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# TEXAS INFORMER

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## Texas Rangers

### Investigate Alto Shooting

The shooting death of Eric (Traggic) Griffin, 47 of Alto at is now under investigation by the Texas Rangers. Mr. Griffin died January 23, 2013 at the hands of Alto police officer, Brandon Smith.

(See Investigation page 9)

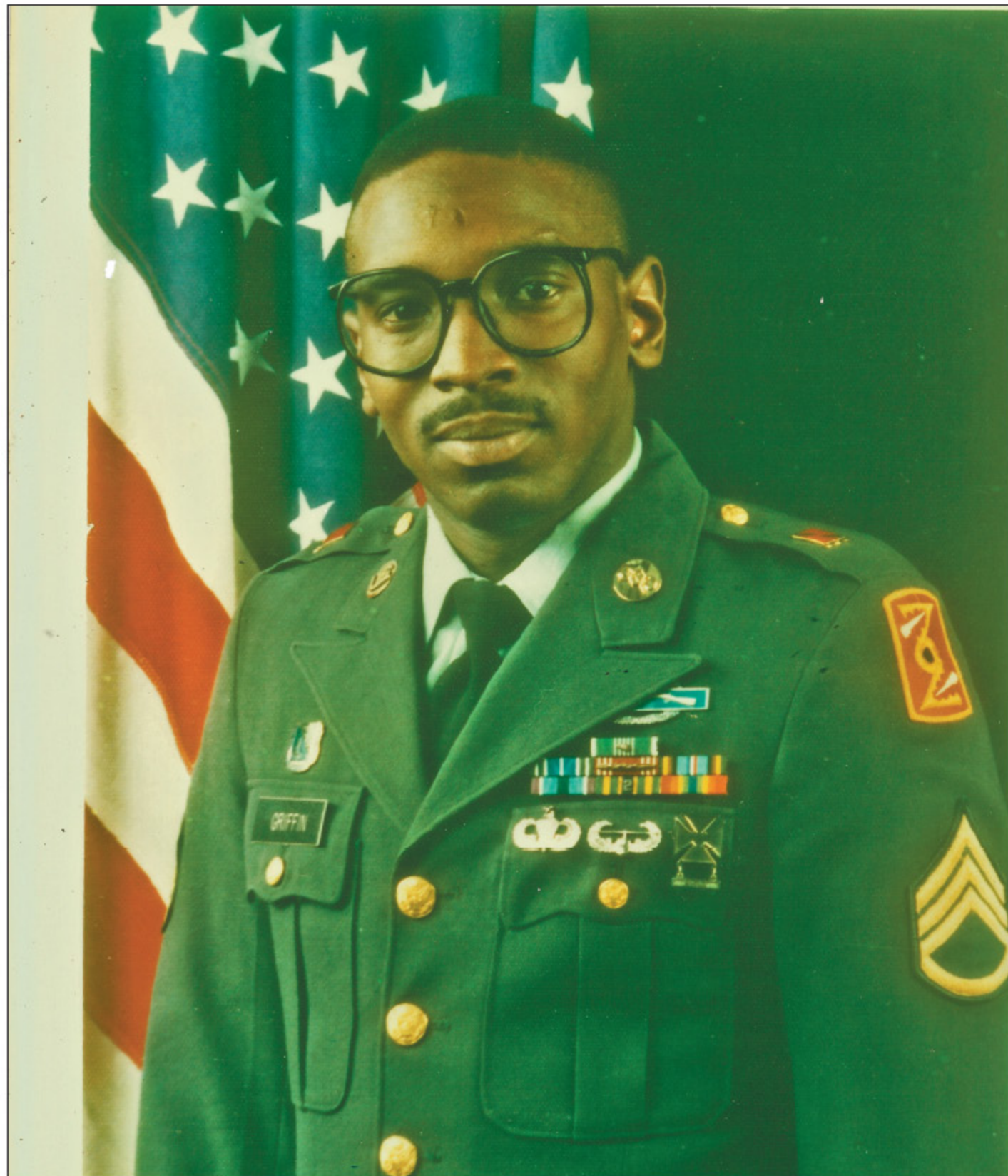
## Cherokee County

### Elected Officials Lassiter, Lusk, Underwood Switch to Republican Party

During the annual January Executive Committee meeting of the Cherokee County Democratic Party, three Democratic elected officials, Ms Patsy Lassiter – County Treasurer, Ms. Lavern Lusk – County Clerk and Mr. Byron Underwood – County Commissioner, announced their intention to join the Republican Party.

Democratic Party Chair Caesar Roy expressed regrets that these long term Democrats had reached this decision. He stated “It is hard to understand how these officials would choose to align themselves with the Texas Republican Party which is intent on legislating voter suppression laws to prevent minorities from voting, that supports underfunding education, children’s health care, Medicare, and Medicaid for our seniors. They are now associated with the Tea Party movement and those Republicans who oppose immigration reform “

See Elected Officials Switch  
page 11



**EDITORIAL*****Rosa sat so Martin  
could walk, Martin  
walked so Barack  
could run***

Maxine Session, Editor

When Carter G. Woodson established Negro History week in 1926, he realized the importance of providing a theme to focus the attention of the public. The intention has never been to dictate or limit the exploration of the Black experience, but to bring to the public's attention important developments that merit emphasis. For those interested in the study of identity and ideology, an exploration of ASALH's Black History themes is itself instructive. Over the years, the themes reflect changes in how people of African descent in the United States have viewed themselves, the influence of social movements on racial ideologies, and the aspirations of the black community. For many African Americans the Presidential inauguration of Barack Obama was the celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King's dream reaching new heights in the form of an African

American President elected on the content of his character and not rejected because of the color of his skin.

It is now a common phrase repeated among those who are aware of the long struggle of African Americans in America, "Rosa sat so Martin could walk, Martin walked so Barack could run."

