

Gladewater Mirror

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"Your Hometown Newspaper Since 1928"



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1 Section, 10 pages

50¢



GLADEWATER ISD SCHOOL BOARD

Gladewater ISD Board of Trustees includes (front row, from left) Vice President Jeff Cook, President Chris Thompson, Secretary Dani Budro, (back row) Superintendent Rae Ann Patty, Ross Morgan, Rickie Blackmon, Cori Arevalo, Garth Cockerell.



School Board Appreciation Month

January 2026

Thank you school boards
for your passion, dedication
and public service!



WHITE OAK ISD SCHOOL BOARD

White Oak Independent School District's trustees include (back row, left to right) Dr. David Ummel, David Trest, School Board President Lance Noll, Ricky Bodovsky, (front) Vice President Stephanie McKinney, Jessica Hughes and Board Secretary Donna Stagner.



UNION GROVE ISD SCHOOL BOARD

Union Grove ISD Board of Trustees includes President Jody Day (Place 7), Vice President Justin Smith (P2), Secretary Tim Turner (P4), former board member Tim Bower (P6), Michael Potter (P3), Karey Barbee (P1) and Brian Cox (P5). Not pictured: Kelly Chambliss, appointed January 12 to fill Place 6 upon Bower's resignation.



Fire chief will stay on during transition to new GFD leadership

By James Draper

Gladewater City Council members accepted the resignation of Fire Chief Mike Simmons during their regular session Jan. 15.

Simmons has accepted a post with Gregg County ESD No. 2 / Sabine Fire Department to become chief of operations and training chief under Fire Chief Richard Sisk.

Council members met with Simmons for about 20 minutes in closed session at the end of their January meeting last week, returning to open session at 7:16 p.m.

"We want to say how appreciative we are for everything he has done for our community," Gladewater Mayor Brandy Flanagan said. "He has graciously agreed to stay on during the transition to help our city continue to move forward and help us stay stable."

"Thank you, Chief Simmons, and we wish you the best in your new role."

Due to Texas Open Meetings Act restrictions, council members were unable to discuss the issues beyond the fire chief's resignation, as stated on the agenda.

"We can only talk about what the exact thing is on there," Flanagan confirmed, so a discussion about next steps is pending. "Other than that he's willing to stay on" during the transition period. "We'll definitely first start out to see if there's anybody in-house. We'll assess that then we'll see if we need to go outside of that."

"Normally there's a little committee that's put together to do those. I did request to sit on that committee in his exit interview."

He encouraged others to step up to fill the gap.



UNITY

'Together we are stronger than any challenge we face'

"We've got to learn how to work this together. We can't continue to stay apart."

Unity, Gilgal Baptist Church's Fredrick Tennyson underscored for his audience Monday. It's what Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. preached. It's what he worked for. It's what community members gathered for Jan. 19.

"In times like this, unity is very important," Tennyson reminded the crowd at Antique Capital RV Park, "whether it's inside the household, whether it's at a job, whether it's in the church."

"In moments of uncertainty and challenges, unity becomes one of humanity's greatest strengths. When people come together, setting aside differences, fears and doubts, they create a force that can overcome even the toughest odds."

Unity is a reminder, he said: No one stands alone.

"Every voice, every hand and every heart contributes to the shared purpose."

The shared purpose for this year's MLK Day Gospel Brunch was 'The Power of Unity Begins With Us,' evident in the young members of the Gilgal Baptist Church Youth who performed for, and with, the audience.

The Gladewater MLK / Juneteenth Committee hosted the celebration once again, with Odette Alexander welcoming the crowd ahead of the fundraiser breakfast this week.

"Today, we gather not only to enjoy fellowship and food, but to reflect, to renew and to recommit ourselves to the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr." Alexander said, "a legacy rooted in faith, courage, service and, above all, unity."

"Dr. King taught us that unity is not passive. It is not simply standing side by side. It is standing together, even when it is uncomfortable, even when it requires sacrifice and even when it demands courage. Unity begins when we choose love over hate, justice over silence and purpose over division."

This year's celebration also included honors for three volunteers whose years of service nourished not only the body, Alexander said, but the community's spirit as well: Vabbie Fortson, Shirley Johnson and Francis Tyeskie each played a vital role behind the scenes year after year, Alexander said, preparing the food that brings people together for MLK events.

"Their hands have served meals, but, more importantly,

Continued on Page 9

Weber encourages residents to step up for council, mayor files for re-election

The ballot for the City of Gladewater's Spring 2026 Election is taking shape, and one spot is entirely open.

With seats 1, 2 and 3 up in the rotation this year, councilman Michael Webber previously said he wouldn't be seeking another term on the dais in Place 2.

"I've decided this year I'm going to step down," Webber confirmed during the council's regular session Jan. 15. "It's been an amazing time."

He encouraged others to step up to fill the gap.

"This city's worth your time. This city's worth your effort.

This city's worth your love," Webber said.

"If you have any of that or you want to be a part of that, sign up."

"We've got great leadership in the city and great staff is doing some amazing things. I've really enjoyed it. I just want to encourage people to run. Do something."

Mayor Brandy Flanagan (Place 1) filed her candidate paperwork Thursday, seeking a second term in the central

seat on the dais at Gladewater City Hall.

She opened last week's session with a reminder candidate packets for seats 1-3 are available at City Hall.

Filing opened Jan. 14, and applications are due by 5 p.m. Friday Feb. 13.

Early voting will run April 20, 22-24 and 27-28, Flanagan noted, with Election Day set for Saturday, May 2.

Council member Stoney Stone (Place 3) also filed his paperwork last week, angling for a second term on council.



OPINION/COMMENTARY

We have a mission...

For a little old country girl from the Blackland Prairie I have had the opportunity to meet a lot, and I mean a lot, of famous people.

Most of the time it was because I am not shy and because I am married to a lifelong journalist who has often been on an 'A' list that blessed us with opportunity.

