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# Rockwall County News

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At least three houses were destroyed from damage caused by storms early Wednesday morning, March 29, 2017, along Panhandle Street in the Dalton Range subdivision, near FM 1141 and FM 552, in Rockwall. The National Weather Service concluded the damage was caused by straight-line winds.

Photo by Brittany Williams/Rockwall County News

## Severe storms cause damage to 18 homes in Dalton Ranch

Three homes in the Dalton Ranch subdivision of Rockwall sustained major damage from the severe storms in the early morning hours of March 29, 2017.

According to Lauri Dodd, Public Information Officer for the City of Rockwall, there were 18 total homes affected.

The Rockwall Fire Department worked with multiple City and County departments to address residents' safety needs in the aftermath of this storm.

The National Weather Service has determined that straight line winds are responsible for the damage in Rockwall.

According to a statement from the city, four residences were determined to be unsafe, five residences were determined to be safe with specified limitations, and nine received minor damage.

Multiple City departments responded in the early hours of Wednesday morning to assist in the aftermath, including the Rockwall Police Department, Fire Department, Parks and Recreation Department, Building Inspections Department, Engineering Department, Street Department, Water and Wastewater Department.

"There have been some questions regarding why the City of Rockwall Outdoor Warning Siren System was not sounded prior to the onset of winds" a statement from Sgt. Jeff Welch Public Information Officer of the Rockwall Police Department said, "When severe weather is likely multiple resources are employed to monitor the weather event dictated by the circumstances at hand.

Guidelines for sounding the sirens set forth in City of Rockwall Emergency Preparedness Plan include: a Tornado Warning issued for

Rockwall County by the National Weather Service, Tornadoic activity has been reported by a reliable source (such as police, fire personnel or storm spotters), or a report from a reliable source of golf ball sized or larger hail.

None of these circumstances were present at the time of the wind event this morning.

Although the winds were strong enough to cause damage it is unknown at this time whether the National Weather Service will rule them as strong, straight line winds or tornadoic."

The community has been very responsive with an outpouring of support, and there is currently no need for additional assistance, however, if people would still like to contribute, please contact Rockwall County Helping Hands.



Houses along Panhandle Street, in the Dalton Ranch subdivision were destroyed, during the early morning hours of March 29, 2017, due to severe storms. The National Weather Service concluded the damage was caused by straight-line winds.

Photo by Brittany Williams/Rockwall County News

## Sweet influences court into rescinding contract for detention center remediation and HVAC

During the March 28, 2017 regular meeting of the Commissioners Court, Rockwall County Judge David Sweet persuaded the majority commissioners court members to rescind the March 14, 2017 approval of a contract with Half Associates Engineering for consultation services related to the Rockwall County Jail, at a cost of \$74,000 for the HVAC.

County Judge David Sweet provided his opinion that the price is "steep" for services that did not satisfy his standards.

The agreement was approved by the court during the March 14, 2017 regular meeting.

After having voted in favor of the agreement, Sweet made a motion to rescind the court's March 14 approval. Commissioner David Magness seconded Sweet's motion.

Magness and Sweet agreed on concerns about contract stipulations that they believed could increase the cost over time. It was also clarified that a meeting was scheduled for Friday, March 31, between the consultant and certain county officials to discuss plans for the jail.

(Continued on Page 2)

### Rockwall County News Briefs

#### Royse City rallies to save historic jail

The Royse City Chamber of Commerce has been working for years to save a historic calaboose in the city limits. Years of weathering and the poor design of its placement have left it in a major state of disrepair. Now, Bobby Gladu of A&A Granite & Limestone has volunteered to temporarily. The chamber is working to create unique bricks for individuals and businesses to purchase. Each personalized brick then will be used in the landscaping of the area around the calaboose once it is repaired. Bricks may be purchased at

(Continued on Page 2)



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# City of Heath earns financial accolades

The City of Heath received a clean audit report from independent auditors, according to a recent news release from the municipality.

The city's financial statements for the 2015-2016 fiscal year received an unmodified opinion, which is the best of the four types of opinions the city could have received, according to the release.

Brooks Cardiel & Company PLLC conducted the independent audit and lauded the City of Heath for its practices in fiscal management, policies and procedures.

The city recently was awarded a Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting by the Government Finance Officers Association of the U.S. and Canada (GFOA) for the seventh consecutive year.

Additionally, the city received the GFOA's Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for the sixth time.

"We are very pleased to once again receive the highest rating possible as a result of the City's astute and proactive financial management," Heath Mayor Brian Berry said. "I want to thank not only my colleagues on the City Council, but City Manager Ed Thatcher, Finance Director Laurie Mays and their staff members for their expertise and hard work to exceed best practices for municipal government financial management and planning."

In the introductory letter, signed by Thatcher and Mays, it states that the annual independent audit was required by Texas Local Government Code Section 103.001.

It goes on to state, "management assumes full responsibility for the completeness and reliability of the information contained in this report," "and the objective is to provide reasonable, rather than absolute, assurance that the financial statements are free of any material misstatements."

According to the auditor's report, the independent audit was conducted in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America.

In the Management's Discussion and Analysis, the following financial highlights were offered:

- The assets of the City exceeded the liabilities (net position) at September 30, 2016 by \$60,669,749. Of this amount, \$39,960,606 (net investment in capital assets) has been invested in the City's infrastructure, buildings, and other assets.
- The City's total net position increased by \$11,803,240. The majority of the City's net position is either invested in capital assets or restricted for specific purposes. The increase is related to the City's current year investment in capital assets.
- The City's governmental funds reported combined ending fund balances of \$20,151,645 at Sept. 30, 2016, a decrease of \$2,030,667 from the prior fiscal year; this includes a decrease of \$2,177,883 in the capital improvement fund, a decrease of \$251,509 in the debt service fund, and an increase of \$211,624 in the general fund.
- Unassigned fund balance for the general fund was \$2,886,117 or 50% of total general fund expenditures.
- The City's outstanding bonds payable demonstrated a net decrease of \$1,720,000. The total bonds payable at the close of the fiscal year was \$36,760,000 including self-supporting debt of the proprietary fund which was \$13,418,312.

