

Gladewater Mirror



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Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program set

TxDOT is hosting a series of virtual public workshops to help connect organizations providing lifeline transportation services with their most vulnerable customers: seniors and people with disabilities.

The agency is seeking input from seniors; individuals with disabilities; representatives of public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human service providers; and other members of the public who share TxDOT's goal of improving local mobility services for seniors and individuals with disabilities.

The Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program promotes the development and maintenance of a network of transportation services for seniors and individuals with disabilities throughout the state, in partnership with local stakeholders promotes public transportation projects that decrease the reliance of individuals with disabilities on ADA complementary paratransit services provides technical assistance to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and safety of transit providers

Virtual Public Workshops
The program is intended to fully integrate with other federal, state, and local resources and programs that are designed to serve similar populations. The way we do this is through regionally developed public transportation coordination plans and public workshops.

The public workshops provide an opportunity to gather input from a diverse group of local stakeholders and the public to assist TxDOT in making decisions regarding the Federal Funding for the 5310 Program and identify how we can best use our resources to serve the mobility needs of the community. We are seeking the participation of, seniors, individuals with disabilities, representatives of public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human service providers and other members of the public who share TxDOT's goal of improving the local mobility services for seniors and individuals with disabilities.

Eligible Recipients
Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities grants are awarded to nonprofit organizations, local public entities serving rural (under 50,000 population) and small urban (population of less than 200,000) areas. Private taxi companies that provide shared-ride taxi service to the public or to special categories of users (such as seniors or individuals with disabilities) on a regular basis are also eligible recipients.

Go to the district links (<https://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/projects/studies/statewide/fta-5310.html>) to be directed to the district workshop site for your region where you can find information about the meeting, information on how to log on, and materials, such as a comment card and a survey, to provide your comments. The agendas also provide information on how to participate in the virtual public workshops.



Santa paid the Gladewater Mirror a surprise visit this past weekend as he strolled the downtown streets reminding shoppers to "Shop Small" and support local small business owners and their local retail stores.

Photo by Karla Byrd



The Union Grove Lion Marching Band advanced to state competition with a sweepstakes rating of straight one's in their division from judges. This is the 31st consecutive year that the UGHS band has achieved this honor. They will compete at state marching contest on Dec. 9 at Pine Tree High School Stadium.

Courtesy Photo

607 COVID cases in Upshur

By Phillip Williams

Upshur County has 607 state-confirmed COVID-19 cases, including 22 deaths, county Emergency Management Coordinator Marc Nichols told the county commissioners court Monday.

The total included 530 recoveries and 55 "active" cases, but 56 "probable active" cases, Nichols said. Asked the difference in "active" and "probable active," he indicated probable cases involved individuals who had symptoms and were tested for COVID-19, but that the state did not necessarily have the test results to confirm a positive diagnosis.

The number of probable active cases is "better than what we've seen," Nichols said. County Judge Todd Tefeller said that total had declined by about 70 and "I'm sure glad to see that number down."

After the meeting, Nichols said "our active cases have gone up" after hovering around 30. "I know the cold weather doesn't help anything" because it causes other types of illnesses, he added.

Nichols also urged continuing precautions of hand washing, wearing masks, and social distancing of six feet from other persons.

Parade officially canceled

As reported last week, the Gladewater Chamber of Commerce was expected to cancel the Dec. 8 Christmas Parade - and they did cancel the annual event as a precaution to growing COVID-19 cases.

Mayor JD Shipp said he was concerned the parade could be "counter productive to the efforts of our school in the continuation of on-site instruction. I also worry that we will put in jeopardy families' ability to gather for Christmas. The parade, while a wonderful holiday tradition, is an event that can be revisited next year with far greater fanfare with COVID and 2020 in the rear-view mirror of a 2021 journey."

DJ Allen MVP of 6-3A Bears dominate all district



D.J. Allen, who was a triple threat for the Gladewater Bears this football season - catching touchdown passes, rushing for TDs and even throwing TD passes - not to mention more than 200 kick return yards and an interception on defense, earned him the Most Valuable Player honors on the District 6-3A Division I All-District Football Team for 2020.

Allen threw a touchdown pass, ran for two scores, had 213 return yards and finished with 23 tackles on defense, but was one of the area's top receiving threat — finishing with 59 catches for 1,316 yards and 17 touchdowns.

Gladewater's Tristan Holmes was named Offensive MVP, Gladewater's Trent Bolt was named Offensive Line MVP and Gladewater's Kollin Lewis was selected Newcomer of the Year, while the Gladewater Bear coaching staff was named the top staff in the district in a vote by the league's coaches.

Tatum's Dalone Fuller was selected Defensive MVP, while Tatum's Trey Fite was picked for Defensive Line MVP honors. New Boston's Kyle Atkinson was named Utility MVP.