Now you may not feel that my celebrity list is all that impressive, but I hug the memories with glee and am just too giddy from the latest opportunity not to share it with you, my friends and neighbors.

First let's see if I can remember just some of the folks old Jimmy Bardwell has positioned me to meet: rock star Peter Frampton (anniversary gift), '70s pop star B.J. Thomas (he's my distant cousin), astronauts Alan Shepard, Gordon Cooper, Scott Carpenter and Wally Schirra. (Wally even winked at me! For a baby boomer who grew up on the space race that was the thrill of a lifetime.) I also met the first woman in space Sally Ride.

Then through our Disney World press trips when Jim worked at the Longview News Journal I stood in a buffet line with Larry King (he called me "sugar" and passed me a fork), spent at least an hour visiting with the original "Battlestar Galactica" Apollo played by the absolutely gorgeous Richard Hatch who told me all about the reboot FX Galactica where he would play the vice president. (I have my picture with him to prove it!) I met the actors who played Chewbacca, R2D2 and C3PO when I took our young son to a sci-fi convention.

"Mr. Bojangles" singer Jerry Jeff Walker fell off a stage into my lap but he was passed out at the time so I don't know if that counts. I met movie star hunk Hugh Jackman in a blizzard on Broadway while on a school trip, mmm-hmmm. More authors and politicians than I can shake a stick at. And gee...you must have stopped reading awhile back.

On Friday night Jimmy and I were introduced to CBS News legend Bob Schieffer. Turns out he is just a good old boy from Fort Worth who has received the Edward R. Murrow Award, eight Emmys for broadcast journalism, and was named a "Living Legend" by the Library of Congress.

Old East Texas journalist Jim Bardwell kicked back with the legendary reporter in Friday's hospitality room for over an hour and got regaled with stories of presidents, saints and sinners in government service. I would have loved to hear those stories in person but I was entertaining another journalist, a young reporter whom I admire that works for



the Denton Chronicle.

Dalton LaFerney was on my last high school newspaper/yearbook staff in 2013. That year I took the 'Fab Five' outstanding student journalists to the high school Interscholastic Press Association convention where I introduced Dalton to Pulitzer Prize winning photojournalist John Moore and that meeting changed the course of Dalton's future. Friday night I introduced Dalton to living legend Bob Schieffer.

Maybe someday, someone will be introducing a young student to this young man who will have inspired them to dedicate their lives to a profession whose mission was mandated by the Founding Fathers to protect their new creation of democracy.

And folks that is still our mission. After all, whether it is the Washington Post covering our nation's capitol or this hometown newspaper covering the local city government and elected officials we ultimately have YOUR protection and interests as our driving force.

Government transparency will NOT exist without the press. It is the reason that the ONLY privately owned business specifically protected in the Constitution of the United States is the PRESS. It's right there in the first amendment where our most sacred rights are protected.

If you are a part of the ill-informed 40 percent who don't know these rights commit them to heart NOW! It is what wars have been fought for throughout our history. The first amendment guarantees freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom to petition the government, freedom to assemble AND freedom of the Press to protect all the others. The press is there to protect YOU, the citizen, the taxpayer. We serve your interests. Mr. Schieffer may have said it best when he was sharing his thoughts with 250 publishers and editors from across the state of Texas:

"We are not the opposition party, I do not consider myself an enemy of the American people. I consider myself an American citizen. Our job is to get to the truth and make sure the message of officials for the people is true. We have a mission and that is it."

Developers can now request assistance of up to 50 percent of construction expenses for new builds inside the city limits. Reimbursement-based grants are capped at \$25,000 for qualifying applicants, and the initiative is limited to local projects, not national franchises.

Gladewater Economic Development Corporation's Board of Directors approved the expansion to the Grow Gladewater Grant Program during their regular meeting Jan. 14. "I love when new things come up and inspires us to think about other opportunities," GEDCO Executive Director Anna Conlan told the group. "This is an add-value for downtown, to get new things going."

Last year, the Grow Gladewater program shifted toward practical improvements at ap-

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

The Best of Suzanne Bardwell



Gary Borders Capital Highlights



Deadline to register for primary

The last day to register to vote for the March 3 primary is Feb. 2, according to the Texas secretary of state's office. Early voting runs from Feb. 17 through Feb. 27, with Feb. 20 being the deadline for applying for a mail ballot.

Prospective voters can visit the votetexas.gov website to find out if they are registered, discern their polling places, learn what is on the ballot and find other information.

More than 18 statewide elected officials are up for election, with the governor's race and a U.S. Senate race topping the ballot. All Texas members of the U.S. House of Representatives are up for election, along with state lawmakers, district judges and local elected officials.

Some Texans will have to vote in new congressional districts after the Legislature redrew the map last summer.

New poll has Talarico leading, Cornyn tied with Paxton

A new poll of the state's U.S. Senate primaries shows state Rep. James Talarico, D-Round Rock, leading U.S. Rep. Jasmine Crockett, D-Dallas by 9 percentage points, 47% to 38%, among likely Democratic voters, The Texas Tribune reported. The Emerson College poll indicates a significant shift since a Texas Southern University poll in December showed Crockett with a similar-sized lead.

In both polls, Talarico leads among white and Latino voters, while Crockett has a commanding lead among Black voters.

On the GOP side, the latest polls show U.S. Sen. John Cornyn and Attorney General Ken Paxton deadlocked, with Paxton at 27% and Cornyn at 26%. U.S. Rep. Wesley Hunt, R-Houston, trailed with 16%. If those margins hold, that race would head to a runoff.

The survey also found Gov. Greg Abbott with a sizable lead over his main Democratic challenger, state Rep. Gina Hinojosa, 50% to 42%.

Solar power surpasses coal

For the first time, solar power supplied more electricity in 2025 to the state's main power grid than coal-fired power plants, the Houston Chronicle reported.

Solar farms provided 67,800 gigawatt-hours of electricity last year, according to the Electric Reliability Council of Texas, which is the power grid operator for most of the state. Power plants burning coal supplied 63,000 gigawatt-hours of power to ERCOT last year.