The lauded results did not include an audit into the legality and ethics of how the funds were used.

## Rockwall County Entertainment

(Continued from page 2)

### RISD to host district-wide art show

The Rockwall ISD's District Art Show is scheduled to run from 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Friday, April 21, and from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, April 22, at Rockwall-Heath High School, according to the district website. Those attending are asked to enter at the Heath PAC entrance.

### Gospel Bluegrass concert set at PCCS

The Poetry Community Christian School will host a concert by the Sowell Family Pickers, a gospel bluegrass group, beginning at 6 p.m. on Monday, May 1. The PCCS is located at 18688 FM 986 in Poetry.

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It is the mission of this newspaper to promote the rights of individuals, guided by the principles so eloquently described in the American Declaration of Independence. The right of life, liberty and ownership of property are the cornerstones of our freedom. The sole purpose of government is to enhance our liberty and freedom. Therefore, we hold every elected and appointed agent of government accountable to that standard.



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the Lord. Praise ye the Lord."

Psalm 150:6

"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart,  
and lean not unto thine own  
understanding;"

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## Rockwall County Commissioners Court ...

(continued from page 2)

During the public forum, Barbara Colson spoke on the subject of the local Farmers Market. She said the Market will begin its ninth annual season, to start May 6, and continue to around September 26. Colson said the first week will include a contribution to the Children's Advocacy Center and Silent Partners for the Rockwall Police.

She said the Farmers Market is run strictly by volunteers, with no paid staff, and asked the commissioners to sign the agreement with the City of Rockwall to allow for use of the Historic Courthouse grounds for the events.

The commissioners unanimously approved the letter of agreement for continued use of the Historic Courthouse for the Farmers Market.

Emergency Management Coordinator Joe Delane presented on the evaluation committee's final decision related to a Request for Proposal for Emergency Disaster Debris Removal.

The RFP Notice was published in the Rockwall County News, Jan. 26 and Feb. 2, 2017, in accordance with state law.

Delane said eight vendors participated in the RFP. The committee scored each respondent by experience, cost of services, and whether the potential vendor meets qualifications in accordance with federal and state laws, along with other standards. He explained the importance of making sure the RFP was done right and in accordance with federal requirements.

The committee wanted to award the contract to the highest scoring vendor, and include the next two highest scoring vendors as alternates in case the primary vendor is unable to respond. The contract is good for five years, and is activated in the event of an emergency disaster.

County Auditor Lisa Constant explained that the contract was awarded to D&J Enterprises based in Auburn, Alabama. Ceres Environmental Services was chosen as first alternate, and Crowder Gulf was named second alternate.

The commissioners unanimously approved the RFP.

(continued on page 6)

### ANGLICAN

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Meets 10:30 a.m. Sunday at

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FIRST ASSEMBLY OF GOD

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Alcoholics Anonymous, 24 hour help line, 800-503-8602.

### AA Meetings

Rockwall, 7 days a week, Big Book Group, 213 Rusk St., 972-722-6366.

### Al-Anon Meetings

Call for information and locations in Dallas area, 214-363-0461.

### Al-Anon Garland

Meetings Monday & Friday, 8 p.m. at 2206 South Jupiter St., Suite 130, Garland.

Sons of the American Revolution East Fork-Trinity Chapter meets 6:00 p.m., second Thursday each month. 4881 Bass Pro Dr. Garland, Texas. Guests & family welcome. <http://www.txssar.org/EastForkTrinity>.

### Rockwall County Kiwanis Club

Meets every Tuesday at noon at the Rockwall Wedding Chapel, 203 S. Fannin. For more information call 972-772-6001

## Senior Services

If you are interested in delivering weekday meals to homebound seniors in Rockwall County, we will be holding volunteer training sessions the second Wednesday each month at 1 p.m. Please call 972-771-9514 for location.

24 Hour Help Line for substance & mental health counseling. 800-662-4357.

NAMI (National Alliance of Mental Illness) meets second Saturday monthly. We offer support and education for families and individuals affected by mental disabilities. For more information call the Dallas office at 214-341-7133.

Everyone is invited to attend the "SAVING AMERICA THROUGH PRAYER" event, on the second Sunday of each month, 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., at Rockwall Bible Church located at the corner of Hwy 66 and Zion Circle, west of FM 3549, in Rockwall. The free event will include guest speakers. This is not church affiliated, and is open

to everyone interested. For more information contact Mike Kennedy (972) 998-2680 or Kenneth Shores (214) 334-1206 or Jerry Minx (972) 896-7081

## Multi Family Garage Sales

1002 Squabble Creek (Behind Dobbs Elementary off Nash). Friday 8 to 3 and Saturday 8 to 5. Antiques, vintage silver, dolls, dishware, holiday items, ceramics kiln, collectors' items and cookbooks.

## Mobile Homes for Rent

Mobile Home for rent on Lake Ray Hubbard. Must be 55 years or older. \$370 monthly plus electricity. Includes t.v., bed, washer/dryer, and living-room chair. 972-795-9537.

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- Rockwall - Krogers (South), Scotties Exxon, Walmart, Chevron (I-30 & Ridge Road), Gateway Shell (Hwy 276 and 3549), Downtown between Texas Traditions and Fatted Calf (coin rack), between the office of William L. Lofland (Attorney at Law) and The book Club Cafe,
- Rowlett - Walmart Neighborhood (Dalrock and Hwy 66),
- Royse City - Tiger Mart, Main Street Joe's Meat Market (coin rack), Walmart.
- Fate - Fate Grocery Store.