FIRST TEAM
OFFENSE
Quarterback: Jace Burns, Sabine; Cayson Siegley, White Oak; Kendrick Malone, Tatum; Running back: Keith Kinney, Atlanta; Tylin Hollins, Tatum; Receiver: Dontavion Gardner, Jefferson; Kaden Manning, Sabine; K'Havia Reese, Gladewater; Line: Clay Fant, Atlanta; Nathan Keller, Gladewater; Jasper Taylor, Gladewater; Zane Werner, White Oak; Zach Martin, Tatum; Hector Diaz, Tatum; Tight end: Zach Shipp, Gladewater; Fullback: Kevon Thompson, New Boston; Devin Walker, Gladewater
DEFENSE
Line: Trey Adams, Atlanta; Eli Kates, Gladewater; Rylie Redden White Oak; C.J. Fite, Tatum; Linebacker: Ty Francisco, Sabine; Michael Stevens, White Oak; Brian Reid, New Boston; Logan Shelton, Atlanta; Isaiah Henderson, Atlanta; Back: Carlos Jackson, Jr., Jefferson; Angel Recendiz, New Boston; Malachi Dorsey, New Boston; Nick Lincoln, Gladewater; Colton Cobb, White Oak; Dexter Monroe, Tatum; Special teams: Zion Hopes, Jefferson; Isaac Goldsmith, New Boston; Cooper McClure, Atlanta; Eduardo Jaimes, Sabine; Brian Smith, White Oak; Justice Hassek, Gladewater; Jace Burns, Sabine; Omar Rodriguez, Tatum

SECOND TEAM
OFFENSE
Running back: Caden Glass, New Boston; Malachi Gordon, Gladewater; Jackson Frazier, White Oak; Decartiyay Allison, Tatum; Receiver: Kameron Dickerson, Atlanta; Dylan Creager, White Oak; Dalton Morgan, White Oak; Kendall Williams, Tatum; Line: Jaden Wells, Atlanta; Rodolfo Fierros, Sabine; Jordan Kinsey, Gladewater; Luke Ummel, White Oak; Alan Flores, Tatum; Markendrick Beall, Tatum
DEFENSE
Line: Alex Romano, Jefferson; Cody Rutherford, New Boston; Trentyn Morris-Hill, New Boston; Tyrell King, Atlanta; Rajuan Johnson, Gladewater; Chris Perry, Gladewater; Linebacker: Jordan Stiger, Atlanta; Daylon Branham, Sabine; Logan Bohannon, Gladewater; Gavin Bzdil, White Oak; Daymien Smith, Tatum; Back: Jackson Warren, Atlanta; Zach Polanco, Gladewater; Ty Bridges, Tatum.

HONORABLE MENTION
Sabine: Cayden Fortson, Alex Galyean, Asher Foster, Brannigan Willige, Carter Patterson; Gladewater: Eli Carter, Ben Alvarez, Austin Verner, Za Campbell; White Oak: Noah Carter, Rylan Friddell, Sam Dusek, Dylan Miller, Chase Tucker; Tatum: Jayden Boyd, Quiston Sheffield, Malachi Ward, Ty'Darius Webb, Latrell Perry, Nich Calhoun, Japatrik Blanton; Jefferson: Joshua Thomas, Malik Brasher, Zion Hopes, Kentravious Dowden, Dameron Warren, Isaiah McDonald, Christian Shepard, Parker Grubbs, Knox Tomlinson, Joshua Davis, Ryan Yeater, Jordan Friday, Bryce lark, Lucas Pover; New Boston: Jayden West, Dalton Daniel, Demetrius McChester, William Henson; Atlanta: Isaiah Harrison, Adrian Kennington, Ashton Harper, Ty Blizzard, Brennan Gaston, Dekorian Parker, Matthew Cauley, Caleb Hamilton



Christian Allen brought toys for the Gladewater Mirror's drive for Manna House's Santa Toy Shop and was greeted by Newshound King. Registered Families will pick up family holiday food boxes on Dec. 9-10 from 9 a.m. until 11 a.m. at First United Methodist Church's Family Life Center on Quitman Street will be able to select a new toy for each child and a coloring book and crayons. Toys may be dropped off at the Gladewater Mirror through Dec. 7 during business hours at 211 N. Main Street.

Recipients of the boxes and toys must register by completing one application per household and providing photo ID and proof of residence. There is a limit of one food box per approved household. Approved applicants with children ages 12 AND UNDER permanently living in the same household may pick out a toy for each of the children (age 12 and under).

Photo By Suzanne Bardwell

OPINION/EDITORIAL

Chris Cobler
Capital
Highlights



Researcher spotlights 'invisible incentives'

The Texas Enterprise Fund took a hit for lack of transparency in a new research paper from the National Freedom of Information Coalition.

The paper by journalist Steve Miller is titled "Invisible Incentives: How Secrecy Impedes Evaluation and Accountability of Economic Development Subsidies." Part of the paper spotlights the Texas Enterprise Fund, which the Legislature created in 2003 to provide taxpayer money to companies in exchange for the promise of jobs.

"But in numerous cases, the money has been paid and the companies left shortly after the deal was completed, taking the jobs with them," the paper's author writes. "The public rarely hears of it, and the money spent is rarely recouped, although because of the opacity surrounding the TEF, it's difficult to discern if any financial recovery by the state is achieved."

The problem is the same across most states, according to the paper, which concludes with this recommendation: "Opening the records, fully, is the best start to handing the decision to the public."

Rena Eze, Gov. Greg Abbott's spokesperson, responded in a statement to the researcher's assertions.

"When he first entered office in 2015, Gov. Abbott established procedures to ensure the protection of taxpayer money and transparency in the spending process, including changing the Texas Enterprise Fund requirements to be performance-based, meaning these companies must first meet their contracted job requirements before any state money is paid out," she stated.