GEDCO directs development dollars toward construction thru Grow Gladewater grants

By James Draper

A portion of local economic development funds are being pointed toward new construction.

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Last year, the Grow Gladewater program shifted toward practical improvements at ap-

plicant businesses (i.e. permanent fixtures and infrastructure) to ensure the EDC's investments stayed here.

Likewise, with the new construction option, "This stays in Gladewater even if the business that builds it moves out and sells it," Conlan said, incentivizing new construction and bolstering local property tax rolls.

"I think it's a fantastic idea," GEDCO board member Jeff Simpson said.

"I think it shows a strength in GEDCO, that we also want to deal with new work," board VP Jim Bardwell agreed. "I think it puts us in a better position."

After discussion last week, the group ultimately voted 4-0, with Bardwell abstaining, to add the new construction incentive to the existing grant program. If and when budgeted monies are depleted, GEDCO will consider an additional funding commitment for city council approval.

PUTTING A PRETTY FACE ON SIN

There's an old saying that says, "A rose by any other name is still a rose." Well, that may be true but many people still try to add a little pretentious dignity to common things. For example, shoes are now called "Footwear." A magazine sounds superior if it is called a "Journal." Customers seem more sophisticated if they are called "clients." Prison guards, undertakers, and garbage-men sound more professional if they are called "Security Officers," "morticians," and "sanitation engineers." I even heard about someone fired from his job who said he had been "de-hired." Well, there's probably not much harm in all this if we just didn't try to give dignifying names to sinful practices. The problem is that some people are trying to dignify, lessen the stigma, or put a pretty face on sin!

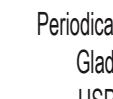
For example, some try to make adultery seem less serious by calling it "an affair." Some minimize the seriousness of drunkenness and drug addiction by describing it as merely "getting high" and a "good time." Pornography is often dignified by calling it "adult entertainment." Some types of fornication are whitewashed by calling them "trial marriage arrangement," and the fornicators are depicted as merely being "sexually active." The slaughter of the unborn through abortion is called a good thing because it gives the woman "freedom of choice." And who can forget how homosexuality has been sanitized and legitimized by calling it "gay" and referring to it as an "alternate lifestyle." On and on we could go but you get the point. Sin is made to look good, or at least palatable to a gullible society.

The devil has some ingenious PR men. But calling sin something else doesn't really change it. Remember the riddle, "How many legs does a dog have if you call his tail a leg?" Of course, the answer is "four," not "five," because calling a dog's tail a leg doesn't make it a leg. And giving high-sounding new names to sinful practices doesn't change the nature of those sinful practices!

Please remember, in Isaiah 5: 20, God's Word says, "Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter." When God's Word is rejected as the norm, all values are turned upside down and people gradually become unable to discern between good and evil. Think on these things.

Dennis C. Abernathy-White Oak Church of Christ

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Independence

An independent US monetary authority is imperative for economic growth, prosperity, stability, and — indeed — sustainability! Period!

About 50 years ago, my dissertation developed an early model of the monetary system and measured the effects of Federal Reserve policy. In the process, I read minutes of every Fed meeting since the early 1950s, a practice that I continue. Thus, I have absorbed the minutia of 70-plus years of monetary policy (no comments regarding my social life). Independence is essential!

For perspective, the Second Bank of the United States, which stabilized the economy following the War of 1812, was abolished by President Andrew Jackson in 1836. The country was without a central bank for almost 80 years, resulting in multiple financial meltdowns with no safety net. After the Panic of 1907, Congress created the Federal Reserve in 1913, formally added the Federal Open Market Committee in 1936, and instituted the “dual mandate” supporting full employment and stable prices in the Full Employment Act of 1946 (which was strengthened in 1978).

It is no coincidence that the mandate began at the dawn of the post-War era of global US economic dominance and the emergence of the dollar as the linchpin of international commerce. The Fed has since responded to major wars, explosive conflicts, pandemics, droughts, currency crises, terrorist attacks, and the bursting of numerous bubbles. The capacity to rapidly make informed, research-based decisions largely insulated from politics is frequently invaluable.

In the early 1980s, Federal Reserve policies broke the cycle of double-digit inflation. The necessary short-term cost was significant and could not have happened without independence. As markets reopened after 9/11, the Fed implemented critical stabilization initiatives. As the Great Recession unfolded, quick and decisive action literally prevented a global collapse. During the pandemic, the Fed infused massive liquidity, avoiding incalculable human suf-

Dr. Ray Perryman

THE ECONOMIST



fering. This response is (predictably) partially responsible for subsequent inflation, but the choice was a terrible option (inflation) or a catastrophic one. Independence allowed the Fed to pick the terrible one.

The Federal Reserve has consistently seen competent leadership supported by excellent research yield decisions to support its dual mandate. It has not been perfect but has been excellent and consistently credible.

Going forward, independence is even more vital. Decades of spiraling deficits have created the need to continuously borrow extensive funds, which requires that the world view US debt as the very definition of a politically risk-free asset. There are warning signs of late. Last April 9, during the apex of the tariff fiasco, investors started looking elsewhere (which brought shockwaves and precipitated an immediate 90-day moratorium). We are now seeing greater movement to alternative assets and spiking gold prices, both definitive signs of faltering confidence in US debt. Threats to monetary independence significantly heighten these concerns.

Every President wants the economy juiced with lower interest rates as elections approach, irrespective of long-term consequences. That decision must occur in a dispassionate and analytical manner devoid of politics, which is only possible with a strong and independent monetary authority. Stay safe!

Upshur looking at animal control

By Phillip Williams

Upshur County Commissioners Court last Thursday approved Sheriff Larry Webb's proposal to take the first steps toward creating a “holding facility” for dangerous dogs—a measure aimed at solving the county's long-standing animal control problem.

After Webb made a detailed, partly visual presentation on the havoc being wreaked by canines—including attacks on cattle, sheep and chickens—the court directed County Auditor Connie Williams to devise a funding plan for animal control.

