code, as amended, Title 3 of the Texas Natural Resources Code, as amended, and the Statewide Rules of the Oil and Gas Division of the Railroad Commission of Texas.

Requests for a public hearing from persons who can show they are adversely affected or requests for further information concerning any aspect of the application should be submitted in writing, within fifteen days of publication, to the Environmental Services Section, Oil and Gas Division, Railroad Commission of Texas, P.O. Box 12967, Austin, Texas 78711 (Telephone 512/463-6792).



PUBLIC HEARING

There will be a public hearing before the City of Gladewater Planning & Zoning Commission on January 8, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. to consider a request for a front set-back variance to Gladewater Code of Ordinance §15.11.120(C)(1)(a) Single Family Districts at LT 13 BLK 1 EVERETT HILAND, more commonly known as 713 Martha Dr.

There will be a second public hearing held by the Gladewater City Council on January 15, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

All interested parties are invited to attend and participate in these public hearings. If you are unable to attend these meetings you may send written comments to Judy Van Houten, City Secretary, City of Gladewater, PO Box 1725, Gladewater, Texas 75647.

PUBLIC HEARING

There will be a public hearing before the City of Gladewater Planning & Zoning Commission on January 8, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. to consider a Specific Use Permit request for a Wine & Malt Beverage Permit (BQ) for off-premises consumption at LTS 15 THRU 19 NCB 63 GLADEWATER & PT OF ALLEY; more commonly known as 227 S. Main Street.

There will be a second public hearing held by the Gladewater City Council on January 15, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

All interested parties are invited to attend and participate in these public hearings. If you are unable to attend these meetings you may send written comments to Judy Van Houten, City Secretary, City of Gladewater, PO Box 1725, Gladewater, Texas 75647.

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BY VIRTUE OF ORDERS OF SALE DATED the 15th day of December, 2025, and issued pursuant to judgment decrees of the County Court At Law of Gregg County, Texas, by the Clerk of said Court on said date in the hereinafter numbered and styled causes, and to me directed and delivered as Sheriff of said Court, I have on the 15th day of December, 2025, seized, levied upon, and will on the 6th day of January, 2026, at the at public auction on an online platform at www.mvbataxsales.com, at 10:00AM on said day, proceed to sell for cash to the highest bidder all of the right, title, and interest of the defendants in such suit in and to the following described real estate levied upon as the property of said defendants, as provided for by the TEXAS PROPERTY TAX CODE.

All of the following properties being located in Gregg County, Texas and each property being more particularly described on an instrument recorded in the Volume and Page (V__/P__) or document number (Doc #) or instrument number (Inst #) of the Deed or Official Records of Gregg County, Texas

02233 CCL2

Gladewater Independent School District v Earnestine Tyron et al

Lots 4 & 5, Block 7, Mallock Addition and part of alley (V1602/P549) Acct #53708

02204 CCL2

Gladewater Independent School District v Bruce Earl Daniels

All of Lot 27 & the North 12.5' of Lot 28, Block 1, Bellwood Addition (V658/P388) Acct #000036082/G655209

02271- CCL2

Gladewater Independent School District v Rick Dwayne Jackson et al

8.64 Acres, more or less, out of the W. W. Avery Survey, Abstract 231, being only that portion of 9.971 Acres (Inst #201011308) Acct #000011049

02200- CCL2

Pine Tree Independent School District v Revenge of Lands, LLC

0.536 Acre, more or less, out of the I. C. Skillern Survey, Abstract 4, and being part of Block 4, Key Bunt Addition (Inst #202123403) Acct #000184128

0231 17-CCL2

Pine Tree Independent School District v Wolfe Creekside LLC

All of the properties listed below are located in the Creekside Townhouse Subdivision (Inst #202215142):