## Required Notices

### Public Sales

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE:** Pursuant to Chapter 59 of the Texas Property Code, The Vault Self Storage located at 1280 E. Ralph Hall Parkway, Rockwall, Texas 75032 will hold a public auction of property to satisfy a landlord's lien. Sale will be at 10:00 AM, April 14, 2017, at The Vault Self Storage, 1280 E. Ralph Hall Parkway, Rockwall, Texas. Property will be sold to the highest bidder for cash only. All successful bidders will remove the contents immediately and leave unit clean. A refundable cleanup deposit will be required. Seller reserves the right to not accept any bid and to withdraw property from sale. Property includes contents of spaces of the following tenant(s): Jaime Chavez: Household appliances, furniture, exercise equipment & misc. household items. Stacey R. Battles: Household furniture, misc. household items & boxes. Contact The Vault Self Storage, 1280 E. Ralph Hall Parkway, Rockwall, Texas 75032, (972) 771-1105.

### Rockwall County News

legally qualifies for publication of required legal notices for all government units located in Rockwall County as a newspaper of general circulation under Texas Government Code Section 2051.044, 2051.045, 2051.046 and 2051.048 (b) and (c). To Submit legal notices call 972-722-3099 or email [rcn.advertising@yahoo.com](mailto:rcn.advertising@yahoo.com)

## Legal Notices

### NOTICE OF RATE CHANGE REQUEST

Oncor Electric Delivery Company LLC ("Oncor") publishes this notice that on March 17, 2017, Oncor filed with the Public Utility Commission of Texas ("Commission") its Petition and Statement of Intent to Change Rates, a copy of which is kept at Oncor's office at 1616 Woodall Rogers Freeway, Dallas, Texas 75202. This notice is being published pursuant to Commission Procedural Rule 22.51(a)(1).

Oncor's rate filing, based on the system-wide financial results for a 12-month test year ending on December 31, 2016, adjusted for known and measureable changes, supports a net increase in transmission and distribution rates of approximately \$317 million over adjusted test-year revenues, or approximately a 7.5% increase over adjusted test-year revenues of \$4,214.2 million. Test-year revenues have been adjusted to normalize billing units, to remove the revenues associated with Oncor's Energy Efficiency Cost Recovery Factor, and to increase test-year revenues to reflect Transmission Cost of Service ("TCOS") and Transmission Cost Recovery Factor ("TCRF") adjustments. TCOS revenue was adjusted to include the September 15, 2016 interim update rates at 2016 Option 2 ERCOT 4CP. TCRF revenue was adjusted to equal the March 1, 2017 TCRF revenue requirement reflected on Line 2, Attachment A of Oncor's petition filed and approved in Docket No. 46616. If approved, the increased rates will be charged to Oncor's direct customers, all retail electric providers ("REPs"), in those portions of Oncor's service area under the original jurisdiction of the Commission. Each such REP is potentially affected by the proposed change. Depending on the REPs' actions, the end-use customer classes of such REPs are potentially affected by the proposed change. In addition, the result could be a change in Oncor's transmission cost of service rates, which would impact all load serving entities in the Electric Reliability Council of Texas. Oncor has requested an April 21, 2017 effective date for its proposed rate change.

Persons who wish to intervene or comment upon these proceedings, in Docket No. 46957, Application of Oncor Electric Delivery Company LLC for Authority to Change Rates, should notify the Commission as soon as possible, as an intervention deadline will be imposed. A request to intervene or for further information should be mailed to the Public Utility Commission of Texas, P.O. Box 13326, Austin, Texas 78711-3326. Further information may also be obtained by calling the Commission at (512) 936-7120 or (888) 782-8477. Hearing- and speech-impaired individuals with text telephones (TTY) may contact the Commission at (512) 936-7136. The deadline for intervention in the proceeding is 45 days after the date the application was filed with the Commission.

Oncor Electric Delivery Company LLC

## Royse City Police Blotter March 24 - 30

- **Friday, 24 March:** Reckless driver, I-30 eastbound from the 73-mile marker; Alarm, 7000 block W. I-30 NSR; Suspicious vehicle, I-30 westbound near the 77A exit; Disturbance, 700 block Silverleaf Court; Medical assistance, 300 block N. Erby Campbell Boulevard; Welfare concern, 300 block Starlight Lane; Disturbance, 1600 block Meadowlark Lane; Disturbance, 2600 block Sabine Drive; Medical assistance, 1200 block Mexia Court; Driving while license invalid arrest, I-30 westbound near the 77B exit
- **Saturday, 25 March:** Suspicious vehicle, 800 block W. I-30 NSR; Reckless driver, I-30 westbound near the 77-mile marker; Alarm, 1000 block Pullen Street; Disorderly conduct arrest, 500 block Pin Oak Lane; Noise disturbance, 1600 block Ranch Road; Welfare concern, Area of W. I-30 and FM 2642; Reckless driver, I-30 eastbound from the 73-mile marker; Welfare concern, 1000 block Courtney Drive; Suspicious vehicle, 400 block W. I-30 NSR; Driving while license invalid arrest, Area of I-30 SSR and Erby Campbell Boulevard; Possession of marijuana arrest, 900 block W. I-30 NSR; Two possession of marijuana arrests, 100 block E. I-30 SSR
- **Sunday, 26 March:** Suspicious vehicle, 500 block W. I-30 NSR; Medical assistance, 300 block N. Erby Campbell Boulevard; Medical assistance, 2800 block Redwood Street; Reckless driver, Area of FM 548 and I-30; Welfare concern, Area of FM 548 and Starlight Lane; Welfare concern, Area of Joe Bailey Street and FM 35; Alarm, 2300 block E. I-30 NSR; Accident, 400 block W. I-30 NSR; Disturbance, 400 block W. I-30 NSR; Suspicious vehicle, 1200 block Chase Court; Alarm, 300 block Ame Lane; Driving under the influence minor arrest, 100 block E. I-30 SSR
- **Monday, 27 March:** Suspicious person, 400 block W. I-30 NSR; Accident, I-30 eastbound near the 79-mile marker; Medical assistance, 600 block Baldwin Street; Alarm, 2300 block E. I-30 NSR; Welfare concern, Area of S. Erby Campbell Boulevard; City ordinance violation, 800 block W. I-30 NSR; Medical assistance, 100 block E. I-30 SSR; Welfare concern, 500 block W. I-30 NSR; Welfare concern, 600 block Tripp Trail; Disturbance, 500 block Baldwin Street; Suspicious person, 1700 block Kelly Lane; Noise disturbance, 1600 block Kelly Lane; Assault arrest, 700 block Stedham Street; Two curfew violations, 400 block W. I-30 NSR
- **Tuesday, 28 March:** Alarm, 2600 block Marsha Lane; Welfare concern, 300 block Cookston Lane; Suspicious person, 100 block W. I-30 NSR; Burglary of a residence, 1700 block Kelly Lane; Medical assistance, 300 block E. I-30 SSR; Reckless driver, Area of Midnight Drive and Maverick Lane; Reckless driver, Area of W. I-30 NSR and FM 2642; Suspicious person, 900 block Loganwood Drive; City ordinance violation, 1900 block Louis Miller Lane; Suspicious person, 1100 block Live Oak Street; Display fictitious registration, 100 block E. I-30 SSR
- **Wednesday, 29 March:** Alarm, 700 block W. I-30 NSR; Accident, Area of W. I-30 NSR and FM 2642; Welfare concern, 1200 block Lost Valley Drive; Welfare concern, 2900 block Glen Oaks Drive; Suspicious person, Area of Hwy 66 and N. Josephine Street; Medical assistance, 200 block Audobon Lane; Driving while license invalid arrest; I-30 eastbound near the 79-mile marker; Possession of controlled substance arrest, I-30 westbound near the 78-mile marker
- **Thursday, 30 March:** Welfare concern, 1300 block Hwy 66; Alarm, 800 block Matthew Lane; Medical assistance, 1300 block Hwy 66; Alarm, 1400 block FM 1777; Disturbance, 300 block Starlight Lane; Accident, I-30 westbound near the 79-mile marker; Reckless driver, I-30 eastbound near the 79-mile marker; Driving while intoxicated arrest, I-30 westbound near the 77B exit; Driving while license invalid arrest, I-30 eastbound near the 79-mile marker; Unauthorized use of a motor vehicle, 300 block Medina Court; Welfare concern, 900 block Kim Lane