Any monies approved by the court wouldn't take effect, however, until the county's next fiscal year, which starts Oct. 1.

The court further authorized Webb to seek out possible locations for the facility and “regulations necessary therewith.” He said he wanted to find an existing building and “re-purpose” it to hold 50 or fewer animals as “constructing a new facility would be cost prohibitive.”

His proposal is not for an animal shelter since the facility would only be for dogs and cats which, as reserve sheriff's Deputy David Hazel told the court, are “connected to a law enforcement investigation.”

Before the vote, Webb told the court his office received 1,440 animal-related calls in 2025, 210 of which involved dogs perhaps attacking humans or damaging property.

“I'm telling you the issue is a huge problem” which will worsen without funding facilities, Webb told the court. Estimating his proposal's start-up cost at \$400,000-500,000, he said it would be well under \$1 million.

“Right now, issuing citations is the only thing we (his office) can do,” and “it's not working,” the sheriff added. “We have a lot of ranchers and cattlemen” who are losing thousands of dollars because dogs are killing their animals, Webb said.



Brayden Elliott and Kalen Chandler finished 39th out of a field of 160 teams on Sunday, January 18th. The White High School Anglers traveled to Kissimmee, Florida to compete in the BASS High School tournament series. This tournament series is designed to give teams to compete on a national level, gain experience and develop their skills against a diverse group of competitors at three events. The BASS High School series will host tournaments on Sam Rayburn Reservoir in Texas, Santee Cooper Lake in South Carolina and Kerr Reservoir in Oklahoma. Brayden and Kalen will also continue to fish the THSBA events this spring.

Texas most popular state to move to

Texas is back on top of U-Haul's list of “growth states,” according to the Austin American-Statesman. The company determines each state's net gain or loss by recording how many customers used one-way equipment in 2025.

This is the fourth time the state has topped U-Haul's rankings in five years. In 2024, South Carolina topped the list but fell to No. 5 last year. In second place is Florida, followed by North Carolina and Tennessee.

Coming in dead last in U-Haul's ranking was California.

Correction: An item in the Jan. 4 Capital Highlights reported the Texas business inventory tax exemption has been raised to \$125,000. That exemption applies to all business personal property accounts, not just inventory.



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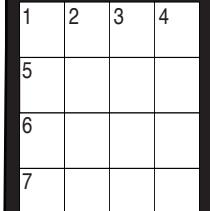
ACROSS

1 this Alan starred in TX-based film "The Big Land"
5 TXism: "___ piece" (long way)
6 Jacksonville AM
7 TX singer ___ Mae Morse
8 TXism: "you got two chances:
_____"
16 XIT Ranch covered ___ Texas counties
17 Gov. Wilbert ___ was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1941
21 Texas "Cowpokes" creator Reid (init.)
22 barbed-wire Texas tycoon, John "___ Million" Gates
23 submissive, obedient
24 21-across, e.g.
29 bundles of money
30 bullets and shells
31 initials of Texas blues artist, Stevie Ray, without the "R"
32 this woman was a famous gambler in early Texas (2 wds.)
34 Kingsville FM
35 notable Texas case: "___ vs. Wade"
36 TXism: "lower ___ scum"
37 TXism: "packed like sardines in ___"
38 TXism: "ole ___ and chain" (spouse)

DOWN

1 "Caddo ___" near Karnack
2 TXism: "red and yeller, kill ___" (coral snake)
3 in Erath County on U.S. 377
4 TX Hagman's "I ___ of Jeannie"

See Answers On Page 5A



TEXAS CROSSWORD

by Charley & Guy Orbison

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P-1775

9 in Parker County on FM 1187
10 Gulf shrimp catchers
11 agcy. that watches for drugs on the so. border
12 TXism: "close but ___ cigar"
13 "___ ___ out" (not like the rest of a group)
14 poet, TX Shihab Nye
15 name before Exxon
18 TX Kenny's "The Gambler, Part ___"
19 "___ ___ Texas" (the Texas sun)
20 adjustable washing machine foot, e.g.
29 fast food restaurant was named for this daughter of its founder, Dave
30 "___ ___ impasse"
33 in Hidalgo County off U.S. 83
34 El Paso TV station
35 surprise attacks
37 sum of its parts
38 TXism: "___ home the bacon"
40 Mexican name: "Río Grande del ___"
41 Cowboy schemes: "game ___"
43 TX Chisum cut a ___ in cattle ears
46 religious beliefs
48 made a mistake in Daikin Park

School Board Recognition Month

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Council hits pause on animal shelter agreement before costs stray too far

By James Draper

Gladewater council members accept the necessity of animal shelter fees, but looming increases are looking a little ruff.

Last week, the local elected officials ultimately tabled consideration of a new interlocal agreement with the Longview Animal Care & Adoption Center, angling to tighten the contract and keep expenditures in check.

"We definitely have to get a handle on it," council member Milton Anderson said. "Have we tried to negotiate any of these rates with them?"

Between personnel, facilities and other expenses to operate and maintain the shelter, the City of Longview operators have given their municipal partners a heads-up of what's to come in the next few years. The intake fee increased about 20 percent for Fiscal Year 2026, to \$249 per animal surrendered between Oct. 1, 2025 and Sept. 30, 2026. That fee is projected to rise to \$297 in October '26, \$345 in '27, \$393 a year later and, for Fiscal Year 2030, \$440.

"This contract is pretty similar to what we've had in the past," Gladewater City Manager Charlie Smith reminded council members Jan. 15. "They're going up on the cost of course."

The municipality has been able to mitigate its payments through the proactive efforts of Gladewater Animal Control Officers, focused on reuniting pets and owners and finding other options beyond shelter surrenders.

"We don't hold a candle to a lot of these other cities with what we pay because of our animal control people. They're always looking for foster homes and trying to find homes for these animals."