Genesis 1:27 tells us that God created man in His image. John 3:14 tells us to love one another, yet there are those who continue in this 21st century, to practice love everyone but black people.....perpetuating racial hatred and division. The worst part of this is they plant this in the hearts and minds of their children. These practices are deeply rooted in Texas in our education system, law enforcement, banking and workplaces to the point that it is destroying the well being of families, both black and white. We must do as our grandmothers who raised children of all races did, continue to pray, asking God to make it ALL right, after all, we are His creation.

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**Letter's To The Editor****Bone to Pick over news report on  
James Eric Griffin**

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a law abiding citizen who mostly mind my own business, but today I felt compelled to pick a very huge disgusting bone I have with the Cherokeean Herald Radio News Channel 97 FM concerning a distasteful news report aired January 25, 2013 regarding (the death of) James Eric Griffin. I don't recall the name of the man who reported the Alto shooting that occurred on January 23, 2013, but who ever you are, SHAME ON YOU! Personally, I think you should reconsider your occupation..... your reporting of James Eric Griffin was distasteful. Did you once take into account the grieving family of James Eric Griffin? No matter what the allegations were, he is a human being who was loved by so many of those "up roared" folks in the Alto community that you spoke sarcastically

of. For whatever unGodly reason, you sir, kept referencing James Eric Griffin as "the thief". This angered me greatly. James Eric Griffin can no longer speak for himself. Sir, in this country a man is presumed innocent until proven guilty, NOT guilty until proven innocent. ....your intent all along to distort James Eric Griffin's image on the air waves in hopes that any potential future Cherokee County Jurors might be listening in order to help out Alto police department and Cherokee County, just in case things might not be the way some want them to appear. This wouldn't be the first or the last time the "GOOD OLD BOY SYSTEM" has been implemented in Cherokee County. We get it! One hand washes the other, especially when it comes to law/justice for people of color. I have personally vowed to stop purchasing your Cherokeean Herald Newspaper and tuning my radio to 97FM, until you apologize to James Eric Griffin's grieving family. Ms. Robin Hood  
Alto, Texas

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**Letters to the Editor Policy**

We welcome your letters to the editor. Please send to P. O. Box 332, Rusk, Texas or [informernews08@aol.com](mailto:informernews08@aol.com). Letters must include name of the sender. We reserve the right to edit content and to accept or reject letters.