## Texas Constitution Article 1, Section 16

No bill of attainder, ex post facto law, retroactive law, or any law impairing the obligation of contracts, shall be made.

The act of forcing any business and natural person to purchase any kind of insurance for others who render services constitutes "impairing obligation of contracts." One exception are Federal Instrumentalities engaged in statutory "employment" on the soil of Texas.

See Tx. Labor Code Section 201.101 & 26 U.S.C. 3306 (c)(g) and (j)(1 & 2). Apply the definitions in (j) to the definitions in (c) and (g).

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## Rockwall County News Briefs

(Continued from page 2)

### RARTA to meet April 10 at RISD Admin. Bldg.

The Rockwall Area Retired Teachers Association will meet on Monday, April 10, at the Rockwall ISD Administration Building, 1050 Williams, in the Board Room, #600. Sandi Berry and Deanna Allison will talk about their Journey Through the Promised Land. The meeting will begin at 1:45 p.m. Prior to that, refreshments will be served at 1:15 p.m. for those who come early.

### Household Hazardous Waste Collection planned

Rockwall will host its 17th annual Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, April 22, at the city's Service Center, 1600 Airport Rd. Items to be accepted include pesticides, paint products, household cleaners, herbicides, motor oil, automotive chemicals, swimming pool products, propane and tires in household quantities. On-site document shredding also will be offered and a vendor also will be on site to take electronic equipment for recycling. Each participating Rockwall resident will need to bring a current utility bill or driver's license to provide proof of residency. For more details visit [rockwall.com/documents/news/HHW2017.pdf](http://rockwall.com/documents/news/HHW2017.pdf).

(Continued on page 6)

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# Opinions

## Yes, let's allow the Syrian people to decide for themselves

by Ron Paul

Ron Paul Institute for Peace and Prosperity

Is common sense beginning to creep into US policy in the Middle East? Last week Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said that the longer-term status of Syrian President Assad would be "decided by the Syrian people." The media reported this as a radical shift in US foreign policy, but isn't this just stating what should be obvious? What gives any country the right to determine who rules someone else? Washington is currently paralyzed by evidence-free rumors that the Russians somehow influenced our elections, but no one blinks an eye when Washington declares that one or another foreign leader "must go."

It's only too bad that President Obama hadn't followed this back in 2011 instead of declaring that Assad had to go and then arming rebel groups who ended up being allies with al-Qaeda. Imagine how many thousands of lives and billions of dollars would have been saved by following this policy in the first place. Imagine the millions of refugees who could still be in their homes, running their businesses, living their lives.

Will the Trump Administration actually follow through on Tillerson's Syria policy statement? It is too early to tell. The President has illegally sent hundreds of US troops to fight on the ground in Syria. Current US positions in eastern Syria suggest that Washington may be looking to carve out parts of oil-rich areas of the country for some kind of future federation.

The White House followed up on Tillerson's comments by stating that getting rid of Assad was no longer a top priority for the US. This also sounds good. But does this mean that once the current top priority, destroying ISIS, is completed, Washington may return to its active measures to unseat the Syrian president? Neocons in Washington still insist that the rise of ISIS in Syria was due to President Assad, but in fact ISIS did not appear in Syria until the US began trying to overthrow Assad. They haven't given up on their desire to overthrow the Syrian government and they do have influence in this Administration.

If the Trump Administration is serious about letting the people of Syria decide their fate he needs to take concrete steps. Rather than sending in more troops to fight an ISIS already on its last legs, he must

bring US troops home and prohibit the CIA from further destabilizing the country.

It would also be nice if Congress would wake up from its long slumber and start following the Constitution. The President (and his predecessors) have taken this country to war repeatedly without proper Constitutionally-required authority to do so. The president has reportedly decided not to even bother announcing where next he plans to send the troops. Congress can rein him in with very little effort by saying no money can be spent to deploy US troops to areas where they may encounter hostilities unless a state of war is declared.