Last month's cost for Gladewater surrenders totaled about \$800, Smith noted, not necessarily by ACOs. In recent years, the highest monthly payout to the shelter was about \$2,000 between official surrenders and other individuals dropping off animals ostensibly picked up in Gladewater.

"At one time we were getting absolutely tore up with fees," councilman Kevin Clark said. "Are they going to guarantee these are City of Gladewater animals that are being dropped?"

Surrenders are designated to go through animal control, Code Enforcement Officer Wes Moyers said. The SOP is for the shelter to contact Gladewater ACOs when someone drops off a local stray.

Per procedure, people surrendering animals must

show identification to verify they and the animal are within Gladewater's city limits. City Hall and taxpayers can get stuck with the tab.

"They don't hold them accountable," Smith said. "That's been my concern for years."

Per Mayor Brandy Flanagan, "That's on their end. If they don't collect the money from people that show up

on their doorstep, that's on them."

"We really need to step forward as a city to push the neutering program," she added. Big picture, "The choices are we build our own animal shelter or we do this... We need to fix this."

Tabled unanimously for now, the council aims to workshop the issue in consultation with animal control, code enforcement and

Gladewater Police Department before recommending revisions to interlocal agreement.

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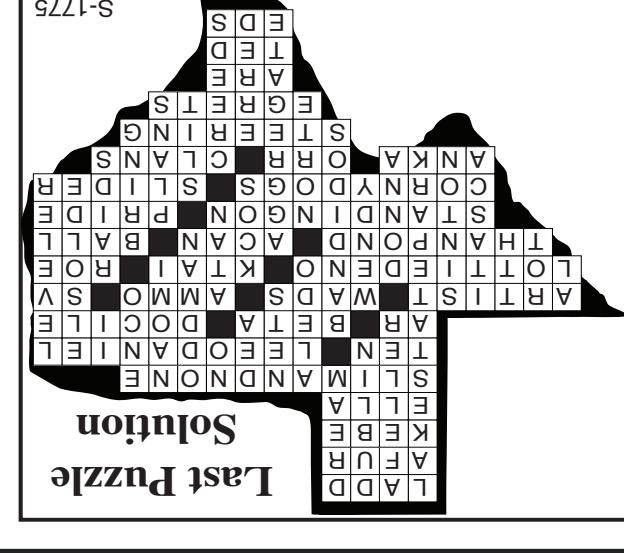
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Sports roundup

By Tyler Sutton

The Gladewater Bears basketball team continued their quest for a district championship as they hosted their cross town rival White Oak Roughnecks at Bill Waters gymnasium but the Roughnecks had other plans as they came away with a 46-43 victory handing Gladewater their first district loss of the season.

Andrew Rector and Tysen McClain both finished with 13 points and five rebounds for White Oak. Cal Jester added 12 points and seven rebounds, Campbell Sutton five points and eight rebounds and Mac Smith three points and five rebounds.



That was followed up by a trip down the road to Sabine where the Bears rebounded with a 83-74 victory over the Cardinals. Landon King had a big game with 24 points and 7 rebounds.

The Bears keep their spot atop the district with an overall record of 11-9 and 4-1. Next up is a trip to Arp to take on the Tigers.

The Gladewater Lady Bears continued their climb in the district standings as they hosted the White Oak Ladynecks and came away with a hard fought 47-40 victory. Paytin Thompson had 23 points, 3 rebounds and 3 assists. Khera Lincoln added 13 points, five rebounds and two assists for Gladewater. Britney Vitehad five points and six rebounds, Kamila Turner two points and 12 rebounds and Beatrice Nasados two points and five rebounds.

That was followed by a trip to Sabine where the Lady Bears grinded out another hard fought victory 37-33 over the Lady Cardinals.

Thompson tossed in 14 points, Kamila Turner added 12. Thompson added six rebounds, two assists and three steals and Turner nine rebounds and two steals. Khera Lincoln chipped in with four points, six rebounds and two assists.

The wins improve the Lady Bears to 5-14 and 4-2 in district play. Next up is a trip to Arp to take on the Lady Tigers.

After their game with the Bears, the White Oak Roughnecks basketball team welcomed in the West Rusk Raiders where they fell 68-45. Jeter had another good game with 13 points and 5 assists.

The losses dropped White Oak to 12-15 and 1-3 in district play and will next be in action with a home game vs Troup then a trip to Tatum.

The Ladynecks followed up their game at Gladewater by hosting the West Rusk Lady Raiders where they fell 53-46. The losses drop White Oak to 10-19 and 0-6 in district play. They will next be in action with a home game vs Troup and then heading to Tatum.

The Union Grove Lions continued their climb up the district standing's as they headed to Linden-Kildare and came away with a hard fought 60-56 victory.

That was followed up by hosting Ore City and easily defeating them 69-22. The Lions led 21-5 after 1 quarter, 38-14 at the half and 67-21 after 3 quarters.

The wins improve Union Grove to 10-12 and 4-1 in district play. They will next be in action when they host McLeod.

The Union Grove Lady Lions continued their march towards a district championship as they traveled to Linden-Kildare where they picked up a 50-34 victory. They then headed home to host Ore City where they routed them 70-22. Shaniya Roland paced Union Grove with 20 points.

Aubree Coulter added 10 points, Landri Sirmans nine, Jill Taylor seven, Eliana Villamendez six, Emma Dabre, Mallorie Cannon and Danica Vestal four each and Chloe Hector and Rachel Potter three apiece. The Lady Lions now sit at a remarkable 22-2 and 5-1 in district play. They will next be back on the court when they host McLeod.