# 18 year Veteran Emerson Griffin

## VFW Post Commander 3rd term

The participation of Americans of African descent in the U.S. military has a long and distinguished history. But although African Americans have participated in all American wars, they have sometimes faced almost as bitter a hostility from their fellow Americans as from the enemy. Nevertheless, particularly since the 1970s, the U.S. military has made a serious effort at racial integration. In 1962 President John F. Kennedy reactivated the President's Committee on Equal Opportunity in the Armed Forces. Chaired by attorney Gerhard Gesell, and known as the Gesell Committee, the panel explored ways to draw qualified African Americans into military service. In 1964 African Americans represented approximately 13 percent of the U.S. population but less than 9 percent of the nation's men in arms. The committee found uneven promotion, token integration, restricted opportunities in the National Guard and Reserves, and discrimination on military bases and their surrounding communities as causes for low African American enlistment. Before the government could react to the committee's report, the explosion of U.S. involvement in Southeast Asia changed the problem. An expanded military, a discriminatory draft, and other government programs brought not only increased African American participation but accusations of new forms of discrimination.

U.S. involvement in Vietnam unfolded against the domestic backdrop of the civil rights movement. From the outset, the use, or alleged misuse, of African American troops brought charges of racism. Civil rights leaders and other critics, including the formidable Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., described the Vietnam conflict as racist—"a white man's war, a black man's fight." King maintained that black youths represented a disproportionate share of early draftees and that African Americans faced a much greater chance of seeing combat.

The draft did pose a major concern. Selective Service regulations offered deferments for college attendance and a variety of essential civilian occupations that favored middle- and upper- class whites. The vast majority of draftees were poor, undereducated, and urban—blue-collar workers or unemployed. This reality struck hard in the African American community. Furthermore, African Americans were woefully underrepresented on local



L to R -Standing Post Commander Emerson Griffin and wife Jackie, children Ebony and John Michael, granddaughters Meliyah, Janiyah and Manyah.

draft boards; in 1966 blacks accounted for slightly more than 1 percent of all draft board members, and seven state boards had no black representation at all.

Born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Emerson Griffin, was very active in extracurricular activities at H. Steven Decatur High School. He participated in wrestling, track, jazz band and marching band. He received a military music scholarship. After graduation, wanting a break from school, he joined the United States Army with the intention of serving 2 years and then using his scholarship. He re-enlisted for four years and then again each time his tour of duty was over. Before long he had served a total of 18 years with combat duty served in Granator, Operation Urgent Fury, two tours of duty in Panama, Operation Just Cause and in Desert Storm.

After receiving an injury, he retired Medically in 1995. Commander Griffin's last duty station was Ft. Hood in Killeen, Texas. He went to work at

Texas Department of Criminal Justice. There he met his wife Jacquelin, who is from Rusk, and they were married. They currently live in Alto.

A position became available with the The County Boot Camp for Cherokee County schools and he jumped at the chance to work with young people in that capacity, working with students with behavior problems for more than six years.

Commander Griffin had been active with Veterans of Foreign Wars, so 2006 he transferred his membership to Rusk VFW Post #3406. In 2009 he was approached to run for post commander. He did, was elected and is now serving his third term as the first African American to serve in this post position.