TRACT 1: Lot 1, Block 1, Acct #000039446

TRACT 2: Lot 2, Block 1, Acct #000039447

TRACT 3 Lot 3, Block 1, Acct #000039448

TRACT 4 Lot 4, Block 1, Acct #000039449

TRACT 5: Lot 5, Block 1, Acct #000039450

TRACT 6 Lot 6, Block 1, Acct #000039451

TRACT 7: Lot 7, Block 1, Acct #000039452

TRACT 8 Lot 8, Block 1, Acct #000039453

TRACT 9 Lot 9, Block 1, Acct #000039454

TRACT 10: Lot 10, Block 1, Acct #000039455

TRACT 11: Lot 11, Block 1, Acct #000039456

TRACT 12: Lot 12, Block 1, Acct #000039457

TRACT 13 Lot 13, Block 1, Acct #000039458

TRACT 14 Lot 14, Block 1, Acct #000039459

TRACT 15: Lot 15, Block 1, Acct #000039460

TRACT 16 Lot 16, Block 1, Acct #000039461

TRACT 17: Lot 17, Block 1, Acct #000039462

TRACT 18 Lot 18, Block 1, Acct #000039463

TRACT 19 Lot 19, Block 1, Acct #000039464

TRACT 20: Lot 20, Block 1, Acct #000039465

TRACT 21: Lot 21, Block 1, Acct #000039466

TRACT 22: Lot 22, Block 1, Acct #000039467

TRACT 23 Lot 23, Block 1, Acct #000039468

TRACT 24 Lot 24, Block 1, Acct #000039469

TRACT 25: Lot 25, Block 1, Acct #000039470

TRACT 26 Lot 26, Block 1, Acct #000039471

TRACT 27: Lot 27, Block 1, Acct #000039472

TRACT 28 Lot 28, Block 1, Acct #000039473

TRACT 29 Lot 29, Block 1, Acct #000039474

TRACT 30: Lot 30, Block 1, Acct #000039475

TRACT 31: Lot 31, Block 1, Acct #000039476

TRACT 32: Lot 32, Block 1, Acct #000039477

TRACT 33 Lot 33, Block 1, Acct #000039478

TRACT 34 Lot 34, Block 1, Acct #000039479

TRACT 35: Lot 35, Block 1, Acct #000039480

TRACT 36 Lot 36, Block 1, Acct #000039481

TRACT 37: Lot 37, Block 1, Acct #000039482

TRACT 38 Lot 38, Block 1, Acct #000039483

TRACT 39 Lot 39, Block 1, Acct #000039484

TRACT 40: Lot 40, Block 1, Acct #000039485

TRACT 41: Lot 41, Block 1, Acct #000039486

TRACT 42: Lot 42, Block 1, Acct #000039487

TRACT 43 Lot 43, Block 1, Acct #000039488

TRACT 44 Lot 44, Block 1, Acct #000039489

TRACT 45: Lot 45, Block 1, Acct #000039490

TRACT 46 Lot 46, Block 1, Acct #000039491

TRACT 47: Lot 47, Block 1, Acct #000039492

TRACT 48 Lot 48, Block 1, Acct #000039493

TRACT 49 Lot 49, Block 1, Acct #000039494

TRACT 50: Lot 50, Block 1, Acct #000039495

TRACT 51: Lot 51, Block 1, Acct #000039496

TRACT 52: Lot 52, Block 1, Acct #000039497

TRACT 53 Lot 52-A, Block 1, Acct #000039498

TRACT 54 Lot 53, Block 1, Acct #000039499

TRACT 55: Lot 54, Block 1, Acct #000039500

TRACT 56 Lot 55, Block 1, Acct #000039501

TRACT 57: Lot 56, Block 1, Acct #000039502

TRACT 58 Lot 57, Block 1, Acct #000039503

TRACT 59 Lot 58, Block 1, Acct #000039504

TRACT 60: Lot 59, Block 1, Acct #000039505

TRACT 61: Lot 60, Block 1, Acct #000039506

This sale will be conducted to satisfy the judgment(s) for delinquent property taxes and accrued penalties and interests due on the properties described herein, and for all costs of court and sale.

