

Lake Watch

Lake Level
on October 18

530.78

Normal Elevation 533.00'
Lake Watch is provided by the
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
on Lake Whitney

Lakeline

WBVFD plans
fall fundraiser

White Bluff Volunteer Fire
Department will host a fall
fundraiser Saturday, October
24, at the fire station from
5 to 8 p.m. The event will
include a barbecue dinner,
raffle drawings, 50/50 draw-
ings, a live auction and two
silent auctions. Meal tickets
are \$20 per adult or \$5 per
child 12 and under. Dinner
will be available from 5 p.m.
to 6:30 p.m. For auction times
and more ticket information,
visit whitebluffvfd.com. The
station is at 20016 Misty
Valley Circle in White Bluff.

Blum Masons

to hold fish fry

Blum Masonic Lodge #607
will host a fish fry fundraiser
from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sat-
urday, October 24. Cost is
\$15 per plate. The Carter
BloodCare Bus will also be
on site. The lodge is located
at 107 Avenue C in Blum. The
public is invited to attend.

Blood drive set
for October 27

The Carter BloodCare Bus
will be in town for a blood
drive Tuesday, October 27,
from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., at King
Memorial Methodist Church,
502 North Colorado Street.
To schedule an appointment,
call 1-800-366-2834 or text
CBCDonate to 999-777.

Angel Tree apps
now available

Applications for the Lake
Whitney Ministerial Alliance
Angel Tree program are now
available at Our Daily Bread
Food Pantry. Applications are
only available at the pantry
and must be returned there
by Thursday, October 29. Our
Daily Bread is located at 100
Sims Drive in Whitney. The
pantry is open from 9 a.m.
to 12 p.m. Mondays, 4 p.m.
to 6 p.m. Wednesdays and
1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Thursdays.
Late applications will not be
accepted.

CRCG to meet
October 27

The Hill County Commu-
nity Resource Coordination
Group will hold its next meet-
ing Tuesday, October 27, at 1
p.m. The meeting will be at
200 Line Street in Hillsboro.
The coalition brings together
local partners, state agencies
and community members to
help youth and adults with
complex needs find coordi-
nated care. More information
and contacts are available at
crcg.lhs.texas.gov.

Proposed HILCO water system sale draws opposition

A proposed sale of HILCO H2O water systems to CSWR-Texas Utility Operating Co. LLC is drawing opposition from local residents concerned about potential water rate increases and the future of service in portions of Hill and Bosque counties.

The sale is pending before the Public Utility Commission of Texas under Docket No. 59426. A legal notice recently published outlined the proposed transfer of water facilities and customers, along with changes to utility service-area boundaries.

HILCO says that the sale of its remaining H2O water systems is intended to provide customers with access to additional resources for system improvements while allowing the cooperative to focus on its core operations.

However, local organizers are urging affected customers to formally protest the proposed transaction, citing concerns about the potential financial impact and CSWR's record in other communities.

A billing comparison included in the legal notice shows substantial differences between existing rates and the proposed CSWR-Texas rates.

For a standard 5/8-inch meter, the notice estimates a monthly bill of \$45.43 for 5,000 gallons of water under existing rates, compared with \$114.45 under the proposed rates.

For 10,000 gallons, the comparison lists an increase from \$60.98 to \$157.65 per month.

Those figures represent increases of approximately 152% and 159%, respectively.

The application identifies 12 requested areas encompassing approximately 4,141 customer connections and 11,688.5 acres.

The proposed transfer involves designated portions of rural areas around Whitney and other locations in Hill and Bosque counties.

The potential increases have prompted concerns about affordability, particularly for households on fixed incomes and families man-

aging rising living expenses.

Organizers Angie Albright and Amy Anderson said that residents should review the application and submit individual protests through the PUC's regulatory process rather than relying solely on a general community petition.

"People see these notices and think they can just sign a quick petition and it'll go away, but state rules don't work that way," said Albright. "If we don't officially block this sale right now at

see SALE on page 3

Early voting now underway ahead of November election

Early voting is underway at polling places in Hill and Bosque counties as Texans begin casting ballots in the mid-term General Election. Early voting opened Monday and will continue through Friday, October 30, ahead of Election Day Tuesday, November 3.

Hill County voters have three early voting locations to choose from in Hillsboro, Whitney or Hubbard.

The main early voting location is the Hill County Covington Street Annex, located at 126 South Covington Street in Hillsboro. It will be open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, October 19-23; 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday, October 24; noon to 6 p.m. Sunday, October 25; and 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday, October 26-30.

The Hill County Precinct 1 Annex, located at 5800 FM 933 in Whitney (Huron), will be open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays during the early vot-

HILL COUNTY	
EARLY VOTING LOCATIONS	
Hill County Covington Street Annex	
 126 S Covington St. Hillsboro	October 19-23: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. October 24: 7 a.m. - 7 p.m. October 25: 12 p.m. - 6 p.m. October 26-30: 7 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Hill Co. Precinct 1 Annex	
 5800 FM 933 Whitney (Huron)	October 19-23: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. October 26-30: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Hubbard Volunteer Fire Dept.	
 116 North Magnolia Ave. Hubbard	October 19-23: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. October 26-30: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

ing period, and the Hubbard Volunteer Fire Department, located at 116 North Magnolia Avenue in Hubbard, will also be open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays during early voting.