Plans for first vaccinations

Texas is preparing to distribute the COVID-19 vaccination to medical staff and other first responders later this month.

"Texas is ready to distribute these vaccines in the coming days," Gov. Greg Abbott tweeted Sunday, sharing a Wall Street Journal news story about United Airlines operating charter flights to position doses of Pfizer Inc.'s COVID-19 vaccine for quick distribution if the shots are approved by regulators.

Earlier, Abbott and the State Department of Health Services announced their guiding principles of vaccine distribution. Texas will initially allocate vaccines based on the following criteria:

- Protecting health care workers.
- Protecting frontline workers.
- Protecting vulnerable populations who are at greater risk.
- Mitigating health inequities.
- Data-driven allocations using the best available scientific evidence and epidemiology.
- Geographic diversity that considers access in urban and rural communities.
- Transparency with the public.

\$1 billion less

Two key Texas funds received about \$1 billion less this year because of the economic downturn, state Comptroller Glenn Hegar announced.

The State Highway Fund and the Rainy Day Fund each received more than \$1.1 billion in the annual transfer of severance tax money, Hegar said. That's about \$500 million less for each fund than a year ago.

The transfer amounts are based on crude oil and natural gas production tax revenues in excess of 1987 collections. If either tax generates more revenue than the 1987 threshold, an amount equal to 75 percent of the excess is transferred. In November 2014, voters approved a constitutional amendment allocating at least half of the severance taxes to the Rainy Day Fund, with the remainder going to the State Highway Fund for use on non-toll highway construction, maintenance and right-of-way acquisition.

The economic contraction associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and recent volatility in oil prices contributed to the transfer amounts being lower than the \$1.66 billion each fund received in fiscal 2020, Hegar said.

"The Rainy Day Fund and the State Highway Fund are critical pieces to ensure Texas' continued economic strength," Hegar said. "The State Highway Fund is a key funding source for the transportation infrastructure that is fundamental to our economy, and the importance of maintaining a healthy Rainy Day Fund to help weather unforeseen economic downturns has never been more clear than it has been in recent months."

With this most recent transfer, the new balance of severance taxes will be about \$10.7 billion.

Billion-dollar breakthrough?

Texas A&M researchers announced a breakthrough in fighting agricultural plant diseases.

Kranthi Mandadi, a Texas A&M AgriLife Research scientist and associate professor in Texas A&M's Department of Plant Pathology and Microbiology, has been working on developing new biological technologies. Mandadi and his team are based at the Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center in Weslaco.

The diseases cause billions of dollars of damage each year. The U.S. citrus industry alone would save \$3 billion a year.

Who knew?

It is Cyber Monday but I don't have time to cruise the online bargains that are calling my name. The newspaper is on deadline and because of my tardiness my poor publisher hubby has his back against the wall, and time is not his friend. I betcha anything I made Santa's Naughty List today.

Since Santa Hubby is exercising restraint and has not yet made me feel guilty, I am stopping just a minute, with you, some of my favorite people in the world to share a little humor, some insight and truth that can be found on T-shirts. T-shirts that I just might have found on Cyber Monday 'window shopping online' while on deadline.

The hook that pulled me in was: "If at first you don't succeed, skydiving is not for you". My hubby did skydiving in the dark ages when you didn't jump tandem. He had his own chute, which the novice had packed himself. Jim had to climb out on the wing of a plane WAY up HIGH, by himself and JUMP. The veteran jumper before him had a chute failure which resulted in the use of a small back up chute and.... injuries. My macho hubby paid for two jumps up front in 1977. He still has one coming.

"Zombies eat brains...you're safe", shouldn't make me laugh but it does. While ALL teachers and parents can relate to the slogan: "AND yet despite the look on my face you're still talking". Then there is "I can explain it to you but I can't understand it for you". Yep, so true which leads to the sarcasm slogan, not that you or I would stoop to such a level: "No, you're right, Let's do it the dumbest way possible".

Then again I have my own system failures that some slogans address such as: "Just once, I want a username and password prompt to say, 'close enough'", or "Don't rush me, I am waiting for the last minute" and the depressingly true "I thought the dryer made my clothes shrink. Turns out it was the refrigerator".

For Christmas I am thinking of ordering hubby this tee. "I had my patience tested. I'm negative :) I also want to get him the T-shirt that proudly sports: "My wife says I only have 2 faults. I don't listen and something else..." But the top of the hubby hit parade of t-slogans has to be: "Never laugh at your wife's choices. You are one of them."

**Suzanne
Bardwell**



I love that one...a lot.

In Sweetie's defense here are a few slogan T-shirts he could put in my Christmas stocking: "Hold On. Let me OVERTHINK this" or "If you can read this shirt, I was forced to put my book down and re-enter society". My rejoinder to that last one is a Tee that reads "Bookmarks are for quitters".

If you have ever seen "Old Yeller", "Big Jake" or "Marley & Me" you probably FEEL this one: "I don't care who dies in a movie as long as the dog lives". So dad gum true!

For my science lovers, how about the Tee that reads "I wanted to make a clever chemistry joke but the best ones ARGON 39.948". See, this column is for all you smarties out there.

I laugh every time I see "Not my circus, not my monkeys" but the truth is, it is our circus isn't it? Which means we probably need to help round up the monkeys.

