

involved in ag-related careers but still make time to be involved in production agriculture.”

The state winner will receive a UTV, sponsored by Southern

Farm Bureau Life Insurance Company; a \$5,000 cash prize, sponsored by Farm Credit Bank of Texas, and expense-paid trips to both the TFB Annual Meeting and AFBF Annual Convention.

believe that we, too, can have a historical impact.

There is perhaps no more fitting figure of flaw and aspiration than Thomas Jefferson. His words in the Declaration of Independence ring through the ages: all men are created equal, endowed with unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. I have no doubt that Thomas Jefferson believed these things. He is one of history’s most brilliant voices for liberty. He was also a man who struggled to practice what he preached. He owned enslaved persons, as he agonized over the concept of slavery and its deleterious effects on all parties to the practice. He likely penned his fateful words of American liberty and independence in the same room as a human being that he owned.

America is a messy experiment that we have tried to get right since July 4, 1776. We have done some things very well and some other things very poorly. We should not shy away from either aspect. By acknowledging our history honestly and fairly, we can build a better future. On June 19, 2021, let us all take a moment to do just that. Let us be thankful for the people who made

General Granger’s words possible. Let us be honest with our failures, take pride in our triumphs, and work every day to build a better America that we are all proud to call our own.

James Decker is the Mayor of

Stamford, Texas and the creator of the West of 98 website and podcast. Contact James and subscribe to these essays at westof98.substack.com and subscribe to West of 98 wherever podcasts are found.



History, Flaws and All

By James M. Decker

“Those that fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it.”

There are many variations of this phrase and each variation seems to be attributed to a different historical figure. I have chosen this version because it is ascribed to one of my personal favorite historical figures, Winston Churchill.

In the last year-plus, our society has had an ongoing debate about how to address aspects of our history that are, for lack of a better word, uncomfortable. A lot of people in our society would like to erase the uncomfortable parts, because they are hard to talk about. Still others would like to pretend that the uncomfortable parts were not actually uncomfortable. I guess you could say I am tired of both groups. These debates make for good social media fodder, it is impossible to have a true understanding of our complicated American history without accepting the existence of the good, the bad, and the deeply ugly.

On June 19, our country will celebrate Juneteenth. As I wrote last year, Juneteenth arose as a celebration of emancipation in Texas, but it is something far bigger and more important to the landscape of our history. On June 19, 1865, in Galveston, newly-arrived General Gordon Granger of the United States Army read aloud the fateful words of General Order No. 3, which emancipated all enslaved persons in Texas. It was bigger because Texas was the residence of the last human beings held in bondage in the United States of America. As a result, General Granger’s words did more than free the people who were enslaved in Texas. His words had the effect of finally ending the despicable institution of American slavery forever.

This is one of those topics that is difficult to discuss but essential to our understanding of history, lest we be doomed as Churchill and others warned. I have no use for those who would simply erase history in the name or comfort. I have no use for those who wish to pretend that our history is spotless and our American heroes are without flaws. Ever since my Juneteenth essay last

year, I have done a lot of thinking about the complexity of American history and its heroes. On Memorial Day weekend, my friend Justin Pitcock wrote a column for the Houston Chronicle and these words from that column feel particularly appropriate to that discussion:

“Ours should be a story of honesty about our failures and pride in our triumphs. We should be proud Americans, not because we are perfect, but because we aspire to march with clear eyes and full hearts ever closer to securing the self-evident truths we declared in 1776.”

The human condition is simultaneously flawed and aspirational. Our history should be treated the same way. By ignoring the flaws of our historical figures or by attempting to erase those historical figures, we do ourselves a disservice. We make it more difficult for the flawed humans of today to



May 2021

The Coke County Sheriff’s Office answered 521 calls for the month of May 2021.

