

make it into the book.

One event in the actual lives of Goodnight and Loving that's enlarged within the book is Loving's death. Goodnight returned his body from Fort Sumner, New Mexico, to Weatherford. In the novel, Call takes McCrae's body all the way from Montana to Texas, a much longer journey with far more drama.

Antagonist Blue Duck was a real Native American chief, but McMurtry said that was coincidental. He chose the name without realizing that, and that's where the similarity stops. But the character's death is without question similar to that of the Kiowa Chief Satanta, who killed himself while imprisoned.

The character Joshua Deets was inspired by Bose Ickard, a longtime friend of Goodnight. When Ickard died, Goodnight carved a fervent epitaph for him. McMurtry used quite similar words—and some of the exact ones—when Call carves an epitaph for Deets.

As we read on, we do encounter genuine historical figures, though their biographies are massaged—people like Judge Roy Bean, John Wesley Hardin and the ubiquitous Goodnight, who's never very chatty and always on the move.

Near the end of the book, a reporter exclaims to Call that people are saying he's a man of vision. He responds, "Yes, a hell of a vision." The real Goodnight actually said this line in a similar circumstance, referring to all the tough times and horror he had seen as a Texas Ranger and frontier rancher.

### Did Texas have a Jurassic Era?

Approximately 150 million years ago, a toothy marine reptile swam through the Texas seas. When it died, it drifted to the bottom, where scavengers feasted and silt covered its bones. That should have been the end of it. Instead, through the slow action of geology, some of those bones eroded out in what is today the Malone Mountains of West Texas. Collected by a team of scientists from Southern Methodist University and the University of Texas at Austin, those bones were recently determined to be the state's first known Jurassic vertebrate fossils. The bones belonged to a plesiosaur, part of a diverse group of marine reptiles that dominated the seas throughout the Jurassic and Cretaceous eras. Plesiosaurs came in multiple families, each of which experimented variously with long, stiff necks (for catching fish) or shorter ones (often for tackling larger prey.)

When it comes to the 180-million-yearlong Mesozoic Era—when dinosaurs ruled the land and other reptiles the seas and skies—Texas' fossil record is uncommonly rich. Triassic quarries produced gharial and dinosaur-like crocodile relatives. Fossils from the Cretaceous, when dinosaurs reached their full flower, are found throughout

Central and West Texas.

But rocks from the Jurassic Period—the epoch from 145 to 200 million years ago—are largely absent from Texas. "Out of 270,000 square miles in the state, there's 13 square miles of Jurassic outcrop in the Malone Mountains, and it's the one place to go look for Jurassic fossils," says Stan Mays, a research associate at the University of Texas in Austin's

Jackson School of Geosciences Museum of Earth History.

The mountains are a remote, rugged landscape, thrusting up from the desert between Van Horn and El Paso. The rocks—poking up amid horse-crippling cactus and blazing hillsides—are composed of sandstones and siltstones, the sole remnants of a shallow stretch of ocean that covered part of Texas during the late Jurassic. Across the border,

Mays says, the rocks of Northern Mexico include a bounty of Jurassic marine reptiles, including dolphin-like ichthyosaurs, flipped marine crocodiles, and long-necked, sculling predators called plesiosaurs. In Texas, however, nobody had found one.

Mays had been researching a book project on Texas paleontology when he realized how poor the states' Jurassic record was. But while digging

up any mention he could of the states' Jurassic deposits, he found tantalizing clues: In a 1938 paper on the geology of the Malone Mountains, the author mentioned large fragments of bone eroding out of the slopes that had never been collected or formally described in a scientific journal. "It was enough of a hint to make me think it was worth taking a look," Mays says.

(Continued on next page)

## NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING TO DISCUSS BUDGET AND PROPOSED TAX RATE

The ROBERT LEE ISD will hold a public meeting at 5:00PM, August 30, 2023 in 1323 Hamilton St, Conference Room 119, Robert Lee, Texas. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the school district's budget that will determine the tax rate that will be adopted. Public participation in the discussion is invited.

The tax rate that is ultimately adopted at this meeting or at a separate meeting at a later date may not exceed the proposed rate shown below unless the district publishes a revised notice containing the same information and comparisons set out below and holds another public meeting to discuss the revised notice.