However, my absolute favorite T-shirt slogan which I may turn into my new life motto is: "People who wonder if the glass is half empty or half full miss the point. The glass is refillable". Isn't that beautiful? I found that truth on a t-shirt. A T-shirt!

Here in this 2020 time loop of disaster it might be a good idea if we took that slogan to heart. My glass is refillable. Sometimes someone graciously fills it, but more often than not it is up to me to do so. It's not so very hard to do. For starters most of us pulled ourselves out of a comfy bed this morning, in a warm house with a refrigerator full of food and then had to decide what to wear. For much of the world our reality is a fantasy. Maybe we should try filling a few other glasses while we are at it. Grab your pitcher and let's get to work.

Who knew t-shirts could be so inspirational?



THE ECONOMIST

By Dr. M. Ray Perryman

The Big One

A new trade agreement covering about 30% of the global economy has been signed. The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) includes China, Japan, South Korea, New Zealand, Australia, and 10 Southeast Asian economies. It's the world's largest in terms of the amount of gross product covered, slightly above the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) according to most estimates. About 2.1 billion people reside in member nations. India is not in the deal at this point but can join at a later date.

It's been a long time in the making, with negotiations dragging on for about eight years. With the coronavirus pandemic causing economic dislocations worldwide, however, there was an even greater incentive to get it done (though member nations still have to ratify it). In addition, the agreement may help China, Japan, and South Korea reach a free trade agreement; they've been struggling for years to work through barriers and reach an accord.

Although clearly a landmark in terms of the proportion of the world economy which is covered, tariffs among most of these nations were already low or nonexistent. While further reductions will clearly enhance growth prospects, they will be phased in over time, and the starting points are generally not that high.

Unlike more comprehensive trade agreements which attempt to reduce a variety of barriers to free trade, the primary goal of the RCEP is to reduce tariffs. In fact, some observers note that, from China's perspective, it is particularly attractive in that it is narrowly focused on tariffs rather than other issues. The agreement touches on intellectual property, but environmental protections and labor rights are not addressed.

Free trade is good for the economy. It can help open markets, strengthen supply chains, and enhance economic growth. This basic fact of economics has been proven over centuries. The increased Chinese influence may prove to be detrimental to the ability of the US to compete in the region. This outcome was largely preordained when the US pulled

out of the Trans Pacific Partnership negotiations in early 2017, but may be reversed through future policy shifts.

As an illustration of the potential magnitude of a major trade deal, we analyzed the benefits to the United States having the USMCA in place and found that it leads to an additional \$64.9 billion in gross product and almost 600,900 jobs compared to trading under the terms that would otherwise be in place (including multiplier effects). While the RCEP is not as comprehensive as the USMCA, it will nonetheless yield benefits to all member nations.

As nations struggle to recover from the pandemic fallout, free trade can help by enhancing competitiveness and reducing costs. Let's hope the US comes to the party. Stay safe!

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GREAT FAITH

Hebrews 11: 1, says "Now faith is the substance (assurance) of things hoped for, the evidence (conviction, confidence) of things not seen." Hebrews 11: 8, says, "By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going." Think about it. Leaving all you have come to know for 75 years. But that's not all, they were leaving not knowing where they were going, what they were going to do when they got there, or who they were going to see.

Why would they do that? FAITH is the answer. Abraham didn't question, because the instructions came from God. His response was, "When would you like me to leave, Lord?" That's faith. That's trust in God. It says, "I don't know all about what's involved in doing this, but I know WHO is telling me to do it!" That's faith in action! That is a positive response to God. That is taking God at His word. You see, faith doesn't question, faith DOES! It is not just believing in God, it's believing that "He is the rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." (Heb. 11: 6).

Can we have that kind of faith today? Yes, we can. God has spoken to us, not directly, but through His Word. Thus, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10: 17). When we hear God speaking to us through His word, we either believe it or reject Him. We either trust Him or we don't. We either do what He says, or we don't. Therefore, the faith that saves is the faith that obeys (Heb. 7: 9), and the faith that keeps one saved is the faith that obeys (1 Pet. 1: 5). Think on these things.

Dennis Abernathy-White Oak Church of Christ
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Comptroller's Office Announces Prepaid Debit Card for Texas ABLE® Program

Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar today announced the launch of the U.S. Bank® Focus Card — a new prepaid debit card for Texas ABLE® Program account owners. With the Focus Card, Texas ABLE account owners can pay for qualified disability expenses on the go or online — anywhere nationwide that accepts Visa® debit cards.

“This is a powerful tool that gives Texas ABLE account owners a convenient new way to use the funds in their accounts,” Hegar said. “This increased flexibility will help account holders manage their personal finances and become more financially independent.”

The Focus Card is a reloadable prepaid debit card funded by withdrawals from the Texas ABLE account. Account owners can transfer money from the account to the card and use it when needed. Balances on the card are covered by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC).

Texas ABLE account owners can log into their account at any time and request a Focus Card on the “Profile” tab. New enrollees can request a card at the time of enrollment. Beneficiaries of the Texas ABLE account can request a card for themselves; authorized legal representatives on the account can request a card for themselves or for the beneficiary, but not both. Go to the Comptroller’s website for more information about the Focus Card.