By all means, we should let the Syrian people decide who will be their president, even if they choose someone we don't like. Syria was never a threat to the United States and the 2011 US intervention has destroyed the country. Interventionism has horrible consequences and no victories to show for itself. It is time for all the US troops to just march back home.

## Right to try to live

"The Right to Try: How the Federal Government Prevents Americans from Getting the Lifesaving Treatments They Need," by Darcy Olsen (HarperCollins, 2015).

by George Leef

Future of Freedom Foundation

The highly acclaimed 2013 movie Dallas Buyers Club told the story of Ron Woodroof, who tried desperately to get drugs that might help arrest Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome back in the mid 1980s. While there were some drugs thought to help in treating the disease, none had been approved for use in the United States by the Food and Drug Administration. Woodroof and his fellow AIDS sufferers knew that no drug was guaranteed to work, but they wanted to be allowed to try those that might save their lives. The FDA, however, did all it could to block the group from obtaining and distributing the drugs.

In the 1980s, FDA officials held the view that they alone were entitled to decide what medications Americans would be allowed to use. How much has that mindset changed over the subsequent decades? Hardly at all, argues Darcy Olsen in her book *The Right to Try*. Olsen, president of the Goldwater Institute, makes two strong arguments: first, that the federal bureaucracy is an immense obstacle to Americans who want to obtain drugs that might save their lives, and second, that a partial remedy for that obstructionism is available in state "Right to Try" statutes.

Olsen's book is partly the telling of stories about Americans who have fought for access to unapproved drugs that might allow them to survive muscular dystrophy, Lou Gehrig's disease, inoperable cancers, and other maladies. The other part is her presentation of unpleasant facts about the FDA's regulatory regime. If you believe, for example, that Lou Gehrig's disease is always fatal, you learn about Ted Harada, who was able to defeat it after battling the FDA to be permitted to try an innovative stem-cell treatment. And if you think that the FDA is run by public-spirited officials who are exclusively dedicated to the lives and well-being of their fellow Americans, Olsen depicts an agency run by haughty bureaucrats who seem to be more concerned about the power of their agency than anything else.

Especially alarming is the evidence she presents showing that doctors and medical researchers worry about the possibility of an FDA backlash that would damage their careers if they do something

to arouse an official's ire. Among the many professionals she interviewed is Dr. Eugenie Kleinerman, who told her,

I fault my pediatric oncology colleagues because I think if we could get together and were more vocal and put more pressure on the FDA — but everybody is afraid, you know. If I make them mad, then my hospital president won't be happy, and I won't get my tenure renewal, or I won't get promoted, the FDA will not put my trial in — you can create a hundred scenarios.

After reading that quotation and many similar ones, it's impossible to avoid the conclusion that the FDA's power not only obstructs Americans from getting drugs and treatments, but also induces skittishness throughout the medical profession. Many people suffer because doctors' desire to avoid trouble with the federal government outweighs genuine medical considerations.

Desperate for alternatives

Olsen indicts many aspects of the FDA's regulatory system, among them its continuing reliance on blind placebo-controlled trials. In such trials, some patients are denied the drug under evaluation in order to assess its effectiveness. That might be morally acceptable if we were talking about an antihistamine, but with cancer patients it means sentencing those in the placebo group to almost certain death. Olsen argues convincingly that the FDA's "placebo fetish" (as she calls it) is neither ethical nor scientifically necessary.

Americans who are not allowed to get drugs they are desperate for are often driven to the very expensive expedient of going to other countries. One of Olsen's most unforgettable stories is about 9-year-old Diego Morris, who was diagnosed with osteosarcoma, a horrifying bone cancer. The boy's survival was doubtful even with chemotherapy, but an experimental drug named mifumartide had been shown to be effective in combination with chemo.

Executives at the company that had developed it were optimistic and sought FDA approval, but were taken aback by the extraordinarily hostile reception they received. In the words of Dr. Paul Meyers, "I mean a really nasty, angry, 'Get out of my face, what the hell are you

doing here' reception." But the company persevered and managed to get a hearing before the agency's Oncologic Drugs Advisory Office. At the hearing, the officials who had been so hostile to the company continued their hostility by making a negative presentation that was based on old data rather than new data showing increased survival rates. Therefore, the regulatory blockade against mifumartide remained in place.

Stymied in the United States, the Morris family learned that the drug was available in many other countries, including Great Britain. They were lucky enough to have relatives in London where they could stay while Diego received treatments over a span of weeks. Those treatments proved successful and the child has made a spectacular recovery. Sad to say, osteosarcoma patients whose families cannot afford to go abroad for treatments continue to die.

The FDA's obstructionism has catalyzed a response in the states: the Right to Try movement. It entails either legislation or a referendum to adopt a law providing that a citizen who is suffering from a terminal illness can obtain a drug so long as it has cleared the FDA's Phase I safety trials and is in Phase II or III evaluation (which deal mainly with dosing and effectiveness). Under the state laws, all that is necessary is approval from the patient's physician and the consent of the manufacturer; no need to beg the FDA's cooperation.

But why would the drug companies want to cooperate? Olsen's interviews with leaders of drug companies provide the answer: companies benefit from the "first-mover" advantage. Just as software firms gain from getting products into the hands of consumers and improving them through feedback, so too with pharmaceutical firms. She quotes Chris Garabedian, the CEO of one of those small, innovative firms: "The goodwill that an early access program would generate among the health-care provider community and patient community could be significant." From Olsen's discussion, it is evident that the nation is missing out on a lot of Hayekian spontaneous-order progress in the pharmaceutical market because of the FDA's rigid controls on the availability of drugs.

Useless compassion

Starting with Colorado in 2014, Right to Try has been passed in nearly every state where it has been introduced, usually with scant opposition. The sole exception is California, where the bill easily passed the legislature but was vetoed by Gov. Jerry Brown, who justified his veto by claiming that the bill was superfluous because the FDA already has a "compassionate use" program in place.

