

Local couple recognized at TSGRA winter meeting

The Texas Sheep and Goat Raisers' Association Winter Meeting was held February 19, 2019, at the Cactus Hotel in San Angelo.

David and Dianne Hefner of Robert Lee were recognized for

having donated three Spanish goats for the luncheon.

Over 150 ranchers and their families attended the event. Congressman Mike Conaway was one of the many speakers in attendance.

County Commissioners Court meeting minutes

The Coke County Commissioners Court met in special session on January 22, 2019, at 9 am at the County Courthouse in Robert Lee.

Those in attendance included County Judge Hal Spain, Commissioner Precinct 1 Donald Robertson, Commissioner Precinct 2 Paul Williams, Commissioner Precinct 3 Marshall Millican, Commissioner Precinct 4 Joe Sefcik, and County Clerk Monica Reyes.

The meeting opened with the pledge to the flag and prayer was offered by Judge Spain.

Judge Spain announced the presence of a quorum.

Commissioner Williams moved to approve the minutes for January 8, 2019, and was seconded by Commissioner Sefcik. The motion carried.

No action was taken on the burn ban.

Commissioner Sefcik moved to approve the payroll as presented. The motion, seconded by Commissioner Williams, carried.

Commissioner Millican moved to approve Accounts Payable for payroll. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Robertson and carried.

Commissioner Sefcik moved to approve the Quarterly State report and was seconded by Commissioner Williams. The motion carried.

Commissioner Williams moved to approve the Equify agreement. The motion, seconded by Commissioner

Robertson, carried.

Commissioner Williams moved to approve the list of auction items for Equify and was seconded by Commissioner Robertson. The motion carried.

Commissioner Williams moved to approve the Financial Report for the year ended September 30, 2018, from Wayne Barr with Eckert & Company. Commissioner Millican seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Discussion was held on the emergency trailer and Commissioner Sefcik will check on the condition of the trailer and report back to Judge Spain.

Commissioner Williams moved to approve the grievance committee. Commissioner Sefcik seconded the motion. The motion, opposed by Commissioner Millican, carried.

Commissioner Williams made a motion to approve the budget amendment for the Sheriff's Office new vehicle. The motion, seconded by Commissioner Robertson, carried.

Commissioner Williams made a motion to approve the agreement with County Information Resources Agency (CIRA) and was seconded by Commissioner Millican. The motion carried.

Commissioner Williams made a motion to approve the payment of bills and was seconded by Commissioner Robertson. The motion carried.

Judge Spain adjourned the meeting at 9:58 am.

made Texas the global energy superpower – have come strains on local infrastructure. Traffic congestion and accidents in the Permian Basin are at an all-time high, largely because local infrastructure is undersized. But the fact is, activity in the region will only increase, and with increased activity comes a renewed focus by the oil and natural gas industry to continue making improvements when it comes to the safety of our operations.

We applaud Governor Abbott and the Texas Department of Transportation for the countless hours spent with operators planning for ways to meet the needs of our state's energy areas. Both state and federal dollars have been drawn down to improve the state highway system. These collaborations will ensure that the world's most prolific energy basin will continue to produce not only energy, but also the billions of much-needed transportation dollars that fund development in transportation corridors across Texas.

And our industry isn't just focused on supporting state roads. We strongly back the request by counties in Texas' energy corridors for state funding to assist with county road repairs and other needs. The energy industry is funding the Rainy Day Fund – 100 percent of it to be exact – so we think it is smart to use some of those dollars to help energy sector counties make road improvements.

With safety as the main priority, oil and natural gas producers in Texas are working with communities where they operate with a continued commitment to find sensible solutions to the unique challenges. The Permian Strategic Partnership was formed by energy producers to focus on the regional needs of the Permian Basin, including safer roads, better schools, improved access to healthcare, continued workforce development and housing issues. Likewise, the Permian Road Safety Coalition is made up of oil and natural gas logistics experts and our partners, and is focused on improving road safety.

Some companies are exploring how they can shrink the growing number of sand trucks, which is expected to increase up to 136% over the next four years, by keeping truck size the same and adding axels, new safety features and additional breaking capacity. Independent experts confirm additional axles can transport material more efficiently with

less wear and tear on our roads. These are just a few of the examples of the industry's commitment to responsible partnerships to improve the lives of the fine Texans who live, work, and raise families across our state.

Texas is fueling the world, and the oil and natural gas companies operating in the Permian Basin and across the state are working every day to improve the quality of life of Texans. The industry looks forward to continuing to partner with local and state leaders to come up with solutions to the complex issues while ensuring the wellbeing of Texans is at the forefront of every decision made.

Todd Staples is president of the Texas Oil & Gas Association and is the former Texas Agriculture Commissioner.



The President of Presidents

by James M. Decker

February 18, 2019, is the day designated for the annual celebration of Presidents' Day in America. Banks, stock exchanges, and many government offices and schools are closed in observation. As has been the case for decades, many commentators will use the day to

honor all 45 Americans who have held the office of President of the United States. But today, I want to author a reminder that the federal holiday is still technically known as "Washington's Birthday" and talk more about the man for which the day was created.

As schoolchildren, we all learn about George Washington. We come to know him as the father of our country. We know him as unfailingly honest. We learn about his brave leadership as a general holding together a ragtag army that ultimately defeated a powerful empire. We know that he was our first president. We know that he's consistently ranked as one of our greatest Presidents.

But how often do we stop to fully consider the life of George Washington? The Mount Rushmore National Memorial contains the images of four specific Presidents for a reason. According to the National Park Service, sculptor Gutzon Borglum chose George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, and Theodore Roosevelt to represent the birth, growth, preservation, and development of the United States as a nation.

Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence and acquired the Louisiana Purchase. Lincoln held together the country in its darkest hour, giving speeches like the Gettysburg Address before giving his own life to the cause of America. Theodore Roosevelt overcame personal adversity and was a bottomless well of powerful quotes and lessons on leadership. Washington's story sometimes feels more abstract and general, by simply lauding him as the father of our country, but the specifics are worth celebrating.

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Safety is top priority of oil and gas industry

by Todd Staples

Texas oil and natural gas companies are fueling our lives and funding our state and local budgets. From production to pipelines, to refineries and ports, new technologies and innovations allow for safer, more efficient, and less impactful energy production, all while employing hundreds of thousands of Texans in good-paying jobs and providing funding for our schools, roads and first responders.

The industry's success is the reason our state's Rainy Day Fund is predicted to be a record-setting \$15.4 billion. It's the reason our Permanent

School Fund is the largest educational endowment in the nation. And it's the reason the Texas Department of Transportation has billions of newly generated dollars to invest in transportation infrastructure across the state.

But along with this phenomenal growth – which has

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