There is no cost to enroll in the Focus Card Program, but some fees may be assessed based on how the card is used. Please refer to the Fee Schedule for details regarding fees associated with the Focus Card Program. Account balance and transaction history are available anytime via the U.S. Bank Mobile App or online at usbankfocus.com. Established by the Texas Legislature and administered by the Texas Comptroller’s office, the Texas ABLE Program allows Texans with disabilities to save in a tax-advantaged account while preserving eligibility for certain means-tested state and federal programs. Texas ABLE is open to eligible Texans who experience the onset of a disability before the age of 26 and are entitled to Supplemental Security Income or Social Security Disability Insurance benefits or have a condition on the Social Security Administration’s list of Compassionate Allowances Conditions or a physician’s

diagnosis of a qualifying condition. For more information on Texas ABLE, including how to request a Focus Card, visit TexasABLE.org or call (844-489-2253).

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or guaranteed and could lose money (including the principal invested). Before investing in the Program, investors should carefully consider the federal and state tax consequences, possible negative effects on eligibility for federal or state benefits, possible Medicaid recapture, investment objectives, risks, administrative fees, service and other charges and expenses associated with the Program. The Program Disclosure Statement and Participation Agreement contains this and other information.



The Gladwater Youth Football sixth grade team beat Pine Tree 27-7 for the championship. The sixth grade Bears beat a team that had not been beaten in three years to take the Super Bowl title. Courtesy Photo

Upshur Commissioners approve buying election equipment

By Phillip Williams

Upshur County Commissioners Court on Monday approved an agreement with HART Intercivic to purchase software and election equipment from the firm for a discounted price of \$580,000.

“We’re wanting to purchase new voting equipment” to have a “paper trail” of votes, County Election Administrator Lory Harle told the court in Gilmer. She said the county had received two federal grants which would cover the \$120,000 down payment.

HART representative John Thompson told the court it could probably utilize its current election equipment another year or two, but that it was made in 2000-2001. He also noted the state requires either spending the \$120,000 grant funds by next year’s end, or returning the money, and that Harle has applied for another \$20,000 grant.

Thompson said his firm works with Government Capital “for a lot of our financing,” and that HART has sent County Auditor Connie Williams a finance package to review. He said the county would have 30-60 days to pay for the equipment once it arrives.

Harle noted she charges cities and school districts to use county machinery for their elections, and Thompson added that “she can possibly charge more if she wanted to.”

Thompson additionally said his firm’s equipment was not involved in the election controversies which surfaced in places outside Texas on the day of the Nov. 3 Presidential election. Reiterating Harle’s point, he noted “this new system will have a paper trail.”

County Judge Todd Tefeller said the county’s election was

“hacked,” that Harle was not to blame for it, and the judge sharply criticized an unidentified losing candidate for complaining about the problems. Harle said the election was not hacked, but that there had been difficulties with registration check-in equipment (which also occurred in other Texas counties).

Tefeller said the new equipment would cost \$704,000 and while Thompson said it would have been \$707,000 with shipping and handling, his firm would pick up the county’s current equipment, destroy it, and grant the \$127,000 discount.

In other action Monday, the court approved an interlocal agreement with the city of East Mountain concerning flood plain management—a move Tefeller said may help the city obtain some benefits from the Sabine River Authority. The judge said he believed the agreement makes East Mountain eligible to request grants.

The county has no designated flood plain administrator.

Tefeller said the city might obtain “stream and precipitation gauges,” which Precinct 2 Commissioner Dustin Nicholson said would “re-route flood waters to different places.”

County Emergency Management Coordinator Marc Nichols, however, said the city would only qualify for help in areas within city limits. He also said he saw nothing “detrimental” to the county in the agreement, adding the county would sign off on East Mountain’s behalf on grants, and that the agreement provides relief for the county’s liability.

Tefeller observed that the county could withdraw from the agreement on 60 days’ notice “for

no reason at all.”

The court also Monday approved overtime pay for jailers who work overtime in place of jailers who have COVID-19 or were exposed to it.

Tefeller told the court that state and federal COVID-related grant funds to the county would cover the cost, which will thus not be “out of our (the county’s) pocket.” Sheriff Larry Webb said

he did not know the exact amount to be paid, but it “involved two shifts of the jail” so far.

The move affects jailers who work overtime between Nov. 1 and Dec. 30.



TexSCAN Week of November 29, 2020

ACREAGE

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EVENTS

Pleasanton – Merry on Main, Dec. 4-5. Two-day annual Christmas event in historic downtown Main St. in Pleasanton, TX (30 min. south of San Antonio) includes local craft and retail vendors, food vendors and food trucks, live music, carolers, children events and more. www.merryonmain.org.

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MAINTENANCE

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Union Grove Cross Country runners made a good showing at the 2A State competition with Kole Burns coming in 33rd and Preston Woodall 58th out of a field of 122 runners from across the state. The cross country coach is J.B. Littlejohn. Courtesy Photo

Santa Paws Celebrating Christmas

It is the happiest time of the year and we all need the cheer! Tiger Creek Animal Sanctuary is hosting their 4th annual Santa Paws this Saturday December 5th from 10 am until 2 pm.