The VFW is very active in performing community service,

**POETRY**

# Growing Texas will strain tight budget

by Senator Royce West



## TAKE ME TO THE RIVER

An original poem by:  
Willie Carwell

Take me to the river my soul said to me,  
I need to feel the water flowing all around  
as the story of the Jordan comes alive.  
I need to hear the hymns the mothers  
would sing as their loved ones sins washed free by being baptized.  
Take me to the river my heart said to me,  
I need to be filled with the power of true love.  
I want to bow at the feet of the one who  
cleansed me, feeling the Holy Ghost come upon me like a dove.  
Take me to the river my mind said to me,  
I want to embrace the wisdom of the Lord.  
I will let the old things wash away and  
receive all that was destined for me;  
I want to be transformed.  
Take me to the river I asked of Him, the  
only One worth living for.  
I asked if he would do this for me to get  
me closer to Heaven's door.  
So that night JESUS took me to the river  
and planted me down by the streams of  
water where my roots would have a constant supply.  
Then GOD spoke to me and said "Prosperous is he that serves me with his Heart, Soul, and Mind". Now I see how  
blessed I am with my LORD and SAVIOR  
by my side.

AUSTIN -- You as parents can all relate to this as well as I, a father, can also witness. It's what happened every year as my offspring approached the start of a new season, let alone a new school year. The clothes I bought for them last summer, last fall, just didn't fit anymore. I had to dig down and spend money to accommodate growth.

Each year Texas, a state that's projected to have almost 33 million residents by 2030, has added hundreds of thousands of new citizens. All will need housing. All will need some way to navigate roads and highways that grow more congested by the day. Many will have children who will add to the annual count of more than 80,000 new students who enter Texas' public schools each year. No more than we can squeeze our kids into the clothes they wore two years ago, can we expect to bind up population growth with the spending patterns of the last two biennia.

But today, budget proposals announced by both chambers of the legislature do just that. Actually, alterations made add a little breathing room in some places, but make for an even tighter fit elsewhere.

Funding projections are based on the methodologies developed to calculate growth, which sometimes presents a challenge within itself.

The initial 2014-15 budget announced by the Senate proposes \$186.8 billion over the two year cycle. The House arrived at \$187.7 billion. Both figures are less than the \$189.9 billion appropriated for FY12-13. They make true on leadership promises to hold tight on the fiscal reins and dim optimism over last week's budget revenue estimate that said Texas is shedding the dark economic outlook of the past recession.

There are glimmers of hope with Monday's announcement by Senate Finance Committee Chairman Tommy Williams that the state would fund for public school growth over the next budget cycle. In addition, both Senate and House budgets include funding for anticipated Medicaid caseload growth during 2014-15; an improvement from the FY12-13 plan that left a \$4.7 billion healthcare bill that must be resolved over the next few months by budget writers.

We all realize that the keys to Texas' economic future must be placed in the hands of an educated workforce. We also know that the cost of college can sometimes make those keys hard to reach. That's why the state must provide a boost to those efforts by restoring cuts made to higher education funding for both institutions and students. However, neither budget version heads in that direction.

While the costs of tuition and fees at state colleges and universities have increased by an estimated 90 percent since deregulation, state support for the same has gone the opposite direction. Higher education funding was cut by more than \$900 million under the current budget. Neither Senate nor House plans restore funding, and may in fact, provide even less for colleges in FY14-15. And still left lacking are firm plans to finance transportation infrastructure and future water needs.

We must get back on course if Texas business and industry is to be supplied with the workforce it needs. Texas is on the verge of exploring new principles of economics and physics. In theory, some say we can successfully plan to contract and expand at the same time. Such an outcome may also defy logic.