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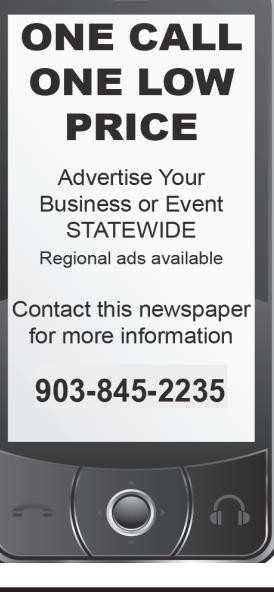
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ORDINANCE 2026-01 OF THE CITY OF WHITE OAK WAS PASSED IN THE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING ON JANUARY 14, 2026, ORDERING A JOINT ELECTION TO BE HELD MAY 2, 2026 FOR THE PURPOSE OF ELECTING COUNCIL MEMBER PLACE 4, 5, AND MAYOR. FOR A COPY OF THE COMPLETE ORDINANCE, PLEASE CONTACT KRISTINE TOON, CITY SECRETARY, CITY OF WHITE OAK, 906 S. WHITE OAK RD., WHITE OAK, TX 75693 OR CALL 903.759.3936



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PUBLIC NOTICE

In accordance with Chapters 501 and 505 of the Texas Local Government Code, notice is hereby published regarding the planned expenditure of Type B sales tax proceeds on an eligible project, as defined in chapters 501 and 505 of the Texas Local Government Code. The White Oak Economic Development Corporation and the White Oak City Council have approved an incentive to grant \$19,352 to the White Oak Softball Association for the purchase of a batting cage.

The White Oak Economic Development Corporation and the White Oak City Council have approved an incentive to grant \$4,400 to SnoJoe's to purchase a 10X20 portable building, a double-sided sign, and WOEDCO will reimburse the City of White Oak for a sewer tap. The grant reimbursement will be made after receipts have been turned in.

The White Oak Economic Development Corporation and the White Oak City Council have approved an interest-free loan in the amount of \$100,000 to Mid South Manufacturing LLC to purchase equipment and an expansion to the facility. Funding for said project shall occur after the expiration of 60 days from the date of newspaper publication of this notice.

PUBLIC NOTICE

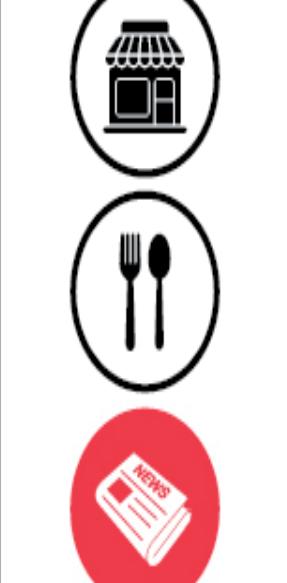
This application has been made with the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission for a WINE AND MALT BEVERAGE RETAILOR'S OFF PREMISE PERMIT (BQ) by PASHUPATI LUCKY LLC, dba: LUCKY MART to be located at 227 S. MAIN ST., GLADEWATER, TEXAS, 75647, GREGG COUNTY. Member of said LLC is BIJAYA KUMAR SHRESTHA, Managing member.

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NOTICE OF APPLICATION TO IMPLEMENT A NET INTERIM FUEL REFUND

On December 30, 2025, Southwestern Electric Power Company (SWEPCO or the Company) filed an Application with the Public Utility Commission of Texas (Commission) to implement a net interim fuel refund of a net over-recovery of fuel costs billed under its factors through October 31, 2025. The docket number assigned to this proceeding is PUC Docket No. 59179. This filing was made under Tex. Admin. Code § 25.237(a)(3)(B). The filing affects only the fuel portion of the rates charged by SWEPCO for electricity in Texas and has no effect on SWEPCO's non-fuel base rates. This application, if granted, will affect all Texas retail customers who pay fixed fuel factors.

The total amount of the net over-recovery balance to be refunded through the proposed refund is \$42,027,369, exclusive of interest. The total amount, including interest up to the proposed refund period, is \$42,464,062.

SWEPCO proposes that customers receiving service pursuant to its As-Available Standby Service (AAS) and Large Lighting and Power Substation (LLP) tariffs should have their refund calculated based on historical usage, including interest.

SWEPCO proposes to apply these factors to the actual kWh usage of each customer for three months, during the February 2026 through April 2026 billing cycles.

The effect of the refund on customer bills will vary depending on the rate schedule under which they take service and, in some instances, will amount to a surcharge. Further, based on time periods of usage, some customers within a class may receive a surcharge while the class as a whole receives a net refund. SWEPCO estimates that under its proposed refund, a residential customer using 1,000 kWh a month would see a decrease of \$22.05, or 19.26% during each month of the refund period on his/her total electric bill if the proposed net interim fuel refund is approved.

SWEPCO's fuel expenses will be subject to final review by the Commission in the Company's next fuel reconciliation proceeding.

Persons with questions or who want more information on the proposed interim net fuel refund may contact SWEPCO at 428 Travis Street, Shreveport, Louisiana 71101, or call toll free at (888) 216-3523 during normal business hours. A complete copy of the filing is available for inspection at the address listed above.

Persons who wish to formally participate in this proceeding, or who wish to express their comments concerning this application should contact the Public Utility Commission of Texas, Office of Consumer Protection, P.O. Box 13326, Austin, Texas 78711-3326, or call (512) 936-7120, or toll free at (888) 782-8477. A request to intervene or for further information should reference Docket No. 59179. Hearing and speech-impaired individuals with text telephones (TTY) may call (512) 936-7136 or use Relay Texas (toll free) at (800) 735-2989.