This is a community-based event where you will find lots of fun for the whole family! Planned activities this year are to include BBQ, Christmas cookies, letters to Santa, a candy cane hunt and of course pictures with Santa Paws (10am-1pm). "Were so excited to host Santa Paws this year and bring joy to people of all ages as they celebrate Christmas at the Sanctuary!" says Brittani Fry, Director of Marketing.

Tiger Creek Animal Sanctuary invites the public to come in their merriest Christmas attire! Join them for Christmas activities as they present animal enrichment throughout the day during Santa Paws. The event will be held this Saturday December 5, 2020 from 10 am until 2 pm.

Manna House holiday pandemic protocols

Manna House holiday family food boxes will be given out to registered families on Dec. 9 and Dec. 10 from 9 a.m. until 11 a.m. at First United Methodist Church's family life center on Quitman Street. A representative from each family is asked to individually pick up box and to wear a mask to ensure social distancing.

To register for a holiday food box go to Manna House in the southwest corner of City Hall on Wednesday or Friday at 9 a.m. until 11 a.m. with proof of a Gladewater residence address.

Parents and Guardians will also be eligible to visit Santa's Toy Shop to select a toy for each child in their family when they pick up their holiday food box.



The Lady Lions Cross Country team came in ninth at state with the team of Macey Alston, Gracie Stanford, Sophie Pyle, Ava Wightman, Gracie Winn, Jenna Scott and Analeice Jones. The team is coached by J.B. Littlejohn. Courtesy Photo

TDLR enacts emergency licensure for renewals affected by COVID-19-related backlog

AUSTIN – All Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR) licensees with a renewable license that expired between August 1 and November 30 will be considered to hold an emergency license valid for up to 120 days after their expiration date.

The Texas Commission of Licensing and Regulation adopted the emergency rule granting the emergency licenses on November 23.

Current license expiration dates will not change, and any late fees accrued will not be waived. All licenses should still be renewed in accordance with their regular expiration dates. The agency will not mail out printed emergency licenses but will post a list of emergency licenses on the TDLR website (<https://www.tdlr.texas.gov/emergency-licenses/search.htm>).

TDLR staffers have been working both remotely and in the office since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, but two departments within TDLR have had to cease operations multiple times because employees were diagnosed with COVID or had to quarantine because of COVID exposures. As a result, processing of mailed-in paper applications and renewals has fallen at least two months behind.

TDLR strongly encourages licensees to renew online using a credit card instead of mailing in a paper form and a check whenever possible, as online renewals are automated and processed within a week of receipt.

Applicants for new licenses should check the TDLR website to see whether their license type allows for original applications to be submitted online. If so, they should apply online and submit documents electronically to help speed up the licensing process.

Santa to visit Gilmer Yulefest Saturday

By Phillip Williams

GILMER--This city's annual Yulefest will feature a series of contests and entertainers on the downtown Gilmer square Saturday, as well as "Breakfast With Santa" at a nearby church.

The festival begins with the 8 a.m. breakfast at the First United Methodist Church (tickets at \$5 each for adults and children are available only online at www.yulefestgilmer.com or at the Gilmer Area Chamber of Commerce, said festival spokeswoman Amorette Burch.) Deadline to purchase is Dec. 3 as no tickets will be sold at the door.

The day's schedule calls for opening Candy Cane Lane at 9 a.m., announcement of the coloring book page winner, a 10 a.m. cornhole tournament, a 1 p.m. appearance by "Happy The Clown," dancers on the square at that same hour, a 2:45 p.m. drawing to win a bicycle,

a magician appearing at 3 p.m., and announcement of "chalk art winners" at 4 p.m.

To allow precautions against COVID-19, the breakfast requires advance reservations, obtained by purchasing tickets in advance, and adhering to one's allotted time slot.

Reservations will obtain one breakfast plate, a "selfie" picture with Santa, and a t-shirt. To help with organizing tables, and ensure that all members of a party can sit together, all of a party's tickets should be purchased at once.

Every attendee must have an individual ticket, and those planning to come should fill out separate forms for all tickets in order to get the correct count for t-shirt sizes. Time slots are 8 a.m. to 9:15, and 9:30 a.m. to 11.

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 Church of the Nazarene • 903-845-4425
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 Northside Pentecostal
 Abundant Life Temple U.P.C. • 903-845-6043
 Southern Pentecostal Church (Starville) PRESBYTERIAN
 First Presbyterian • 903-845-2905
- OTHER**
 Starville Church of the Living God • 903-877-3205
 Friendship Community Church
 Full Faith Holiness • 903-845-8195



- Full Gospel Fellowship**
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Sports Round-Up

The Gladwater Lady Bears rallied late against Carthage, outscoring the Lady Dawgs 18-10 in the 4th.

It wasn't enough however, as Carthage held on for a 55-52 win. Both Hai'leigh Oliver and MaKayla Police put up 13 points each, while JaKiyah Bell added 12.

Gladwater started well, but a sluggish 2nd quarter put the Lady Bears in a hole too deep to climb out of.

Earlier in the week, Bell led all scoring with 22 as Gladwater fell by one to Henderson 53-52. Oliver continues to be a reliable scorer with 11 while Teya Grooms had 6, Sydney Spurlock 5, and Calice Henderson 4. Bri Boyd and Police had 2 apiece.