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1414	Discovered Dollars - Overall Odds are 1 in 4.75	\$2	02/01/13	07/25/13
1422	Rockin' 9's - Overall Odds are 1 in 4.75	\$2	02/16/13	08/15/13
1459	10K The Money - Overall Odds are 1 in 3.47	\$5	02/25/13	08/24/13
1470	Holiday Doubler - Overall Odds are 1 in 3.18	\$10	02/28/13	08/27/13
1486	Merry Millions - Overall Odds are 1 in 3.09	\$20	03/01/13	08/28/13
1302	Megaflood 7's - Overall Odds are 1 in 3.59	\$7	04/03/13	09/20/13
1336	Veterans Cash - Overall Odds are 1 in 4.15	\$2	04/03/13	09/20/13
1418	Fire & Ice 5's - Overall Odds are 1 in 3.83	\$5	04/03/13	09/20/13
1421	King's Ransom - Overall Odds are 1 in 3.87	\$5	04/03/13	09/20/13
1436	World Series Of Poker® - Overall Odds are 1 in 3.15	\$10	04/03/13	09/20/13
1482	Hunted Tripler - Overall Odds are 1 in 4.86	\$2	04/03/13	09/20/13

For detailed odds and game information, visit [txlottery.org](http://txlottery.org) or call 1-800-07-LOTTO. Must be 18 or older to purchase a ticket. The Texas Lottery supports Texas Education. © 2013 Texas Lottery Commission. All rights reserved.



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**OBITUARIES**

**Kenneth Glend Session**

Funeral services for Kenneth Session were held February 2, 2013 at Woodville CME Church, Rusk, Texas with Pastor Truman S. Bryant, Elder Foyce Staples and Rev. Melvin Session officiating. Kenneth Glend Session, son of the late Gene Autrey and Jo Ann Majors Session Shedd was born August 12, 1967 in Jacksonville, Texas. J He passed away January 24, 2013 in Rusk, Texas. He was raised in the Woodville Community by his aunt and uncle Leader Mae and S. D. Turner. He graduated from Rusk High School in 1985. He grew up as a member of Woodville CME Church where he served as an usher and Sunday School Superintendent. Later he became a n associate member of Sharon Seventh Day Adventist Church of Tyler, Texas.

Survivors are two sisters: Renee (Sylvester, Sr.) Golden of Rusk and

Sharon Woods of Jacksonville; seven aunts Tamara (Windell) Jackson of Brox, New York, Theresa (Dwight) Johnson and Edna Session of Houston, Carolyn ( Kermit) Martindale, Clara Session all of Dallas; three uncles Mitchell (Joyce) Session, James (Diana) Session all of Houston and Royal (Charlesetta) Session of Dallas. Great aunts Viola (Rob) Henderson of Houston, Pearl Session of Rusk, two neices and eight nephews, many other relatives and friends. Burial was at Woodville Cemetery

**James (Eric(Traggic) Griffin**

Funeral services were held for James Eric (Traggic) Griffin of Alto on January 30, 2013 at the Alto Community Fellowship Church with Rev. Lionel Whitaker officiating. He passed away January 23, 2012 in Alto, Texas. He was born June 27, 1965 in Rusk, Texas to Luke Griffin, Sr. and Bulah Hackney. He lived in Alto all his life and was a Baptist. He worked construction, environmental services

and odd jobs around the community in later years. He was preceded in death by his parents and two sisters, Mary Jo Hackney and Tina Hackney. Survivors are two sons; Larry Jenkins and Michael Jenkins both of Alto, six brothers and four sisters-in-law, Kenneth and Westley

Hackney, Robert (Glenda) Hackney and Earnest Griffith all of Alto. Larry Hackney, Dallas, Ray (Felicia) Hackney Topeka Kans. Luke, Jr.(Angela) Hackney. Three sisters : Brenda Jackson, Deborah (Willie) Hackney and Sheila Hackney, one granddaughter Yuanna Jenkins.



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Smith County

Did you know that 3 out of 4 African American adults in Texas are either overweight or obese, which contribute to the onset of diabetes? Did you know that African Americans have the highest prevalence rates of diabetes in Texas? And did you know that where we are born, grow-up, work, live, and pray affects our health?