- Sheriff’s Info Report - 5
- Welfare Concern - 4
- Civil Matter - 4
- Criminal Trespass - 1
- Criminal Mischief - 2
- Domestic Disturbance - 3
- Deadly Conduct - 1
- Burglary of a Vehicle - 2
- Unlawful Carrying of a

- Weapon - 1
- Stolen Vehicle - 1
- Warrant Arrest - 8
- Theft - 1
- Public Service (includes funerals, court, motorist assist, alarm calls, etc) - 315
- MHMR Interactions - 5
- Civil Process - 2
- Prisoner Transport (including arrest and to and from court) - 7
- Warrants Served - 8
- Livestock Calls - 28
- Accidents - 4
- Blue Forms Issued - 4
- Accident Assist - 6
- Traffic Stops - 63
- Traffic Stops Resulting in Citations - 46
- Total inmates in jail as of Friday, June 4, 2021:
 - Males - 3
 - Females - 2

CONCHO VALLEY COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY

Robert Lee Courthouse
Thursday, July 8th
2 pm-4 pm

We are a non-profit that helps people pay their rent and utility bills and transition out of poverty.

We will be set up to answer your questions and take your applications

Call us at (325) 653-2411 or visit cvcaa.org for more information

Sale Sale Sale Sale Sale Sale Sale Sale

MOVING SALE

Saturday, June 19

8 am - 4 pm

1250 Ratliff Road, Bronte
(approximately 5 miles south of Bronte, turn left on Ratliff Road and go 2 miles)

Household items,
furniture, clothing, holiday
decor, books, tools, LOTS more!

Sale Sale Sale Sale Sale Sale Sale Sale

ESTATE AUCTION

SATURDAY, JUNE 19 • 10 AM

HOLBROOK ESTATE

291 WILDCAT RD • ROBERT LEE

Directions: From Robert Lee take Highway 158 (San Angelo Highway) for approximately 8 miles to Wildcat Road - Watch for signs!

Lynn is moving to be closer to her son and the following will be sold by public auction.

TRACTOR • PICKUP • ZERO TURN • ATV’s

JD 5105 4x4 w/521 JD Front End Loader, 1400+ Hours, Sync Reverser, 3 PT Diesel WF Rops - Tractor is like brand new!
2006 Ford F-250 Lariat Crew Cab, Powerstroke Diesel, 4x4, Very Clean!
Zero Turn 2540 M 24HP, Very Clean - JD Gator 825I, 4x4, runs great, very clean!
Honda Rancher 4-Wheeler, 350 CC, has been in shed, super nice!
Suzuki Ozark Quad Runner, 250, runs great! - Honda 550 3 Wheeler - JD LX173 Riding Mower - JD LT 150 Riding Mower - 3 PT JD Single Ripper - 3 PT Bale Spike - Baler Spike for FT Loader - JD LX6 6’ HD Shredder, like new! - 18’ Gooseneck Trailer - SO MUCH More!!

ANTIQUES AND FURNITURE

Old store display button box - Wash pot - JD Pedal Tractor - 1890’s Cheese Cutter - Outdoor Bench - Machine Base - Signs - Coke Boxes - Vintage Cabinet with 9 Drawers - Old Shelves - Lanterns - Hull & Depression Glass - Vintage Clothing - Vintage Toys - Cream Cans - Lincoln Logs - Eastlake Sewing Rocker - Ranch Oak Chest - Maple Full Size Bed - Oak Jelly Cabinet - Love Seat - Leather Recliners - End Tables - Oak S-Type Roll Desk - Sofa - Oak Dining Table w/6 Chairs - Oak Carved Front China Cabinet, very nice! - Barstools - Dressers - Oak Hi Boy Chest - Vanity w/Mirror - Flat Screen TV’s - Washer and Dryer - Side by Side Refrigerator - Chest Freezer - Chairs - Occasional Tables - SO MUCH MORE!!

PLUS

Horse Drawn Wagon - Steel Wheels - Neat Vintage Western Toys - Lone Ranger, Tonto, and Horse Quilts - Vintage Books, Elmer Kelton - 100’s of Yard of Fabric - Firewood

Folks the Holbrooks have lived here for many years, there is lots of vintage here! Bring your trailers!

For More Information, (325) 370-1111 or (325) 214-1556

BIG COUNTRY AUCTION CO.

ABILENE, TEXAS • AUCTIONEER LIC. #12058 Jeff Vaughn

Visit our Facebook page for details