UPCOMING GAMES

GLADEWATER BOYS VARSITY & JV					
Dec. 8	Gilmer	Home		5 & 7:15 p.m.	
Dec. 15	Tyler Heat	Home		5 & 7:15 p.m.	
Dec. 18	Daingerfield	Home		5 & 6:15 p.m.	
Dec. 22	New Diana	Home		5 & 7:15 p.m.	
GLADEWATER GIRLS VARSITY & JV					
Dec. 4	Kilgore	Away		5 & 6:30 p.m.	
Dec. 8	Gilmer	Away		5 & 6:30 p.m.	
Dec. 12	West Rusk	Away		5 & 6:30 p.m.	
Dec. 15	Sabine	Home		5 & 6:30 p.m.	
Dec. 18	Daingerfield	Away		5 & 7:15 p.m.	
Dec. 22	New Diana	Home		5 & 6:30 p.m.	
UNION GROVE BOYS VARSITY & JV					
Dec. 4	Sabine	Home		5 & 7:15 p.m.	
Dec. 8	Marshall Christ.	Away		5 & 7:15 p.m.	
Dec. 11	New Diana	Away		5 & 6:15 p.m.	
Dec. 19	Gary	Away		Noon	
UNION GROVE GIRLS VARSITY & JV					
Dec. 4	Hughes Springs	Away		4 & 6:30 p.m.	
Dec. 8	Quitman	Away		5 & 6:30 p.m.	
Dec. 15	Campbell	Away		5 & 6:30 p.m.	
Dec. 18	Carlisle (V)	Home		5:30 p.m.	
Dec. 21	Big Sandy	Home		11 a.m.	



Gladwater's Calice Henderson (20) drives down court to the basket. Photo by Chris Jones



Gladwater's MaKayla Police (12) elevates for a lay-up. Photo by Chris Jones

SMALL BUSINESS *Spotlight*

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'Tis the season for scams

Don't get scrooged

Holiday celebrations will likely look very different in 2020 as we seek out a balance between celebrating with loved ones and staying safe. But one tradition isn't going anywhere: Sadly, 'tis still the season for scams, as cybercrooks cook up schemes to exploit our holiday habits.

A few scams are specific to the holidays, but most are variations on everyday frauds, ramped up to match seasonal spikes in spending and web traffic. Not surprisingly, they often center on shopping, especially online. Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, 71 percent of consumers plan to do most of their holiday shopping online in 2020, according to a CreditCards.com survey.

As real retailers roll out their seasonal deals, scammers seek to snare bargain-hunting shoppers with bogus websites and social media campaigns that impersonate major brands. These "spoofing" sites and fake posts entice you to spend money for products you'll never receive.

Further, many are vehicles for harvesting credit card numbers and other personal data that fraudsters use to commit identity theft or sell on the dark web. Scammers may distribute malware-loaded links or attachments via supposed coupon offers or "order confirmation" emails. Frauds involving gift cards — which nearly two-thirds of shoppers buy during the holidays, according to a November 2020 AARP survey — also shift into high gear during the holidays.

Other hallmarks of the season provide grist for grifters:

Charity scams: One-third of all charitable giving is done in December, fundraising software company Network for Good reports. That means more sham charities exploiting Americans' goodwill via fake websites and pushy telemarketers.

Delivery scams: As holiday packages crisscross the country, scammers send out phishing emails disguised as UPS, FedEx or U.S. Postal Service notifications of incoming or missed deliveries. Links lead to phony sign-in pages asking for personal information, or to sites infested with malware.

Travel scams: Despite the pandemic, nearly 2 in 5 Americans plan to travel during the holidays in 2020, a survey by mobile-booking app maker Hopper found. Spoof booking sites and email offers proliferate, with travel deals that look too good to be true and probably are.

Letter from Santa scams: A custom letter from the jolly old elf makes a holiday treat for the little ones on your list, and many legitimate businesses offer them. But so do many scammers looking to scavenge personal information about you or, worse, your kids or grandkids, who may not learn until many years later that their identity was stolen and their credit compromised.

Warning Signs

* Huge discounts on hot gift items, especially when touted on social media posts or unfamiliar websites.

* Spelling errors or shoddy grammar on a shopping website or in an email.

* A shopping or travel site does not list a phone number or street address for the business and offers only an email address or a fill-in contact form.

* A site does not have a privacy policy.

* An unsolicited email asks you to click on a link or download an app to access a deal or arrange a delivery.

Have you seen these scams?

Call the AARP Fraud Watch Network Helpline: 877-908-3360

Do's

* Do mouse over links in emails and social media ads to display the true destination URL, and click through only if you're certain it's a legitimate site.

* Do pay by credit card. That way you can dispute charges and limit the damage if it turns out you were scammed.

* Do research unfamiliar retail, travel and charity sites online. Search for their names with terms like "scam," "complaints" or "reviews," and look them up on evaluation and information sites like those listed below under "More Resources."

* Do look for return and refund policies when shopping on an unfamiliar or suspicious site, and make sure they are clear.

* Do buy gift cards online, directly from the issuing business. If you must buy cards at a store, carefully examine them for signs of tampering, which could mean a thief has accessed the card's PIN code and can drain its value as soon as someone buys and loads it.

Don'ts

* Don't assume a website is safe because it shows signs of encryption, like a padlock icon or "https://" in front of the URL. Many scam sites now use this technology, knowing that fraud-savvy consumers look for it, according to the Anti-Phishing Working Group, a global antifraud coalition.

