

beyond their control, there is a breaking of the tie between people and place that creates a love for place and a willingness to fight for it.

Caesar Augustus knew the value of love for place. He oversaw a vast Roman Empire that stretched across Europe and North Africa. No level of military occupation could force such a diverse people to be glad to participate in the Roman Empire. Not even a Caesar could impose virtue and dignity of a shared life. Similarly, we cannot force pride upon our own citizens. Forced pride always fails spectacularly and it sometimes leads a culture through some dark places before the failure.

It is far more important and far more difficult to create real pride and real love. This is what Caesar Augustus sought to do. It does not require a poet as skilled as Virgil to pen a transcendent local mythology, although if any aspirants are interested, hit me up. It requires a community's leaders to recognize and value the dignity and honor of every one of our people. It requires all our local institutions—governmental, cultural, economic, and recreational—to serve and uplift both people

and place. It requires us to ask ourselves tough questions like: why would someone want to move here if they aren't like us? What about our friends and neighbors who grew up with different experiences? What makes them want to be from here?

These are difficult questions without easy answers, but that is where good and meaningful work happens. Tough questions with easy solutions exist only in the fantasyland of political discourse and we see how successful that is.

As our high school seniors embark on their next phase of life, I hope that some of them want to be from here with the same manner of enthusiasm that Leslie Knope was from Pawnee. I hope that our community leaders look both inward and outward and ask ourselves how we can create an environment where our people want to be from here and are willing to fight to make our place better for generations to come.

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



**Party Time!** Robert Lee Baptist Church recently hosted the June Birthday party at Robert Lee Care Center. Apple and cherry pies topped with ice cream were served and everyone in attendance had a good time.

## Wallace Family Reunion held recently

Descendents of Harve and Millie Wallace gathered for the annual Wallace Reunion, held June 10 - 11, in Robert Lee. Family and friends met at the Northside Church of Christ Fellowship Hall for the two day event.

The family began the day on Saturday with a hot dog lunch at noon, followed by a potluck dinner in the evening. The group enjoyed visiting, playing various games, horseshoe pitching, and some group gospel singing on Saturday night.

A bar-b-q lunch with all of the trimmings was served on Sunday.

There was a really good turnout this year and it was such a blessing to be with so many family members and great friends. An enjoyable time was had by all and they are already looking forward to next year's reunion.

Those attending included Royce Wallace, Buddy and Kristen Wallace, Jana Jeffries, Jeff, Kate, Ollie, Samuel, Lucas, and Emilia Gibson, Mike and Kim Stephens, Joe and Joyce Stephens, Leta Caston, and

Tommy Williams, all of Robert Lee; Jacky and Pam Wallace of Abilene; Linda Havins of Dallas; Wade Wallace of Carrollton; Sidney Myers, April, Lexi, Ashley, and Cody Redmon, and Lorenzo Zamaro, all of Amarillo; Morris, Wanda, Duncan, and Garrett Wallace, and Alvis and Lola Fisher, all of San Angelo; Jackie and Joel Smith of Lubbock; Troy and Susan Millican of Sterling City; and Jerrod, Cayla, John Crea, and Lyla Holt of Big Lake. The group missed having Aunt Alice there this year as she was not feeling well enough to attend.



### May 2023

The Coke County Sheriff's Office answered 284 calls for the month of May 2023.

- Burglary - 1
- Disorderly Conduct - 1
- Criminal Trespass - 2
- Criminal Trespass with Warning Issued - 1
- Criminal Mischief - 2

- Unattended Death - 1
- Theft - 2
- Civil Matter - 3
- Welfare Check - 2
- Public Service (includes funerals, court, motorist assist, alarm calls, etc) - 256
- MHMR Interactions - 1
- Civil Process - 0
- Prisoner Transport (includes arrest and to and from court) - 4
- Warrants Served - 0
- Livestock Calls - 16
- Accidents - 2
- Blue Forms Issued - 0
- Accident Assist - 3
- Traffic Stops - 84
- Traffic Stops Resulting in Citations - 44
- Total inmates in jail as of Monday, June 12, 2023:
  - Males - 2 (1 awaiting transfer to TDCJ)
  - Females - 1

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