Olsen explains that the FDA's compassionate-use program is woefully inadequate because it, like the rest of its regulatory system, is too restrictive to help many people. She writes,

Compassionate use is designed for small numbers of people who are seeking access to later-stage AIDS and cancer drugs for which there have been big trials but the drug is still a few years away from approval. It is not designed for broad access by large numbers of patients to early-stage innovative technology that is showing promise in small trials and could make a difference for patients with an unmet need.

And yet, the FDA continues to publicize its program as if it solves the entire access problem. Governor Brown may have been taken in by its spin but readers of the book won't be.

Although the author doesn't draw this comparison, Right to Try laws are a lot like right-to-work laws. Both are instances of states' relying on federalism to partially offset the damaging effects of overreach by Washington. Right-to-work laws partially offset the collectivism of the National Labor Relations Act by giving unionized workers the right to stop paying union dues without being fired. Right to Try laws partially offset the stranglehold that the Pure Food and Drug Act has given the FDA over access to medications.

The trouble is that in neither case is the "fix" allowed under federalism complete. Workers in unionized firms cannot break entirely free of union domination as long as the NLRA remains in force, and patients who desperately want to try developmental drugs still have to wait until they have made it through the federal government's costly and expensive first phase of testing before Right to Try can do them any good.

Nevertheless, Right to Try laws are a step in the right direction. Enacting them helps to focus attention on the FDA's ingrained hyper-caution and arrogance. They are also a good example of the way the Founders expected our system to work. Olsen quotes Alexander Hamilton's *Federalist No. 28*: "If [the people's] rights are invaded by either [state or federal government], they can make use of the other, as the instrument of redress." With Right to Try laws, the people are using their state legislatures to redress a problem caused by the federal government's overreach.

This is a wonderfully optimistic book. It reveals a lot of the astounding work that medical researchers have done, and shows how much more quickly pharmaceutical companies and medical-device manufacturers could progress if it weren't for the FDA. It's also optimistic in demonstrating that bipartisan cooperation is possible on issues where excessive government has created a major problem.

Olsen doesn't directly make the case for a major overhaul of the FDA, much less abolishing it. Many other writers have done that. Her book, however, dovetails perfectly with their work by giving a much-needed "human side" to the argument that the FDA does more harm than good. Perhaps the passage of Right to Try laws in most states will be the crucial step toward the eventual abolition of the FDA.

## President Trump and a season of hard lessons for America

by Mark Landsbaum

BarbWire

It is a season of hard lessons.

It can be fruitful — but only if the lessons are learned. Don't hold your breath.

President Donald Trump was unable to get his luke-warm reform of Obamacare approved by enough Republicans, so it's dead for now. Despite the hand-wringing on the right and the celebration on the left, this is the best thing that could happen to that bill, which didn't go nearly far enough in replacing Obamacare with what should be the only acceptable replacement — a free-market system that relegates government to the shadows, instead of the driver's seat.

About 17% of Americans liked the bill, which means 83% didn't like it. It would have left tens of millions without coverage. It would have made the UN-affordable care act even more unaffordable for many. Had this bill passed, Democrats would have been super-charged in the mid-term elections, gaining back angry blue-collar defectors, who so surprisingly elected Trump, but now would blame Republicans.

The only "fix" for Obamacare will come when it crashes and burns. It's on target to do that. Republicans tossing a life-line to this doomed big government scheme play into the hands of its creators — Democrats. Let it crash and burn. Only then will a genuine replacement be widely embraced. Until then, let the country find out what horrors result from Democrat-dictated government health care.

Speaking of crashing and burning, California is nose-diving to oblivion at warp speed. Gov. Jerry "Moonbeam" Brown wants \$50 billion in new gasoline and vehicle taxes. He says it's needed to pay for road repairs. Californians should smell a rat. They've been paying billions of dollars in gas and car taxes for ages precisely to repair roads. But that money has been diverted by the super-majority Democratic-controlled Legislature to pay for other stuff, like public employee salaries and benefits, and hare-brained schemes to combat the non-threat of so-called global warming.

At least Brown promises this tax will last only 10 years. Californians ought to recognize that rat smell again. In 2014 Brown promised a new tax increase would last only 2 years. Two years later he campaigned to make it permanent. Another former California governor once said the closest thing to eternal life on the earth is a government bureau. This California governor wants to add taxes to the list of eternal evils.

Speaking of eternal evils and eternal bureaus, Trump seems to be following through with his campaign promise to drain the swamp. Or at least eradicating some of the swamp creatures' creations — rules and regulations governing how Americans live. But a closer examination reveals he's not ridding the swamp of the creatures who thrive in it: bureaucrats and lobbyists.

Trump cheerleaders celebrate whenever he reverses an Obama executive order or removes a bureaucratic obstacle. That will be about as effective as a thumb in the dike while the sea rises to pour over the wall. Until conservatives understand that a government with the power to reward is the same as a government with the power to punish, not much will change.

Does anyone really think conservative interests won't seek the same kind of rewards sought by left-wing interests under previous administrations? Does anyone think the Constitution is going to be amended to prohibit Americans from petitioning their government — which is the old-fashioned way of describing lobbying? Only when government is emasculated will it be incapable of rewarding and punishing, and those most effective in lobbying will continue to be rewarded, and those least effective will be punished.

This is the reason for small, limited government. Otherwise, we won't drain the swamp, we'll just swap the creatures there now for new creatures. That's not draining. That's treading water.

Speaking of treading water, the domestic threat from terrorism will not be eliminated by targeting "refugees" or immigrants from particular countries, as Trump is trying to do. The threat posed by refugees and immigrants to the American way of life can only begin to be solved by not allowing in people who hold values antithetical to the American way of life.

If you think it's OK to beat your wife, you need to find somewhere else to immigrate to. If you think suicide bombing earns you a place in paradise, you need to go elsewhere. If you're ideal is to replace the American constitutional system with a religious-political scheme cooked up 1,400 years ago by a man who consummated his marriage to a 9-year-old girl, you need to stay away.