* Don't make a purchase, donate to a charity or conduct other financial business online while using a public Wi-Fi network. It might not be secure.

* Don't make a purchase or donation if a website or caller seeks payment by wire transfer, gift card or prepaid card. These are like forking over cash.

Gift Card Scams

Nearly two-thirds of U.S. consumers plan to buy gift cards for family and friends during the 2020 holiday season, according to an AARP survey on seasonal shopping. But take care when buying or using gift cards: Scammers love them, too.

The money on gift cards is like cash: Once it's spent, you almost certainly can't get it back. That's why requests for payment by gift card are a regular feature of tech support, impostor and grandparent scams. If anyone demands that you go get Walmart, iTunes or other gift cards to pay a debt, bill or fee for service, or to help a friend or relative in trouble, it's a sure sign of fraud.

Fraudsters have also developed ways to drain the cash consumers put on gift cards they've legitimately purchased, for themselves or others. One trick is for thieves to go to stores and surreptitiously scratch off the film strip on the backs of gift cards to get the personal identification numbers (PINs), which they cover back up with easy-to-obtain

replacement stickers.

The scammer enters the card numbers and PINs into a computer program that repeatedly checks the retailer's website and notifies them when someone buys and loads a compromised card. The crook can then spend or transfer the money on the card, or cash it in, before the buyer can.

Online Shopping Scams

The internet continues to reshape the way we shop, with retail apps and social media stores adding to consumers' online options and the coronavirus pandemic driving people to shop from home in droves. Cybercriminals are keeping pace. Online purchasing is the most common scam type reported to the Better Business Bureau (BBB), accounting for 38 percent of complaints to the BBB's Scam Tracker in the first seven months of 2020 — up from 24 percent in 2019.

The typical shopping scam starts with a bogus website, mobile app or social media ad. Some faux e-stores are invented from whole cloth, but many mimic trusted retailers, with familiar logos and slogans and a URL that's easily mistaken for the real thing. They offer popular items at a fraction of the usual cost and promise perks like free shipping and overnight delivery, exploiting the premium online shoppers put on price and speed.

Some of these copycats do deliver merchandise — shoddy knockoffs worth less than even the "discount" price advertised as a once-in-a-lifetime deal on, say, Tiffany watches or Timberland boots. More often, you'll wait in vain for your purchase to arrive. Reports to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) of undelivered orders quadrupled from 2015 to 2019, and no-shows reached record highs in the spring of 2020 as the spread of COVID-19 fueled a spike in online shopping.

And your losses might not stop there: Scammers may seed phony sites, apps, or links in pop-up ads and email coupons with malware that infects your device and harvests personal information for use in identity theft.

Not surprisingly, these frauds flourish during the holiday season. A November 2020 AARP survey on holiday shopping found that while 72 percent of U.S. consumers are concerned about the security of their personal and financial information when buying something online, only 15 percent could correctly answer at least 7 of 10 true/false questions about safe shopping practices. You need not forgo the ease and endless selection of online shopping, but take precautions to make sure you get what you pay for.

Warning Signs

Bargain-basement prices. Internet security firm Norton says to be on guard if discounts exceed 55 percent.

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83rd East Texas Yamboree Queen's Race

To My Community, Family and Friends,

I am Skylar Simone Fort, and I'm proudly representing the Iris Garden Club as a Lady-in-Waiting in the 2020 East Texas Yamboree. I am the daughter of Chasity Fort, the granddaughter of Tyrone and Robyn Fort, and the great-granddaughter of Ruby Henry of Gladewater and the late Herman and Bobbie Jean Fort of Gilmer.

I am currently a senior at Gilmer High School and in my fourth year as a member of the GHS drill team where I have held an officer position for the last two years. I am also a member of the National Honor Society, Deuces, Sisters of Tomorrow and Student Council. I have performed in past East Texas Yamboree Queen's pageants, as well as exercised my civic duty as a local election worker.

I am a member of Gladewater's Union Temple Church where I serve as a junior secretary.

After high school graduation I plan to attend Prairie View A&M to major in nursing and to further my education to become a medical malpractice.

My favorite quote is: "You may not control all of the events that happen to you, but you can decide not to be reduced by them."

Maya Angelou

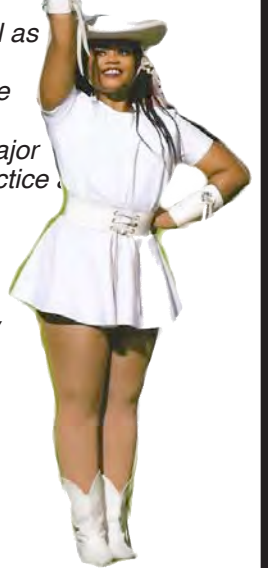
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Skylar Simone Fort

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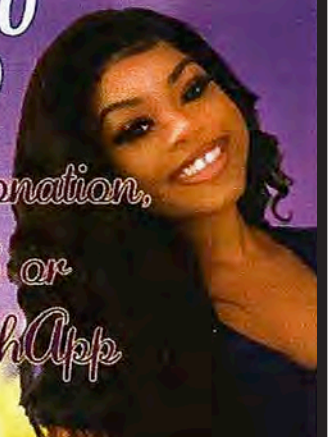
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