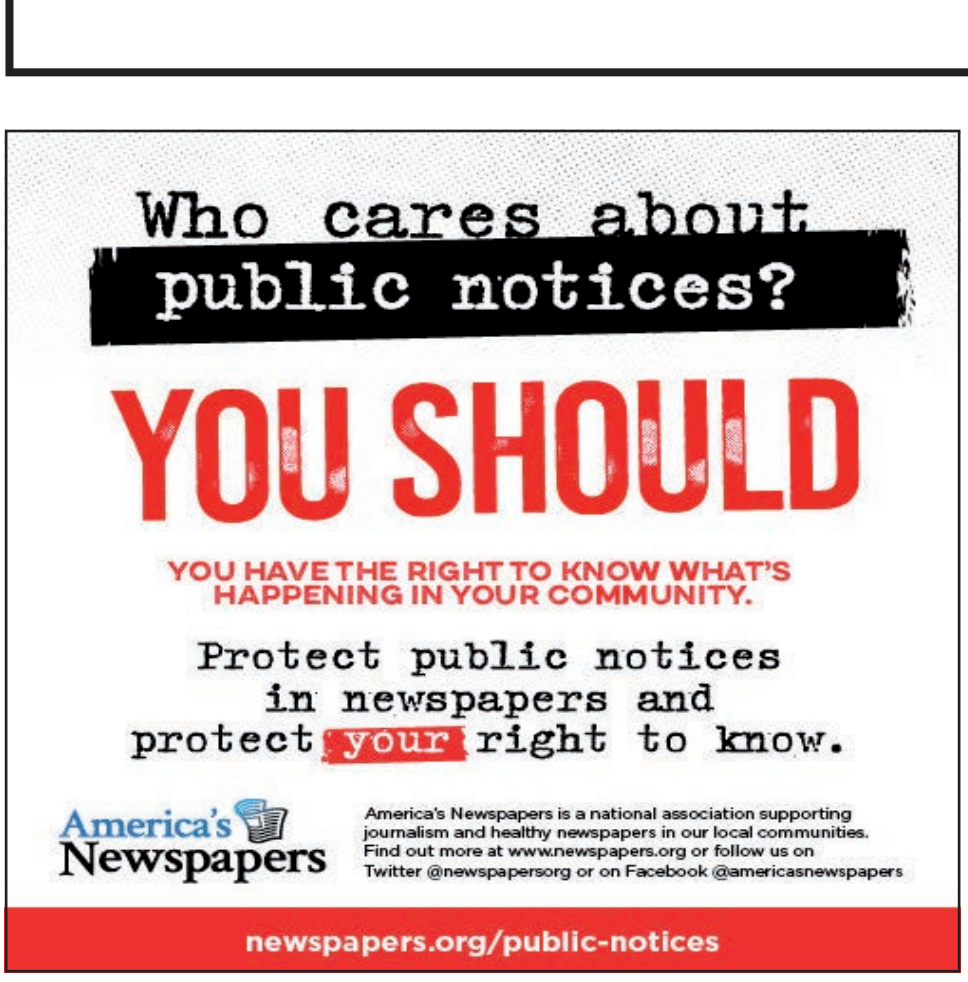
I do hereby verify that true and correct copies of the foregoing Joint Notice of Sale have been delivered by United States Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested, and by regular mail, to each of the Defendants named in each of the numbered and styled causes.

DATED the 15th day of December, 2025, at Longview, Texas

MAXEY CERLIANO
Sheriff, Gregg County, Texas

By: */s/ Shawn McFadden.*
SHAWN MCFADDEN, Deputy Sheriff

You may contact the attorney for the taxing units at (903) 757-5757.





Gladewater Museum celebrates 20 years preserving the past

Continued from Page 1

even the library.

As the museum stands today, it pays homage to prominent Gladewater figures such as Beth Bishop, who brought the antique shops to Gladewater; famed disc jockey and radio executive Tom Perryman; and Dick Burnett, owner of the Gladewater Bears minor league baseball team. Other interesting stories and artifacts fill the walls and rooms, offering a peek into different periods of the town's history.







As Roddy walked through the rooms, describing the history of the museum and where certain items came from, the early-1900s handwritten logs of a local grocery store lay open on display. Roddy gently flipped through the old pages and talked about each family's yearly purchases as if she knew them personally.

After speaking about the history of several prominent families in the town, Roddy laughed and said, "You came here to get the history of the museum, but instead I've given you the history of Gladewater."