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Right now, the Northeast Texas Public Health District (NETPHD) is leading the Transforming Texas initiatives in Smith County. NETPHD is working with coalitions and local stakeholders to discuss the importance of clean indoor air policies in preventing secondhand smoke exposure as well as improving opportunities for physical activity in the community and workplace. NETPHD is also working on improving patient self-management of high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and/or diabetes as well as developing initiatives to increase the affordability and availability of healthful foods through farmers markets, small store initiatives, and provision of full service grocery stores. To learn more about these Transforming Texas initiatives and programs in Smith County, please contact Terrence Ates at 903-535-0020.

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# President Barack Obama 44th President of the United States

## *sworn in for second term*



President Barack Obama recites his oath of office at his inauguration ceremony. Michelle Obama in Jason Wu gown for Inaugural Ball 2013

Mr Obama, 51, who is the 44th president of the US, was sworn in by Chief Justice John Roberts. Monday's inaugural festivities in the US capital include black-tie balls, a parade and musical performances. In his inaugural address, the Democratic president is now laying out his vision for the next four years. He was formally sworn in at a small White House ceremony on Sunday - the US Constitution dictates presidential terms begin on 20 January.

In the famous Blue Room with his wife and daughters, the 44th president rested his hand on a Bible that was used for many years by Michelle Obama's family, as

Justice Roberts administered the oath of office.

Thousands began gathering in the dark, chilly predawn hours to see the inauguration. 750,000 plus people flooded into the city for his address and the festivities surrounding it.

The people filled street corners and stood in long snaking lines all around the Capitol and surrounding neighborhoods. "In 2009 my husband Marcus, my aunt Daphne Session and I got up before dawn, walked for miles and stood in the bone-chilling cold to be a part of that history-making inauguration", said Krystal Ward Carter formerly of Rusk. "Sitting here at home (Houston)

watching this 2013 inauguration is almost as exciting as that. It makes me so emotional to think about the history of our ancestors and what they had to go through. ....and just think, President Obama is being sworn in for a second term on Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday. It makes me know that God is a part of this plan. "

Many Republicans said President Obama's first election was a fluke. This second term election proves that to be untrue. The American people have spoken. President Obama begins his second term four years after

inheriting an economic crisis and wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. In spite of a republican controlled congress the President was able to pass a health care plan, a major stimulus bill, new financial regulations and an end to combat operations in Iraq, the winding down of the war in Afghanistan and the Navy SEAL raid that killed 9/11 mastermind Osama bin Laden in 2011.

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# History of Slavery In Texas



Slaves pictured from early 1800's standing in front of cabin

The history of slavery in Texas began slowly, as the Spanish did not rely on it for labor during their years of control. The use of slavery expanded in the mid-nineteenth century as British-American settlers from the Southeastern United States crossed the Mississippi River and brought slaves with them. Although the Spanish colonists had held some slaves, they did not succeed in creating a sustainable agricultural economy in the entirety of New Spain, including Texas, Mexico, Central America, and other former Spanish territories in the American Southwest. The issue of slavery became a source of contention between the Anglo-American (called that because they spoke English) settlers and Spanish governors. The governors feared the growth in the Anglo-American population in Texas, and for various reasons, by the early 19th century, they and their superiors in Mexico City disapproved of expanding slavery. In 1829 the Guerrero decree

conditionally abolished slavery throughout Mexican territories. It was a decision that increased tensions with slaveholders among the Anglo-Americans. After the Texas Revolution ended in 1836, European Americans greatly increased the enslaved population in the Republic, and later the State of Texas as they encouraged settlement and developed more acres under cultivation in cotton and other commodities. The cotton industry flourished in East Texas, where enslaved labor became most widely used. The central part of the state was dominated by subsistence farmers. Free and runaway blacks had great difficulty finding jobs in Texas. Many worked in other parts of the state as cowboys herding cattle or migrated for better opportunities in the Midwest, California, or southward to Mexico. Both the civil and religious authorities in Spanish Texas officially encouraged freeing slaves, but the laws were often ignored. Beginning

in the 1740s in the Southwest, when Spanish settlers captured American Indian children, they often had them baptized and "adopted" into the homes of townspeople. There they were raised to be servants. At first the practice involved primarily Apaches; eventually Comanche children were likewise adopted as servants.