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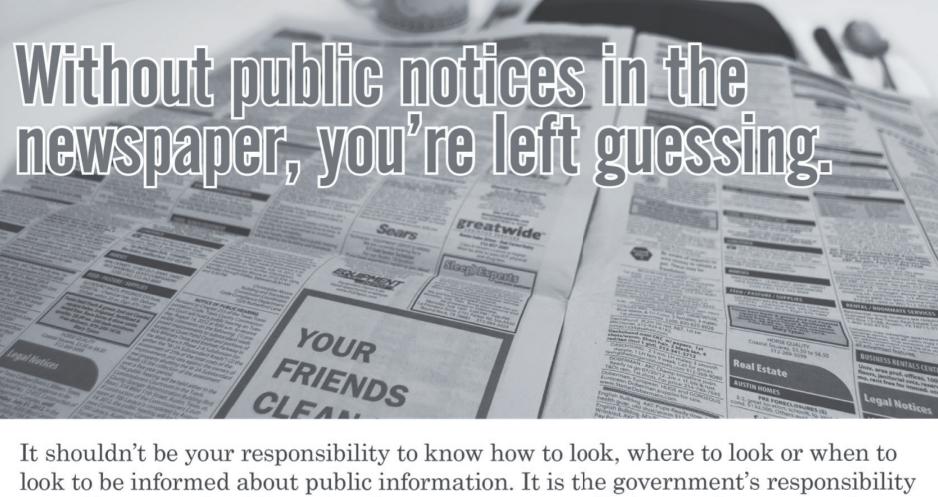
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The Gladewater Mirror

what's Happening?

County library storytime set

A book will be read to young children at both of the Upshur County Library's weekly "Storytime" sessions in Gilmer on Thursday (Jan. 22).

In addition, the format for "Storytime" has recently changed, said Amy Allred, children's coordinator for the library. Instead of two books being read to children, only one will be, and a short story, song or rhyme will be held with the craft following the reading, she said.

The book to be read this week is "Polar Bear Island" by Lindsay Bonilla. An "animal dance" and polar bear-related craft will follow.

The readings are set for 10 a.m. and 4:15 p.m.

The library is at 702 W. Tyler, which is also Texas 154. The events are free to the public with no advance registration required, but children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult.

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

Inaugural GHS alumni soup showdown set for Feb. 10

Soup always tastes better in cold weather, so cross your fingers there'll be a chilly forecast next month as Gladewater High School alumni put their best recipes to the test.

Gladewater Former Students' Association's first Soup-er Stew Cookoff is set for 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 10, at the GFSA building at 2509 Hendricks St.

"Teams from different GHS Alumni Classes will prepare their favorite soup or stew," organizers announced, "and we will vote to see who has the best."

In addition to the competition fare, GFSA will provide cornbread, crackers, tea and water.

A fundraising event, tickets are \$10 per person. To reserve a seat, contact Bryan Kelly (903-780-1375 or bryan@dqtyler.com) or Peggy Whiteman (307-216-0517 or joe_peggy@hotmail.com). GFSA board members and associates also have tickets to sell.

Five class-teams are signed up, the organizers announced, so there will be plenty of soup and stew available to enjoy.

Vet benefits fair on tap Feb. 21

The Gilmer posts of three national organizations for military veterans will jointly host a Veterans Benefit Fair at the Gilmer Civic Center on Saturday, Feb. 21, announced local American Legion member Shirley Parnell.

The event, open free of charge to local veterans and their families, is set for 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 1218 U.S. Hwy. 271 N.

A flyer promoting it terms it as "a day dedicated to serving those who served."

It will feature "a variety of veterans' resources," free food from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., and "giveaways throughout the day," the flyer said.

Sponsors are American Legion R.E (Peppy) Blount Post No. 320, Veterans of Foreign Wars Post No. 6715 and Disabled American Veterans Post No. 204.

Gilmer man indicted on murder charges

By Phillip Williams

The Upshur County Grand Jury recently indicted Joshua David Starcher on a murder charge that he fatally beat his elderly stepfather last October at their Gilmer home.

Starcher, 51, of Gilmer, is charged with killing Bert Ronald Young by striking him multiple times with his fists, said the Upshur County district clerk's office. He remained in county jail at

Gilmer on an additional charge of injury to elderly, said District Attorney Barry Clark Wallace's office.

Wallace said Monday he believed Young, who was in his seventies, died one or two days after the Oct. 25 beating. Starcher is the son of Young's widow from a prior relationship or marriage, the district attorney said.

Wallace also said that Starcher's adult son, who was present when the beating occurred, lived at the same residence. The district attorney said he didn't know the address.

As for the injury to elderly charge, Wallace said that was filed for the beating before Young died, after which the murder charge was filed.

Starcher's was among 11 indictments, two of them sealed, jurors returned Jan. 9 in Gilmer, Wallace announced last Thursday.

Defendants, charges and bond information in the open indictments were as follows, his office said:

Christopher David Leon, 48, of Gilmer, assault on peace officer/judge Oct. 21. He remained in county jail under \$50,000 bond.

Elvin Pruitt, 42, of Ore City, possession of controlled substance with intent to deliver (methamphetamine) last April 23. He was originally released on \$25,000 bond, but re-arrested when a surety was released from his bond, then re-released on \$25,000 bond.

Traveon Dwayne Moore, 19, of Texarkana, evading arrest/detention with vehicle last Nov. 5. He remained in county jail under \$15,000 bond.

Christie Lynn Walls, 47, of Gilmer, possession of controlled substance (methamphetamine) on April 3, 2024. She was freed on \$10,000 bond.

Jason Scott Knight, 49, of Gilmer, evading arrest/detention with vehicle last Nov. 22. He was released on \$15,000 bond.

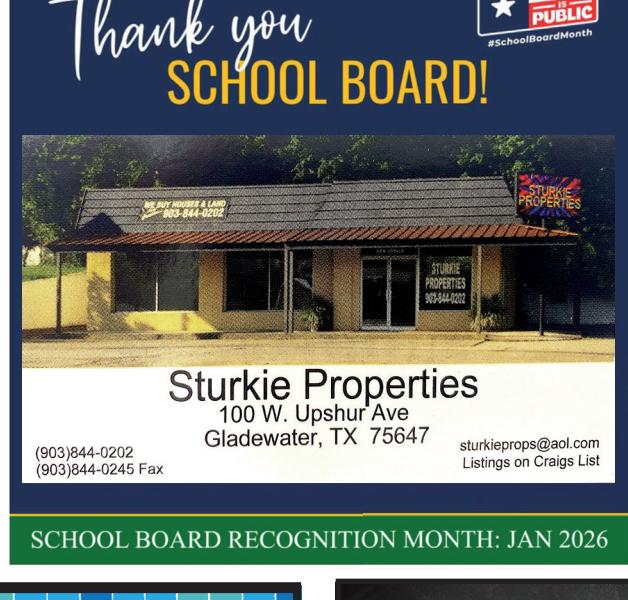
Eric Wayne Wellborn, 44, of Gilmer, possession of controlled substance (methamphetamine) on Feb. 22, 2024. He was freed on \$10,000 bond.