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| Maintenance Tax          | \$0.738000/\$100 (proposed rate for maintenance and operations) |
| School Debt Service Tax  | \$0.420000/\$100 (proposed rate to pay bonded indebtedness)     |
| Approved by Local Voters |   |

### Comparison of Proposed Budget with Last Year's Budget

The applicable percentage increase or decrease (or difference) in the amount budgeted in the preceding fiscal year and the amount budgeted for the fiscal year that begins during the current tax year is indicated for each of the following expenditure categories.

|                            |                   |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Maintenance and operations | 8.70 % increase   |
| Debt Service               | -19.21 % decrease |
| Total Expenditures         | -2.17 % decrease  |

### Total Appraised Value and Total Taxable Value (as calculated under Section 26.04, Tax Code)

|  | Preceding Tax Year | Current Tax Year |
|--|--------------------|------------------|
| Total appraised value* of all property   | \$371,835,439      | \$391,290,376    |
| Total appraised value* of new property** | \$2,164,625        | \$3,270,235      |
| Total taxable value*** of all property   | \$341,780,231      | \$360,757,936    |
| Total taxable value*** of new property** | \$2,164,625        | \$3,095,335      |

\*Appraised value is the amount shown on the appraisal roll and defined by Section 1.04(8), Tax Code.

\*\* "New property" is defined by Section 26.012(17), Tax Code.

\*\*\* "Taxable value" is defined by Section 1.04(10), Tax Code.

### Bonded Indebtedness

Total amount of outstanding and unpaid bonded indebtedness\* \$14,360,988

\*Outstanding principal.

### Comparison of Proposed Rates with Last Year's Rates

|  | Maintenance & Operations | Interest & Sinking Fund* | Total      | Local Revenue Per Student | State Revenue Per Student |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Last Year's Rate   | \$0.854600               | \$0.420000               | \$1.274600 | \$19,571                  | \$2,151                   |
| Rate to Maintain Same Level of Maintenance & Operations Revenue & Pay Debt Service | \$0.688000               | \$0.257650               | \$0.945650 | \$13,864                  | \$4,645                   |
| Proposed Rate  | \$0.738000               | \$0.420000               | \$1.158000 | \$18,093                  | \$5,048                   |

\*The Interest & Sinking Fund tax revenue is used to pay for bonded indebtedness on construction, equipment, or both. The bonds, and the tax rate necessary to pay those bonds, were approved by the voters of this district.

### Comparison of Proposed Levy with Last Year's Levy on Average Residence

|   | Last Year  | This Year  |
|---|------------|------------|
| Average Market Value of Residences                    | \$73,513   | \$73,175   |
| Average Taxable Value of Residences                   | \$36,392   | \$17,460   |
| Last Year's Rate Versus Proposed Rate per \$100 Value | \$1.274600 | \$1.158000 |
| Taxes Due on Average Residence                        | \$463.85   | \$202.19   |
| Increase (Decrease) in Taxes                          |            | \$-261.66  |

Under state law, the dollar amount of school taxes imposed on the residence homestead of a person 65 years of age or older or of the surviving spouse of such a person, if the surviving spouse was 55 years of age or older when the person died, may not be increased above the amount paid in the first year after the person turned 65, regardless of changes in tax rate or property value.

Notice of Voter-Approval Rate: The highest tax rate the district can adopt before requiring voter approval at an election is \$1.1580. This election will be automatically held if the district adopts a rate in excess of the voter-approval rate of \$1.1580.

### Fund Balances

The following estimated balances will remain at the end of the current fiscal year and are not encumbered with or by a corresponding debt obligation, less estimated funds necessary for operating the district before receipt of the first state aid payment.

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Maintenance and Operations Fund Balance(s) | \$809,590 |
| Interest & Sinking Fund Balance(s)         | \$554,597 |

A school district may not increase the district's maintenance and operations tax rate to create a surplus in maintenance and operations tax revenue for the purpose of paying the district's debt service.

Visit [Texas.gov/PropertyTaxes](http://Texas.gov/PropertyTaxes) to find a link to your local property tax database on which you can easily access information regarding your property taxes, including information about proposed tax rates and scheduled public hearings of each entity that taxes your property.

The 86th Texas Legislature modified the manner in which the voter-approval tax rate is calculated to limit the rate of growth of property taxes in the state.