Importation of enslaved Africans was not widespread in Spanish Texas. In 1751, after three Frenchmen were found to have settled along the Trinity River to trade with the American Indians, the Spanish arrested and expelled them from the colony. A 1777 census of San Antonio showed a total of 2,060 people, with 151 of African descent. Of these, only 15 were slaves, 4 male and 11 females. The 1783 census for all of Texas listed a total of 36 slaves. There was intermarriage among blacks, Indians and Europeans. In 1792 there were 34 blacks and 414 mulattos in Spanish Texas, some of whom were free men and women. This

was 15 percent of the total 2,992 people living in Spanish Texas. When the United States purchased Louisiana in 1803, Spain declared that any slave who crossed the Sabine River into Texas would be automatically freed. For a time, many slaves ran away to Texas. Free blacks also emigrated to Texas. Most escaped slaves joined friendly American Indian tribes, but others settled in the East Texas forests. When some French and Spanish slaveholders moved to Texas, they were allowed to retain their slaves. In 1809, the Commandant General of the Interior Provinces, Nemesio Salcedo, ordered the Texas-Louisiana border to be closed to everyone, regardless of ethnic background. His nephew, governor of Texas Manuel María de Salcedo, interpreted the order as allowing slaveholders from the United States to enter Texas to reclaim runaway slaves.

The United States outlawed the importation of slaves in 1808, but domestic trade flourished, especially in New Orleans during the antebellum decades. In part due to the slave trade, New Orleans was the fourth largest city in the US in 1840 and one of the wealthiest. Between 1816 and 1821, Louis-Michel Aury and Jean Lafitte smuggled slaves into the United States through Galveston Island. To encourage citizens to report unlawful activity, most southern states allowed anyone who informed on a slave trader to receive half of what the imported slaves would earn at auction. The men sold slaves to James Bowie and others, who brought the slaves directly to a customhouse and informed on themselves. The customs officers offered the slaves for auction, and Bowie would buy

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“Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.” Romans 14:19

You're a special person, created by God, and He has unique work for you to do. Do you acknowledge your own uniqueness, and do you celebrate the one-of-a kind opportunities that God has placed before you? Hopefully so, but if you're like too many, you may have fallen into a trap. The trap of taking yourself and your opportunities for granted. God created you with a surprising array of talents, and He placed you precisely where you are, at a time and place of His choosing. God has done His part by giving you life, love, blessings, and more opportunities than you can count. Your particular situation is unique and so are your opportunities for service.  
~sasa

## Post Commander Griffin from page 3

performing service at nursing homes, participating in parades, holding services in memory of and in support of veterans on Veterans Day, support sick veterans, hold raffles as fund raisers, perform at veteran burials providing military service. They also make the VFW building available for community us for family reunions, etc. In past months they donated a flag to the city of Rusk. Commander Griffin says we don't do these things for glory, but just our way of giving back



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# Hollywoods's Time



President Obama  
"The Right One"

Billy

"Hollywood" Groves

The election of President Barack Obama to a second term as President of the United States, will give him the eight years he needs to complete his mission. Over the last four years he has clearly laid out his mission. The mission is "to get America back on track economically, get America out of foreign wars, build the infrastructure of America and bring Americans together despite their differences".

Thank God we got the right one back in the Whitehouse. I don't dislike Governor Mitt Romney; I think he is a very successful businessman and family man. It's obvious that Governor Romney knows about making money and what it takes to run a business conglomerate. The problem with that is, America is not a business,

