

# THE OBSERVER/ ENTERPRISE

Serving Coke County



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## General Election slated for next Tuesday, November 4

Early Voting ends today, Friday, October 31, 2014, for the November 4th General Election. Voters may still cast an early ballot today at the Coke County Clerk's Office from 8 am to 1 pm. According to County Clerk Mary Grim, early voting has been steady with over 100 votes cast through Monday morning, October 27, 2014.

On Tuesday, November 4, polling locations will be open from 7 am to 7 pm at the following locations:

- Precinct 1 - Robert Lee Rec Hall
- Precinct 2 - Bronte Senior Citizens Building
- Precinct 3 - Coke County Courthouse in Robert Lee
- Precinct 4 - Bronte City Hall

There are no opposed races at the local county government level. Local incumbents on the ballot are County Judge Roy Blair, District/County Clerk Mary Grim, Treasurer Hal

Spain, and Precinct 1 Justice of the Peace Jackie Walker. Paul Williams is on the ballot for Precinct 2 Commissioner. He is joined by Joe Sefcik for Precinct 4 Commissioner.

With no opposed races in our county, some may feel this election is not crucial. However, at the state level, this election is very important. The top elected official who sets the tone for the entire state is on the ballot this year. The two main candidates for Texas Governor present clear options for voters to decide the future of Texas.

The Justice positions on the ballot are equally important. With Coke County being one of the many smaller counties lumped into Austin's higher judicial district, voters here help choose the judges who decide many important cases in our state.

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## Commissioners deny request to benefit Emergency Dispatchers

The Coke County Commissioners Court voted Monday, October 27, 2014, to deny a line item transfer request for Coke County's Emergency Dispatchers.

On January 1, 2014, a new state law became effective which required all emergency dispatchers to fulfill training and testing requirements and be licensed and certified by the state. At that time and through the present, the only emergency

dispatchers in the county with this required certification are those contracted to answer the Sheriff's Office line. Coke County was not in compliance with this law from January 1 through July 22, 2014.

The county's 911 system has been housed at Robert Lee Care Center for many years. This organization requested early this year for that arrangement to come to an end. The arrangement was terminated on



# FALL BACK

Daylight Savings Time ends at 2 am Sunday morning, November 2. Set your clocks back one hour.

July 22, 2014, when representatives of Robert Lee Care Center met with the Commissioners to insist the 911 equipment be removed from their facility immediately so that a scheduled asbestos removal - a part of a building renovation - could stay on schedule.

The Commissioners had been in discussion with Runnels County to take over 911 dispatching for Coke County. These talks fell through and a new arrangement was made for Tom Green County to dispatch Coke County's 911 emergency calls for \$21,000 per year. However, that transition has not yet taken place and Coke County's 911 calls go to Concho County 911 emergency dispatchers who then place a call to the Coke County Sheriff's Office dispatchers who now are required to page out county EMS and fire departments.

The Coke County Sheriff's Office contracts with Misti Hayes and Gayle Sisemore to be off-hour emergency dispatchers for the Sheriff's Office. They are paid approximately \$9,000 each for this service encompassing over 5,200 hours.

Since July 22, 2014, the number of calls being dispatched under this contract has more than doubled. Prior to July 22, 2014, these dispatchers could answer this emergency line from anywhere a cell phone had service. Since that time, they are now required to remain at a base station which has the ability to page out the fire and EMS personnel.

This Monday, Sheriff McCutchen requested a line item transfer of funds within his department. Money in the Sheriff's Office budget to pay a deputy from October 1, 2014, through October 31, 2014, was not used due to the vacancy of

one deputy's position. He requested that this \$2,660 be moved over from the Deputy Salary line on the Sheriff's Office budget to the Emergency Dispatching line in order to help compensate for the extra work and new restrictions placed upon the current emergency dispatchers.

After much discussion, Judge Blair made the motion to approve this request, seconded by Precinct 2 Commissioner Wendell Lee. However, these two gentlemen were the only votes for the motion. Precinct 1 Commissioner Gene Montgomery, Precinct 3 Commissioner Gaylon Pitcock and Precinct 4 Commissioner Bobby Blaylock voted to deny the request.

Due to public support of the Sheriff's Office during the Public Hearings of this year's Budget process, the deputies and sheriff received a 7% salary increase for this new fiscal year which began October 1, 2014. The \$13,115 necessary for this increase was more than compensated by the return of over \$19,000 from last year's Sheriff's Office budget to Coke County's General Fund.

Possibly because of this increase, Sheriff McCutchen was finally able, after several months with no applicants, to fill the vacant deputy position in Robert Lee. Anthony Lopez joins the Coke County Sheriff's Office November 1, 2014, and will be stationed in Robert Lee.

## New location announced for annual Potato Bake Luncheon

Sorosis Study Club will hold its annual potato bake luncheon fundraiser on Tuesday, November 4, at Bronte First United Methodist Church in the new fellowship hall. The luncheon will be from 11 am until 1 pm.

Tickets can be purchased ahead from any club member or at the door. The club members are excited to be able to use the church's new fellowship hall. For those who cannot stay, to-go containers will be available.

## BHRC to host children

Bronte Health & Rehab residents will be having "trick or treat" for all community children on Friday, October 31, at 6 pm.

## Desserts needed for Bronte Barbeque

The annual Hunter's Wild Game Barbeque in Bronte will be held Saturday, November 1, from 11 am until 2 pm.

Coordinator Brian Hall would like to make an appeal to area cooks to provide a dessert for the benefit barbeque.

## Electronic Recycling slated

The City of Bronte will be sponsoring an Electronic Recycling Event on Saturday, November 15, 2014. More information will be included in next week's *The Observer/Enterprise*.

### COKE COUNTY FOOTBALL!

**Robert Lee Steers**  
**vs. Veribest Falcons**  
*Friday, October 31, 2014*  
7:30 pm *Robert Lee*

**Bronte Longhorns**  
**vs. Roby Lions**  
*Friday, October 31, 2014*  
7:30 pm *Roby*

**Blackwell Hornets**  
**vs. Loraine Bulldogs**  
*Friday, October 31, 2014*  
7:30 pm *Loraine*

Coke County is once  
again under a  
**BURN BAN.**