Brody Kail & Caydence Martin were recently recognized as the Gladewater Rotary Club's Students of the Month.



Local Rotarians welcomed Gladewater High School Boys Basketball Coach Jerry Timmons (center) as speaker last week, pictured with club members Avon Bateman (left) and Sam Cloud.





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City, school keep eyes on traffic issues at primary campus, seek solutions

By James Draper

After an initial on-the-ground assessment of traffic around Gladewater Primary School, city and school officials will continue monitoring and working up solutions for the congestion around the campus.

It's a bit of trouble spot on Gay Avenue on school mornings, and Gladewater City Manager Charlie Smith recently joined Police Chief Kyle Ready and Gladewater ISD Superintendent Rae Ann Patty at 6:45 a.m. to get a better idea of how things flow at the campus.

"It went pretty smooth that day," Smith told council members during his first City Hall round-up of the year Jan. 15.

Granted, he quipped, drivers may have been on their best behavior when they recognized Ready.

The police chief returned for another shift in the afternoon, Smith said, and the city will keep observing and coordinating with district leaders to come up with a strategy to fix problems that have been identified.

"We are keeping an eye on that. We're going to find a solution," he added. "We've thrown around some other ideas."

In other notes last week, Smith said the pickleball parking lot has been completed at Lake Gladewater park.

"It looks really good. That was all in-house by our public works guys," he said.

"They did a good job with that."

The city is also moving forward with the dog park at Everett Park: "There's plenty of room for parking down there."

Smith also joined other local officials in Longview Thursday for a planning session focusing on area America 250 activities spearheaded by the City of Longview.

With a growing list of festivities on the calendar for Gregg County, "They want all the cities to be involved and for us to deliver our information to them so they can combine it with their information," Smith reported. "I think this year everybody will have something to do every day of the week. There are a lot of festivities going on."

"Definitely put us down for one," Mayor Brandy Flanagan said.

'Together we are stronger than any challenge we face'

Continued from Page 1

they have served love, unity and tradition," she added. "Through early mornings, long hours, planning, cooking, and serving, they have made sure that our gatherings were warm, welcoming, and rooted in care."

"To our honorees: thank you for showing up, for rolling up your sleeves, and for serving with consistency and heart. Because of you, our MLK Day events feel like home. Because of you, fellowship is made possible. And because of you, Dr. King's legacy is carried



forward one meal, one act of service and one united effort at a time."

Applauding scholarship recipient and Kilgore College student Olivia Hawley

as well, Alexander closed this year's event with a reminder: "MLK day is a day on, not a day off," she said, "so go out and serve somebody."

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TODD TEFTELLER
Upshur County Judge

Upshur County Court House, 100 W Tyler St 3rd floor, Gilmer, (903) 843-4003

Paid for by Todd Tefeller

gold crown
FLORAL & EVENTS

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IS PUBLIC**

MANDY KILLGORE SCHWAB
OWNER

PHONE (903) 374-2062
CELL (318) 224-0537

117 S. Main St.
Gladewater

GOLDCROWNFLORALANDEVENTS.COM

**SCHOOL BOARD RECOGNITION MONTH
JANUARY 2026**

**NEW
PIER**
Restaurant

Planting The
Seeds Of Success

705 W US Hwy 80
White Oak
(903) 297-4384

**SCHOOL BOARD
MEMBER
RECOGNITION
MONTH**

Making A World of Difference

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**SCHOOL BOARD RECOGNITION MONTH
JANUARY 2026**

Forgotten Treasures
Antiques & More
Eva And Mitch Aills Owners
Bob Chauvin
Tracy and Jimmy Bradshaw

111 S. Main St.
Gladewater, TX 75647
Antique Capital of East Texas
903-520-0383

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**SCHOOL BOARD RECOGNITION MONTH
JANUARY 2026**

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**SCHOOL BOARD RECOGNITION MONTH
JANUARY 2026**

**PLANTING SEEDS OF
SUCCESS**
School Board Recognition Month

Guadalupe's Mexican Restaurant

101 East Pacific Ave.
Gladewater, TX 75647
903-845-2318

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GLADEWATER WHITE OAK UNION GROVE

School Boards

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MEMBER FDIC

EQUAL HOUSING LENDER



January is recognized as School Board Appreciation Month, and WE BELIEVE that WHITE OAK has the BEST!

Lance Noll - President
Stephanie McKinney - Vice-President
Donna Stagner - Secretary
Ricky Bodovsky - Member
Jessica Hughes - Member
David Trest - Member
Dr. David Ummel - Member

THANK YOU for ALL you do for WHITE OAK ISD!

[Signature]



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SCHOOL BOARD RECOGNITION MONTH
JANUARY 2026

L-R: Michael Potter - assistant secretary, Brian Cox, Tim Bower, Tim Turner - secretary, Jody Day - president, Kary Barbee, Justin Smith - vice president

Union Grove ISD
www.ugisd.org (903) 845-5682
11220 Union Grove Rd., Gladewater
Kelly Moore, UGISD Superintendent

Home of Lion Pride!
Encourage ~ Empower ~ Educate



Front Row: Jeff Cook-Vice President, Chris Thompson-President, Dani Budro-Secretary
Back Row: Rae Ann Patty-Superintendent, Ross Morgan, Rickie Blackmon, Cori Arevalo, Garth Cockerell



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JANUARY 2026

Thank You from the
GISD Staff and Faculty
200 E. Broadway
903-845-6991
www.gladewaterisd.com



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