it is a Nation—a Nation with people of all religious, social and racial persuasions. Governor Romney has a lot of good qualities, but he was not the right man for the job. America needs a President who understands what the average American citizens go through on a daily basis. When I analyze the difference between Governor Romney and President Obama, I can't help but think about the story of the boy and the puppy. The story goes...A man took his young son to a pet store to buy him a puppy for his birthday. The boy got to see many puppies that day and he finally picked a puppy he thought was the right one. He chose a puppy that had a disabled leg. The pet store owner and the boy's father pleaded with the boy to take one of the puppies who had perfect legs. After they couldn't get the boy to change his mind, the boy's father bought the puppy for his son. Before the boy left the pet store he raised his pant leg up and showed his own leg, which was also disabled. The boy told the man, this puppy has an injured leg and

what's happening with him. In my mind, President Obama understands the plight of the average American in a way, Governor Romney can't even begin to comprehend because he has never "been in the shoes of the average American citizen". Obama understands what it's going to take to make America the nation that it is supposed to be. On November 8, 2012, American voters put President Obama back in the Whitehouse, not because they thought he was a better businessman than Governor Romney; they put him back in the Whitehouse because they know he understands their needs better than Governor Romney.

God Bless America, Africa and the rest of the World.

## Hancock Family Reunion Scheduled July

The Kansas City, Missouri branch of the Hancock family will host their 2013 family reunion in Kansas City July 19, 20, and 21st. A block of hotel rooms have been requested. To help facilitate planning, family members are asked to RSVP to [maelobrownh@sbcglobal.net](mailto:maelobrownh@sbcglobal.net)

In your response please give your name, address ( mailing and e-mail), number family members attending, number under age 18, and your planned arrival date. Please RSVP by February 9, 2013.

## African American History *from page 7*

them back. Due to the state laws, he would receive half of the price he had paid. After that, he could legally transport the slaves and sell them in New Orleans or areas further up the Mississippi River.[14][15] Texas seceded from the United States in 1861, and joined the Confederate States of America during the American Civil War. It replaced the pro-Union governor, Sam Houston, in the process. During the war, slavery in Texas was little affected, and prices for slaves remained high until the last few months of the war. The number of slaves in the state increased dramatically as the Union Army occupied parts of Arkansas and Louisiana. Slaveholders in those areas often moved their slaves to Texas to avoid having them emancipated. By 1865 there were an estimated 250,000 slaves in Texas.

For the financial benefit of the white slave owners, Texas African Americans continued to be enslaved two years past the Emancipation Proclamation signed by President Abraham Lincoln in January 1, 1863.

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## Elected Officials Switch

continued from page 1

While the National Republican Party is in disarray and decline around the country following the loss of the 2012 election where President Obama and the Democratic House and Senate won the popular vote and the electoral vote, these individuals have chosen to align themselves with Governor Perry and the "secessionist" movement.

It is understandable that in politics "perpetuation often trumps principle" but these elected officials should consider not just what they are leaving but where they are going. Their new friends may accept them but they will probably not trust them--and why should they?

Nevertheless, the Cherokee County Democratic Party will continue to fight for issues that promote a brighter future for our county, our state and our neighbors

## Investigation

from page 1

Officer Brandon Smith is on paid administrative leave until the investigation is complete. Alto Residents have expressed their unhappiness with this tragic event by addressing the City Council, holding community meetings and holding a candlelight vigil in memory of Mr. Griffin.

In one community meeting held Sunday evening, January 27th, several citizens addressed the crowd expressing dissatisfaction with the Alto City Council and the current Alto City police force. Citizens complained about the aggressive way the police force comes at them. One man was threatened by a city police officer and talked down to when he stopped where a home fire was being put out by the fire department. Another lady was tased downtown Alto for standing near a disturbance that was taking place.

"We had a community friendly police force of local officers who knew both the community and the people", said one man. "Our city council was dissatisfied with them. They shut that police force down, firing them all, saying they were not aggressive enough toward the citizens and in writing tickets. Now we have a force who does not know the people and who constantly harasses the people of Alto and even those passing through. It's a dangerous thing when you have going on what we have here. The senseless shooting death of a community man who everybody knew to be harmless proves that they are totally out of control."

The peaceful gathering ended with most planning to attend the next city council meeting as they blame the council for the actions of the police department.

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