Bosque County early voters can cast ballots at either the Bosque County Elections Administration Office at 104 West Morgan in Meridian or

the Clifton Civic Center, at 403 West 3rd Street in Clifton. Bosque County early voting hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. the first week of early voting; 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday, October 24; 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday, October 25; and 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. the second week of early voting.

see VOTING on page 3

County tax abatement terminated after solar company cancels plans

The Hill County Commissioners Court voted to terminate the county's tax abatement agreement with Gransolar Texas Ten for a planned solar project Tuesday, October 13.

According to information presented in court, the company is no longer moving forward with its planned development southeast of Hubbard.

In July, Gransolar approached the county with requests to extend the deadlines for the company to complete its project under the tax abatement agreement.

Prior to the July meeting, the company withdrew one of its requests, which was to extend the completion date of the 83.6 megawatt solar electric generating facility from December 2025 to December 2027.

The court denied Gransolar's second request in July, which was to extend the deadline for the company to complete its 135.12 megawatt AC battery energy storage facility from the third quarter of 2026 to the third quarter of 2029

due to construction delays.

In other action, the court approved submitting a memorandum of understanding to the City of Hillsboro regarding a county fire marshal position. Commissioners have been discussing partnering with the city for fire marshal services with the goal of ensuring industrial development projects are in compliance with regulations. The city is expected to review the document as negotiations continue.

The court approved terminating the county's contract related to a Community Development Block Grant through the Texas Department of Agriculture for Post Oak Special Utility District water improvements in the Hubbard area.

The county is involved in the agreement because grant funds are distributed to the county to be passed on to the district. County Judge Shane Brassell said that the grant administrator had identified an issue with the application after it was submitted, and the project is no longer eligible for the funding.

A related contract with Mathis Construction for the project was also canceled. The district plans to seek grant funds for another project that would benefit the residents it serves.

Commissioners approved job descriptions for road and bridge operator II, III and IV positions. Precinct 1 Commissioner Jim Holcomb recently proposed adding the operator IV position to create an incentive for road and bridge employees to move up by becoming certified on two pieces of equipment and accumulating three years of experience.

The court voted to accept a donation of 1,325 tons of rock from Hubbard Wind 2 for use in Precinct 3.

Commissioners approved applying for the FY 2027 Rural Ambulance Service Grant Program, which provides financial assistance to qualified counties for the purchase of ambulances.

The court renewed the county's annual mental health counseling services agree-

see COURT on page 3

County, city sales tax allocations up sharply

Hill County's monthly sales tax allocation from the comptroller was up over 258% compared to last September when the monthly list of disbursements was released last week, and the City of Whitney's allocation was up almost 45%.

The data shows that Hill County received a payment of \$1,409,351 from the comptroller in September, an increase from last September's payment of \$393,070.

The county's sales tax revenue is also up for the year, with \$5,345,481 received to date in 2026, an increase of 33% compared to the same time period in 2025.

Hill County Treasurer Rachel Parker said that she had not received the necessary information to explain the jump as of press time, passing along a message from the comptroller's office: "There are many factors that drive this number, such as new businesses, late tax payments, penalties, heavy traffic or events around the county, etc."

The City of Whitney's September allocation was \$120,014 this month, an in-

crease of 44.88% over last September. Year to date, the city's allocations have totaled \$1,066,272, up 22.68% over the same period last year.

In the county seat, the City of Hillsboro's September allocation came to \$618,082, an increase of 24.33% over last September. Year-to-date figures show Hillsboro receiving \$5,367,718 so far in 2026, an increase of 6 percent over the first nine months of 2025.

Allocations and changes over last September for other Hill County cities in September were: Abbott - \$15,915.33, up 12.61%; Aquilla - \$2,277.87, up 120.45%; Blum - \$6,083.51, up 4.36%; Bynum - \$1,246.65, up 41.60%; Carl's Corner - \$3,147.46, down 42.75%; Covington - \$7,514.75, up 8.83%; Hubbard - \$103,180.14, up 266.13%; Itasca - \$35,426.40, up 29.43%; Malone - \$5,088.41, up 147.39%; Mertens - \$550.83, down 7.48%; Mount Calm - \$2,069.79, down 0.19%; Penelope - \$1,024.71, up 19.81%.

Bosque County's September allocation was \$140,416, up 31.43% over last September

see TAX on page 3

Whitney ISD Board meets in Oct. session

The Whitney Independent School District (WISD) Board of Trustees met in a regular session Monday, October 12.

Campus leadership presented students and staff members of the month recognized for their significant contributions to WISD campuses.

Students of the month were: elementary school - McKenlee Byrd; intermediate school - Sawyer Reid; middle school - Joselyn Figueroa Martinez; high school - Harmony Parker.

Staff members of the month were: elementary school - Julia Campos; intermediate school - Kyla Isbell; middle school - Darrin Powers; high school - Leah Caperton.

The board approved the purchase of new vehicles for the district's maintenance department to replace aging vehicles. Two Ford F-150

trucks will be purchased for \$34,500 and \$34,975.

A fuel bid was also approved after the district recently advertised for proposals. One bid was received from Reeder Distributors of Waco for fuel deliveries to the district's transportation department.

Superintendent Todd Southard's report to the board showed that the district's enrollment stands at 1,400 this month, with 380 students at the elementary level, 276 in intermediate school, 321 in middle school and 423 in high school.

The board convened in closed session, and no action was taken when open session resumed.

The next regular board meeting date is Monday, November 16. The meeting will be held in the board room of the Whitney ISD Administration Building, located at 305 South San Jacinto Street.

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