As long as people who exalt anti-American ideals are allowed to enter our nation, which is to say, anti-western civilization ideals, we invite domestic terrorism. If you're thinking that it will be extremely difficult to know whether a prospective refugee or immigrant is lying when those questions are put to him, you're right. So what? The burden should be on the refugee and immigrant to demonstrate beyond doubt that they are compatible with our way of life. We don't have to prove them worthy. They do.

Let's recap. Will these hard lessons be learned? Didn't I already

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## Rockwall tackles cleanup after last week's storms

City of Rockwall personnel were late last week, trying to help local residents recover from the Wednesday, March 29, storms that swept through the northern part of the city.

The Rockwall Fire Department maintained the Mobile Command Unit to support workers on site, according to a city news release. Rockwall city officials met with insurance adjusters to help them gain access to damaged homes and police officers provided a 24-hour presence to ensure that properties were secure. Rockwall firefighters worked with multiple city and county department to address residents' safety needs in the storm's aftermath.

Eighteen residences were impacted by the storms, according to a report from the city. Four were determined to be unsafe, five were safe "with specified limitations" and nine sustained minor damage.

On Saturday, Republic Waste provided additional service to Dalton Ranch residents, who were particularly hard hit by the storms.

Roads in that vicinity were closed. Only residents of that area were allowed access to the neighborhood, according to the news release.

City departments involved in the early hours of response included the Rockwall Police, Fire Department, Parks & Recreation, Building Inspections, Engineering, Street Department, Water and Wastewater Department, according to a city news release.

Boosting the municipal response were the Rockwall County Sheriff's Office, Rockwall County Office of Emergency Management, Rockwall County EMS and the Texas Department of Public Safety, as well as Republic Waste Management, Oncor, Atmos and Farmers Electric Cooperative.

City officials also lauded Rockwall CERT representatives in their response to the event.

"The volunteer organization has played a crucial role in the cleanup and recovery from these storms, and their hard work has not gone unnoticed," the city release stated.

Straight-line winds were responsible for the damage in Rockwall, according to information from the National Weather Service included in the city's report.

"The community has been very responsive with an outpouring of support and there is currently no need for additional assistance; however, if people would still like to contribute, please contact Rockwall County Helping Hands," the city report stated.



Austin Taylor, a seventh grade student at Utley Middle School, attended a team tournament in Wills Point on March 25. He competed in the seventh grade singles division and captured second place. He is the son of Terry and Danna Taylor.

Courtesy photo/Rockwall County News

## Rockwall County News Briefs

### Drug takeback planned April 29

The local observance of the National Drug Takeback Initiative will run from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the John Fitzwater Sr. Community Services Center, 1113 Ridge Rd. (in the Ridge Road Shopping Center).

### ARC Blood Drive set April 30 in Rockwall

An American Red Cross blood drive will run from noon to 6 p.m. on Sunday, April 30, at Half Price Books Rockwall, 959 I-30. Eligibility requirements may be viewed at [redcrossblood.org/donating-blood/eligibility-requirements](http://redcrossblood.org/donating-blood/eligibility-requirements). Make an appointment by downloading the free Red Cross Blood Donor app, by visiting [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org) or by calling 1-800-RED CROSS.

### Rockwall Farmers Market opens May 6

The Rockwall Farmers Market will open for its 2017 season at 8 a.m. on Saturday, May 6, on the historic downtown square. The market will be open from 8 a.m. to noon each Saturday through Sept. 30. For more details visit [rockwallfarmersmarket.org](http://rockwallfarmersmarket.org).

## Rockwall County Commissioners Court ...

(continued from page 3)

The court approved out of state travel for Radio System Administrator Tim Williamson to attend Radio System Training in Lynchburg, Virginia from April 2 to April 8, 2017.

Constant explained the funds would come from the Radio Interoperability fund.

Commissioner Dennis Bailey moved to approve consent agenda and hold the item related to a contract with Texas Representative Justin Holland for office space.

The consent agenda included the minutes of the previous meeting; Justice of Peace Precinct 2 monthly judicial activity reports; Constable, Precinct 2 Eric White to serve as Reserve Deputy; and Auditor's monthly reports.

The court approved the acquisition from Capital Outlay, of a Fujitsu fi-7169 document scanner for the District Clerk, at an estimated cost of \$908.30.

Non-emergency budget transfers approved by the court included transfer of \$200 within the SCAAP Grant Fund to travel and training; \$2,800 within the General Fund to travel/Training from contingency for the County Judge to attend Commissioners Court Leadership Academy that was approved during the March 14 meeting; transfer \$2,800 within the General Fund to travel/training for commissioner Lee Gilbert to attend the leadership academy; \$1,500 within the General Fund to Human Resources/Recruiting ads for subscription with [governmentjobs.com](http://governmentjobs.com), approved Jan. 3, 2017; \$20,000 within the General Fund to Rockwall Historical Foundation from moving expense for the Bailey house approved during the March 14 meeting.

The court approved the following accounts, bills, claims and payrolls presented by Constant: Paid claims in the amount of \$76,551.38; Unpaid claims \$280,203.98; Payroll report for pay period ending March 11, 2017, in the amount of \$593,398.50.

### March 14, 2017 regular meeting

The county commissioners handled the following matters during the March 14 regular meeting:

- Approved the use of contingency funds for the relocation of the Bailey House for the Rockwall County Historical Foundation. Carolyn Francisco asked the county to support the Historical Foundation in its endeavor to relocate the Bailey House. Upon inquiry by the commissioners, Francisco explained the house has been used for a business during the past 20 years, and is structurally sound. She said it needs to be moved by April. The house will be moved next to the Historical Museum, allowing for use of the existing parking lot. The amount of the funding was not addressed.

- Discussed possible emergency repairs to a culvert located on a private road Burkett Lane pursuant to Chapter 253 Transportation Code, as presented by Magness. The Sheriff's department recommended emergency repairs. The property owners would be forced to cover repair costs with an attached lien.

