

COURTYARD

Here for all of Wood County



November 15, 2021

Dear Friends,

We live in a state known for its friendliness. Texas means "friends." It should come as no surprise then, that here in Wood County, many of us have "never known a stranger." Our residents are friendly, open and approachable. I believe the same should hold true for our local government. It, too, should be open, approachable and easy to understand. It should also be accountable and efficient.

It is my hope this newsletter might communicate to you, in an open and easy way, news you can use. Hopefully, through the information I share each month, you will have a better understanding of the value of county government and the services we provide. After all, we are here because of you, and for you. It is an honor to serve you!

With friendly greetings,
Judge Lucy



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Honoring Our Wood County Veterans

For several years now Judge Lucy was asked to speak at the Veterans Memorial Park in Hawkins on Veterans Day and this year was no exception. It's a very moving and respectful program that she's proud to attend. See a copy of her [SPEECH](#) attached and learn more about heroes in her life and why veterans are forever in her heart.

Other speaking engagements for Judge Lucy soon include one on December 4 for the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) in Mineola about patriotism and how her mother made it to the promised land of the United States from Riga, Latvia. (See paintings by Judge Lucy's mother, Nina Magness, and learn more about her journey to America on www.ninamagness.com.)

On December 18 Judge Lucy will be at Holly Lake Cemetery and the City of Hawkins Cemetery later that day as part of the nationwide program [Wreaths Across America](#). That project aspires to place a wreath on every veteran's grave and is a wonderful way to honor and remember loved ones who served. Judge Lucy's hope is that one day all veterans in Wood County might be included.

Welcome VSO Christi Billman

Christi Billman is the new Wood County Veteran Service Officer. She helps veterans and families understand and obtain government benefits, including VA, disability, medical/health, educational, cemetery, death and others. The VSO office is located with the Tax Assessor Collector at 301 E. Goode in Quitman. Christi and her husband both served in the Navy and moved to Wood County from the DFW metroplex several years ago. She looks forward to working with the many veterans who live in our county.



Enjoy Wood County's Fun and Thriving Communities

We are fortunate to live in a county with so many wonderful, lively small towns with an endless supply of fun and meaningful things to do. Just this past Saturday alone, Judge Lucy made the rounds starting with the Mineola Veterans Parade. Mineola was also celebrating their high school's award-winning marching band. Over in Winnsboro she enjoyed the Art & Wine Festival and a delicious lunch at Liefie's — one of many great dining places in the county — then came back to Mineola to attend the Historic Select Theater's showing of the classic film "Holiday Inn." Check in with each town's online events calendar to stay up to date with all the fun happening in Wood County.



Paying Attention to Efficiency and a Healthy Economy

Your hankering for bacon is going to cost you 28% more today than a year ago according to a recent report from Yahoo Finance. People are voicing their feelings at voting polls across America and letting representatives know they are not happy with the rising prices at the store, at the gas pump, and when buying a home.

There is hope for rural America and those of us in Wood County as indications are that economy is an important issue for voters and that parents and education matter, women's votes matter, and that candidates must connect with voters. Governments and politicians are ultimately held accountable when the economy heads south. Remedy? Simple — reduce bloated government spending and improve efficiencies. Ditto for Wood County.

In the last several years the county has used a proactive rather than a reactive approach to keeping budgets in check and being prudent with taxpayer dollars. Planning and training and constant review of different categories of expenses does take some time and effort, but it pays off in the form of reduced costs and improved efficiencies. For instance, with regular reviews of our claims litigation history and meeting with our risk management consultants, we are able to train for safety and in other areas in an effort to mitigate injuries and potential losses. Reducing exposure to claims helps keep losses low and/or preventable.

In other areas the county is also taking proactive measures to ensure against cybersecurity issues by regularly monitoring our IT procedures, equipment, software and other items to ward off potential threats which so many government entities, schools, and other public entities are faced with. Our county actively monitors vulnerabilities and also has invested in significant IT upgrades to protect the integrity of our systems which directly affect the services we provide.

With the advent of COVID and closing of the court system for several months during which we could not hold in-person court proceedings, the courts have modernized the court system in that hearings can be held remotely, and business can still be conducted. By keeping the systems up and running we ensure that cases can still be handled and fines and fees can still be collected.

These are just a few ways we are mindful of costs and efforts to modernize, upgrade and in general, be more efficient.

**I SACRIFICE.
I WORK HARD.
I WORK SMART.
I AM A PROFESSIONAL.
I AM BUILDING MY EMPIRE.
I AM THE MASTER OF MY DESTINY.
I AM AN**

ENTREPRENEUR.

Where Have All the Workers Gone?

I confess. I love the Kingston Trio and their folk melodies popular back in the 50's and 60's. One of the songs they sang was "Where Have All the Flowers Gone." Writing this blurb about the lack of employees/workers, that song came to mind. Our Texas economy continues to recover with payroll employment growth accelerated and the business cycle index continues to climb.

[Read More](#)

"Reflect upon your present blessings

*of which every man has plenty;
not on your past misfortunes,
of which all men have some."*

Charles Dickens



Thanksgiving Attitude of Gratitude

During this season when thoughts turn to family and friends, we in Wood County have a lot to be thankful for: the good country life, beautiful surroundings, hometown values and a great place in which to live and work. Studies show that people who are thankful enjoy better well being overall and a have a cheerful disposition. Here a few more benefits of being grateful:

Improves physical and psychological health
Enhances empathy
Makes you friendlier
Enhances sleep

Everyone can use extra sleep and some of these benefits during the holidays! We here at Wood County wish you and your loved ones a Happy, Healthy and Blessed Thanksgiving!

**Congratulations to
Sinclair Market in
Winnsboro for
winning the Texas
Downtown
Association
Presidential Award
for Best
Restoration!**



A young girl with a white bow in her hair, wearing a bright yellow long-sleeved shirt and blue jeans, stands in an art exhibit. She is smiling. Behind her are two framed paintings: one of a tree with orange leaves and another of a yellow and green abstract scene. To her left is a small table with a red ribbon award and a sign that says "WINNERS FOR WOOD COUNTY".

AROUND THE COUNTY

- Awards Presented for 2021 Winnsboro Children's Art Competition & Exhibit
- Learn about the history of our county seat, Quitman, from the Texas State Historical Association
- Railroad History Adds Charm to Mineola Architecture
- Love Bugs Collected to Aid Area Youth

Wood County Judge
**LUCY
HEBRON**

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