From stories of the KSIJ radio station to bedroom furniture brought to Gladewater in a covered wagon, patrons can learn about the history of this East Texas town by studying the relics that remain. "We let people touch things," Roddy says, explaining that the museum is open for everyone to enjoy, not roped off or kept at arm's length.

Families often bring their relatives to the museum during the holidays, when everyone is in town, to flip through the old yearbooks and to reminisce about days gone by. Other visitors are simply passing through and want to learn more about Gladewater.

"We had 109 third-graders from six different classes come to the museum," Roddy says. This was especially meaningful because it was the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic that classes have come to visit – a tradition that once took place every year.

It's easy to support the Gladewater Museum. Simply enjoying an admission-free visit with friends and family brings joy to the volunteers who work so hard to research and maintain this history. Donations are always welcome as well, helping to keep the lights on and ensuring that future generations can learn the history of Gladewater, Texas.

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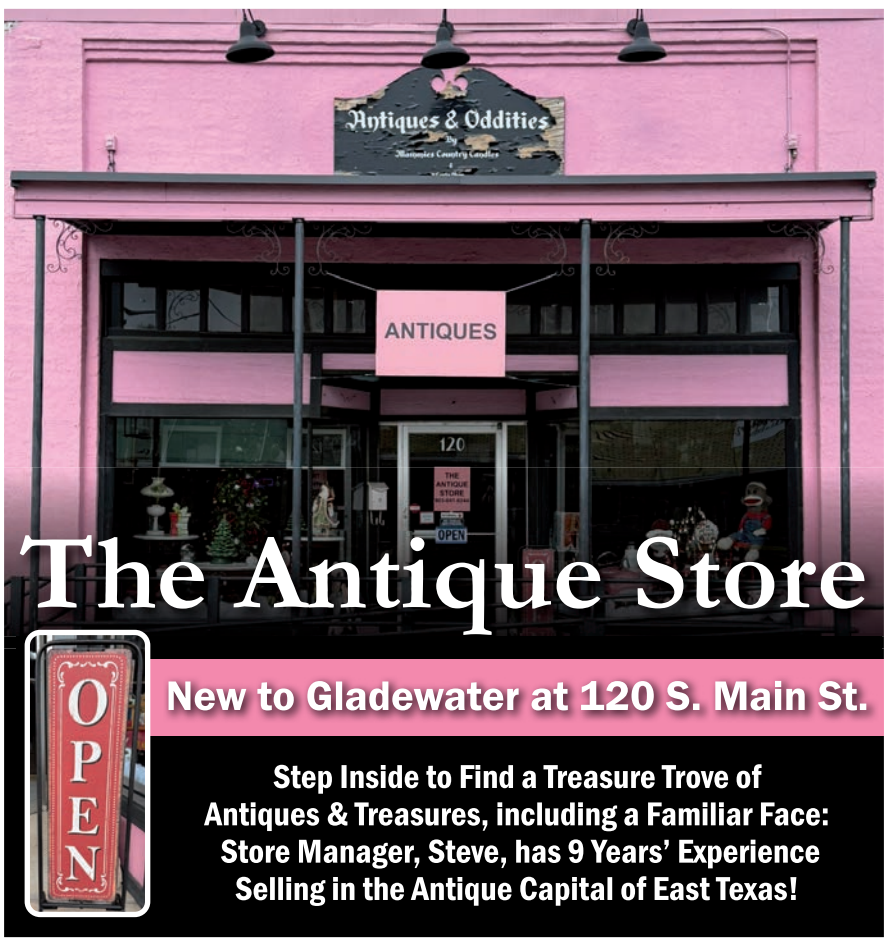
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Gladewater residents made sure to give Santa plenty of light to guide him to town. Local decorations are certainly worth an easy drive through town in the unseasonal warmth.











Gregg County Sheriff
Maxey Cerliano



101 E Methvin St., Ste 559, Longview
greggcountytxsheriff.org
(903) 236-8400

Paid for by Maxey Cerliano

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Wise men still seek Him.

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship him." Matthew 2:1-2

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