- Commissioner Lee Gilbert briefed the court on the new fitness trail approved during Oct. 2016, that would be located between the new courthouse and interstate 30, which is still under construction. The court approved funding of approximately \$17,000 for construction of the pavilion that will be positioned behind the library.

- Approved participation with the National Association of Counties related to a flag disposal program. National Association of Counties sponsor a project for flag disposal. The association provides boxes for participating counties for "proper" disposal of flags. The project is in conjunction with the National Flag Foundation and the National Sheriff's Association. The local American Legion volunteered to sponsor the disposal of flags in Rockwall County.

- Pulled the issue of renewing a three year service agreement with Election Systems & Software for ballot services. Rockwall County Elections Administrator Chris Lynch briefed the court about an upcoming presentation by ES&S and another potential vendor, and recommended waiting until later before taking action.

- Approved the notice of termination to Relias Learning, LLC, related to the Master Services Agreement, effective June 2, 2017.

- Approved an agreement with Kimley-Horn and Associates to prepare the annual report to TCEQ for year four of Phase II Small Municipal Separate Storm Water Systems (MS4) permit as required.

- Approved a vendor named Castro Roofing to repair the roof at the County Services building. Constant explained the business is a member of a Cooperative Purchasing Network that has already provided a bid, thus not requiring a formal RFP.

- Approved an Interlocal Agreement with the City of Heath for use of the Rockwall County Interoperability Radio Network.

- Pulled the Interlocal Agreement with the City of Fate for use of the Rockwall County Interoperability Radio Network. Constant and Brenna said they did not receive a document related to the matter. The court approved the agreement as the last item of the meeting.

- Approved an agreement with Kofile Preservation to perform phase VI preservation services of historical records of the County Clerk at a cost of \$233,659.35 to be paid from the County Clerk Archival and Records management Funds.

- Approved funds for Sweet and Gilbert to attend the Commissioners Court Leadership Academy in the amount of \$2800 per official.

- As a result of a closed meeting, Magness moved that the court authorize settlement with Linda Rogers in the amount of \$362.74. The court did not discuss the reason for the settlement.

- Approved the consent agenda, which included: the minutes of the previous meeting; monthly judicial reports for Justice of the Peace Precincts 1, 3 and 4; Environmental Health Coordinator monthly report; treasure monthly report; Transfer of \$90,000 within the road bond fund from 2008 Advanced Planning to ITS Consultants agreement; Payment to Half Associates for engineering services provided thru Jan. 29, 2017 at FM 3549 from SH 66 to IH 30 in the amount of \$1,974.15; Payment to Dannenbaum Engineering Company for engineering services proved during Jan. 2017 at FM 549 from SH 276 to SH 205 in the amount of \$25,185.29.

- Approved the purchase of concrete at an estimated cost of \$4,000 by the County Jail, from the Capital Outlay; and Surplus transfer to Maintenance & Operations related to a 2004 Ford pickup truck.

- Approved the following non-emergency budget transfers: \$1,300 within the General Fund to Account Receivable Travel Advance from County Sheriff payments related to police academy recruit training approved Nov. 8, 2016; \$3200 within the Maintenance & Operations to Capital Outlay from Unanticipated Expense related to purchase of platform lift and forklift with battery charger, approved Feb. 14, 2017; \$1,000 within the District Attorney Forfeiture Fund to Travel & Training from Legal Notices/Ads resulting from expenditures exceeding budgeted funds.

- Approved paid claims in the amount of \$105,657.21; Unpaid claims in the amount of \$787,962.38; Payroll report for pay period ending Feb. 25, 2017, in the amount of \$611,372.71.

### Fundraiser to benefit RHS Robotics Boosters

A Drive for your School fundraiser set to run from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, May 6, at the Wilkerson Sanders Stadium parking lot, will benefit the Rockwall High School Robotics Booster Club. Rockwall Ford will bring in nine vehicles. If an adult over the age of 18 drives a vehicle then the club will receive a \$25 donation. The more people who come out to drive, the more donations will be made to the Booster Club. A bake sale and drinks will be on hand to sell refreshments and a face painter will be on site from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.



Rockwall Yellowjackets defending the goal against a Sachse attack are Kayden Brady (center) and Chris Garrett (right). Ready to assist at back are (from left) Ryan Figert and Alex Johnson. The Jackets fell to Sachse 4-0, Friday, March 31, 2017, during the Area round playoff game at Wilkerson-Sanders Stadium in Rockwall.

Photo by Tim Burnett/Rockwall County News

### Sports Results

#### Rockwall

##### Baseball

Longview 3/28  
(Away) 11-1 (Win)  
Longview 3/31  
(Home) 5-0 (W)

##### Softball

North Mesquite 3/28 (H)  
5-0 (W)  
John Tyler 3/31 (A)  
16-0 (W)

##### Soccer men

Sachse 3/31, Area, 4-0 (L)

##### Soccer women

Garland Naaman Forest 3/31,  
Area, 2-2 (L).

#### Rockwall-Heath

##### Baseball

Tyler Lee 3/14/2017 (H)  
7-1 (W)  
Tyler Lee 3/17 (A) 10-1 (W).

Rockwall 3/21 (A) 6-2 (Loss).  
Rockwall 3/24 (H) 14-1 (W).  
N. Mesquite 3/28 (H) 8-0 (W).  
N. Mesquite 3/31 (A) 10-0 (W).

##### Softball

Tyler Lee 2/28 (H) 14-1 (W).  
Rockwall 3/7 (A) 3-1 (W).  
Mesq Horn 3/28 (A) 15-3 (W).



The Royse City Chamber of Commerce assisted with a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Laramore-Osborne American Legion Post 100 on March 20. Pictured are David Harvey, 1st Division commander, left; Jason Castleberry, post commander, pictured at center with scissors; and Gene Toohey, 4th District commander. The American Legion is the oldest and largest nonprofit veterans organization; it focuses on four pillars: Americanism, national security, veterans and youth. The group is temporary conducting its meetings at the First United Methodist Church office, 200 Plum St., Royse City. For more information call 903-274-0702.

Courtesy photo/Rockwall County News