

**...WCCHD**

**meeting minutes**

*(Continued from previous page)*

Jim Gross will be entertaining at the facility at 3:30 pm on October 25, and there will be a Halloween Festival at 6:30 pm on October 29. Come and enjoy the festivities!! The resident council meeting will be at 3 pm on October 30, followed at 3:30 pm by Nails & Tales. On Halloween, October 31, there will be a spooky day at the facility with a costume contest at 3:30 pm, followed that evening with a Trunk or Treat at 5 pm, so enter at your own risk! Wishing everyone a fun and safe Halloween!!

**Friends of the RLCC**

**Bake Sale big success**

Everyone who baked, bought or just came by and checked out the Friends of the RLCC bake sale on Friday, October 11, is greatly appreciated. For those of you who bought, your generosity made it a very successful fundraiser! There is also much appreciation given to all of the wonderful cooks without whose efforts we could not have had the bake sale. The Friends of the RLCC would also like to express appreciation to the Robert Lee State Bank for its support of all our local organizations by allowing the bake sales to be held in the bank lobby.



**Poor Towns and Dirty Towns Revisited**

by James M. Decker

*Author's Note: In the coming weeks, thanks to partnership between Reclaiming Stamford and the City of Stamford, the Stamford community will launch a new wave of demolishing abandoned and dilapidated houses within the community. This was the second-ever edition of "Essays from West of 98." I thought it would be appropriate to share the back story on this project, for folks who might be new to my essays or who are interested in following a new campaign of beautification.*

In 2005, a group of Stamford citizens formed a beautification coalition that would come to be known as "Reclaiming Stamford." Since then, this volunteer group has demolished over 100 dilapidated structures in Stamford, sponsored numerous cleanup days, and eliminated over a dozen illegal dumpsites. But one sentence uttered by my father in an early meeting has resonated throughout the years and stuck with me ever since: "You can't always choose whether you're a poor town, but you can choose whether you're a dirty town."

Stamford and similar rural communities have certain challenges that are no secret to any of us. Suburban sprawl is too far away to grow our own populations and tax bases. Oil booms, the fuel for much West Texas success, can be fleeting and unpredictable and have largely evaded some of our communities. Stereotypical "old money," to the extent that it ever existed, becomes fragmented or detached from the community as it passes down through multiple generations.

These are some of reasons that might cause difficulty for a rural community to maintain or achieve prosperity. A town that lacks growth and the financial resources to improve its situation may well be called a "poor" town. And yet, none of these challenges are an acceptable excuse to be a "dirty" town.

When an outsider drives through a poor town, they might not see shiny new retail businesses or freshly-paved streets, but the existing improvements might be maintained with care. What about a dirty town? Are the streets and sidewalks overgrown with weeds? Does trash collect on every street and vacant lot? Are broken street signs and park equipment left to linger for months? Are city codes properly enforced?

Bringing in new retail investment

or building new structures can be a substantial financial challenge. But what about pulling weeds, picking up trash, fixing street signs and park equipment, and enforcing city codes? Those are all a choice.

If rural community leaders desire a better future, then outside growth and investment will surely be necessary. But does your town actually attract outsiders? When an outsider passes through, what do they see? Do they see a town doing its best with what it has, or do they see a town that has made the choice to be dirty? That choice suggests whether a community cares enough to make their place desirable. Without visible community pride from current residents, it's hard to expect much enthusiasm from outsiders.

What do you see in your town?

And will you be part of the choice to make it something better?

James Decker is a lawyer, farmer,

and mayor in Stamford. He may be contacted through Facebook at facebook.com/james.decker.

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**NOTICE OF SPECIAL ELECTION ON CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT  
(AVISO DE ELECCION ESPECIAL EN EL CONSTITUCIONAL ENMIENDA)**

THE STATE OF TEXAS  
(EL ESTADO DE TEXAS)

TO THE QUALIFIED VOTERS OF COKE COUNTY, TEXAS:  
(A LOS VOTANTES CAPACITADOS DE COKE, TEXAS)

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the polling places listed below will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., on November 5, 2019, for the purpose to adopt or reject proposed Constitutional Amendments as submitted by the 86th Legislature, Regular Session of the State of Texas.

(La Presente se Notifica que el lugar de votacion liste a continuacion estara abierto de 7:00 am a 7:00 pm, el 5 de Noviembre de 2019, para del proposito para adoptar o rechazar las enmiendas a la constitucion propuestas tal como fueron presentadas por la 86th Legislatura Sesion Regular, del Estado de Texas)

LOCATION OF POLLING PLACES:  
(DIRECCION DE LUGAR DONDE LOS ELECTORES:)

Coke County Courthouse, 13 E. 7th St., Robert Lee, Texas, Precinct 1 and 3  
Bronte Senior Citizen Building, 613 E. Oliver Ave., Bronte, Texas, Precinct 2 and 4

Early Voting by personal appearance will be conducted each weekday at:  
(La votacion adelantada en persona se llevara a cabo de lunes a viernes en:)

County Clerk's Office, 13 E. 7th St., Robert Lee, Texas, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday thru Thursday, 8:00 a.m. till 1:00 p.m. Friday, beginning on October 21 and ending on November 1.

(Oficina del Secretario del Condado, Coke County Courthouse, 13 E. 7th St., Robert Lee, Texas, entre el horario de 8:00 a 17:00 el lunes al jueves, de 8:00 y 13:00 el viernes, 21 de octubre y el 1 de Noviembre.)

Applications for ballot by mail shall be mailed to:  
(Las solicitudes para boletas que se votaran adelantada por correo deberan enviarse a:)

MONICA REYES, COUNTY CLERK  
(Monica Reyes) (Nombre del Secretario de la Votacion Adelantada)

EARLY VOTING CLERK  
(Secretario de la Votacion Adelantada)

13 E. 7th St.  
(13 E. 7th) (Direccion)

ROBERT LEE, TEXAS 76945  
(Robert Lee) (Ciudad) 76945 (Zona Postal)

Applications for ballots by mail must be received no later than the close of business on: October 25, 2019.  
(Las solicitudes para boletas que se votaran adelantada por correo deberan recibirse para el fin de las horas de negocia el: 25 de Octubre, 2019.)

Issued this the 29th day of August, 2019.  
(Emitada este dia el 29 de Agosto, 2019.)

  
**Hal Spain, County Judge (Juez del Condado),  
Coke County, Texas**