

Like any objective philosopher, he also saw that what was bad for the goose was also bad for the gander, so to speak. The problem was not centralizing power in the hands of the wrong people, it was that centralizing power was bad. Period. No asterisks. No exceptions for putting the good guys in charge. Lord Acton famously wrote that “power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely.” So it is with centralizing power, no matter whether we agree with the guys in charge or not. No matter who is at the controls, we would ultimately

want for bread at their hands. And they sure wouldn’t fix the potholes, either!

This is a multi-week topic, so buckle in for a ride that leads us through Adam Smith (two of them, actually!), Wendell Berry, G.K. Chesterton, and the future of rural America.

James Decker is the Mayor of Stamford, Texas and the creator of the West of 98 website and the Rural Church and State and West of 98 podcasts. Contact James and subscribe to these essays at westof98.substack.com and subscribe to him wherever podcasts are found.

Friends of the RLCC monthly meeting held

The January meeting of the Friends of the Robert Lee Care Center was held on Monday, January 22, in the West Coke County Hospital District Board Room.

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 am by President, Della Alexander. There were nine members and no guests present.

Secretary Harriett Ann Demere read the minutes from the November 2023 meeting which were approved as read. Treasurer Becky Ross presented the most recent expenditures and the current balance both of which were accepted as read. Items of old business were presented and discussed.

A rock has been located to use for the gazebo dedication plaque. Becky Ross presented a paper mockup of the size of the rock and the plaque along with pictures the rock. She will move forward with getting the rock relocated to the yard by the gazebo.

Della Alexander shared that a few final Christmas Yard decorations were purchased. This should complete the goal of upgrading the seasonal outdoor decorations. Pat Stephens will be looking at purchasing some additional spring greenery and bushes for the outdoor planters.

Della Alexander reported that

the sock and blanket gifts that were to be presented as Christmas presents will be given out as Valentine’s Day gifts due to the late shipment of some of the items in December.

The FRLCC is set up to host the March resident birthday party. Refreshments were discussed and members volunteered to prepare the designated desserts.

The FRLCC will once again be providing red roses and tea cakes for the Mother’s Day party. Della Alexander reported that she working on finding a florist in San Angelo from which the roses can be purchased. Pat Stephens volunteered to contact Beverly Broughton to make the tea cakes.

No new projects were discussed at this time. Mary Rodriguez thanked the FRLCC for the karaoke machine which was purchased as a Christmas present for the residents. She reported that they are really enjoying using it.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:43 am. The February meeting will be held on Monday, February 26 at 10 am.

Local student competes in state ag marketing contest

Ammileigh Smith of Coke-Sterling County Farm Bureau was one of 10 finalists in Texas Farm Bureau’s AgVentures Challenge: “Pitch It, Market It, Sell It” State Contest.

The contest challenges students to develop and deliver a creative marketing pitch for an agricultural commodity, product or service.

“The AgVentures Challenge is a Shark Tank style competition with the students pitching their products to a panel of judges. The products don’t have to be real, but they do have to pertain to agriculture,” McKenna Bush, TFB Youth Outreach coordinator, said. “These students accepted the challenge and developed unique and creative pitches. They analyzed their target audiences, researched potential competitors and created memorable presentations.”

Smith, a senior at Robert Lee ISD, presented her product to help landowners better manage access to their properties when companies need to access powerlines, pipelines or other structures on the property.

As a finalist, she received a \$1,500 scholarship.

She is active in FFA, competing in leadership development events and career development events. She also serves as the Concho District FFA vice president. In addition to FFA, Smith is active in FCCLA and plays basketball, tennis, golf and serves as the school mascot.

Smith is also active in the community, serving with her church’s youth group and as a volunteer with Vision With A Purpose.

She plans to major in agricultural business and



economics at West Texas A&M University or Texas A&M University.

Contest details

The contest is open to high school seniors who completed TFB’s Thrive experience last August.

Thrive is part of TFB’s Student Success Series, which includes virtual and in-person programs for students in eighth through twelfth grade. The Student Success Series aims to help students develop a better understanding of advocacy, learn more about Farm Bureau and grow personal and professional skills they can use in the classroom and future careers.

Ten finalists participated in the state AgVentures Challenge where they created an agricultural product, developed a marketing pitch and presented their ideas to a panel of judges. The state contest took place at TFB’s Conference and Training

Center in Waco, January 26.

For more information about the Student Success Series, visit texasfarmbureau.org/student-success-series.

Coke County student athlete makes LSC Commissioner’s Honor Roll

Nearly 180 Angelo State University student-athletes have been named to the Lone Star Conference Commissioner’s Honor Roll for their academic performance during the fall 2023 semester.

To be eligible, a student-athlete must post a minimum 3.30 grade point average (GPA) for the specified semester and be on a team roster. ASU’s 178 honorees are the fifth-most in the LSC for the fall 2023 semester and the university’s second-highest total ever.

Local honorees included: Katelyn Bohensky of Bronte - Civil Engineering

VOTE

Ticha Jo Lindsey

FOR Tax Assessor-Collector

Paid for by candidate Ticha Lindsey

I am asking for your VOTE for Coke County Tax/Assessor Collector.

I worked as management in a corporate setting for 25+ years. I have ran operations that did 6 to 36 million dollars a year.

I won several awards including Best Operations and Presidential Awards multiple times. I also have ran successful teams from 10 to 150 employees.

I am married to Ed Lindsey. We raised three children. Sterling and Francis Lindsey raised Ed and his sisters in Robert Lee. I was raised on a farm.

I would love the opportunity to serve you the citizens of Coke County.

This message is approved and paid for by Ticha Jo Lindsey the candidate.

VOTE

RUSSELL ASH

Coke County Attorney

My family has been involved in this wonderful area of West Texas for over 100 years. I was raised in Coke County and want to continue to make it my final home. I would greatly appreciate your vote on March 5.

Pd. Pol. Adv. by Russell Ash

Deadline to submit information to

The Observer/Enterprise is Monday at 5 pm.