

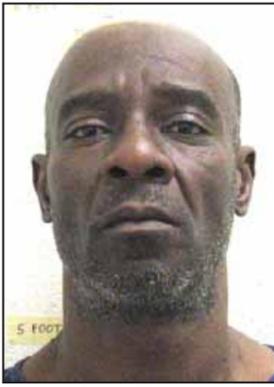
Suspect linked to multiple burglaries

A burglary suspect was arrested following a foot chase Dec. 21 through the United Supermarket parking lot.

Richard Stephens, 51, was charged with an outstanding second-degree-felony warrant for burglary of a habitation and faces a new charge of evading arrest.

Stephens is accused of breaking into a series of homes on North First Street over a recent period of a few weeks and stealing some copper tubing.

Brownfield police found evidence that linked him to those offenses about a week before he was arrested while they were serving a search warrant on East Buckley Street. They arrested several suspects at the scene on misdemeanor marijuana and drug-paraphernalia charges, and collected evidence related to other cases, including Ste-



Richard Stephens

phens'. Officers formed a warrant for his arrest, then later located him outside United. They advised him of the charge and attempted to begin arresting procedures, but the suspect instead fled. They chased him through the parking lot for a few minutes until he ran into a handicapped-parking sign.

Stephens was then apprehended and received the additional evading-arrest charge. He was taken to the Terry County Jail, where he remains as of press time in lieu of a \$25,000 bond.



Kitha Tankersley was named 2012's Employee of the Year for the Brownfield Police Department. Tankersley, an administrative assistant, was selected following a vote by her fellow staff and honored at BPD's recent Christmas party.



Cpl. Adam Stevens was named 2012's Officer of the Year for the Brownfield Police Department. Stevens, a patrol officer, received the award following a vote by his fellow officers and was honored during the department's annual Christmas party.

Businesses announce New Year's schedules

Most local businesses and government agencies will be closed Tuesday in observance of New Year's Day, and some will be closed Monday for New Year's Eve.

Terry County agencies such as the health department, sheriff's department and offices previously housed in the courthouse will be closed Tuesday but open Monday.

Brownfield City Hall, 201 W. Broadway St., will also be open Monday and closed Tuesday.

Brownfield Independent School District will remain on holiday break until teachers will return to work Monday, Jan. 7 for a staff-development work day. Students will return to classes Jan. 8.

The Brownfield branch of the U.S. Post Office will continue its normal mail-delivery schedule every day except Tuesday. Retail windows will close at noon Monday.

United Supermarket, 1401 Tahoka Rd., and Wal-Mart, 1405 Tahoka Rd., will both be open regular hours Monday and Tuesday.

All emergency services such as police and fire will continue their 24-hour operations.

Pair charged with organized crime, forgery



Rogelio Guerra

Three local men are accused of stealing some checks and forging them at local businesses.

Dusty Tijerina, 25, Rogelio Guerra, 31, and a third suspect who has not yet been arrested are charged with forgery of a financial instrument, a state jail felony, and engaging in organized criminal activity, a third-degree felony.

According to reports last summer from the Brownfield Police Department, a victim noticed his checkbook was missing from his

pickup truck and reported it stolen.

Through investigation involving interviews and reviews of store surveillance footage, detectives learned the three suspects were in possession of the stolen checkbook and had used it to write more than \$3,200 worth of forged checks to local businesses. After debunking a false claim that Tijerina had written the checks with permission from their owner, police formed warrants for his and the other two suspects' arrests.

Tijerina was served with his at 1:43 p.m. Dec. 20 in the 700 block of Cactus Lane after Brownfield police were called to that

address to investigate a disturbance. He was also charged with a misdemeanor capias pro fine warrant for possession of drug paraphernalia regarding a separate case.

Guerra was arrested at 11:23 p.m. Sept. 12 in the 800 block of North Third Street on the forgery and organized-crime charges, as well as parole violation and bond-forfeiture warrants for original charges of reckless driving and evading arrest in a vehicle.

Police and sheriff's deputies attempted to arrest Tijerina's and Guerra's codefendant - a 22-year-old man - Dec. 6 in the 500 block of North Fifth Street, but he fled on foot. They made a report for evading

arrest, and he could face that additional charge.

As of press time, Tijerina was still being held in the Terry County in lieu of a \$15,000 total bond. Guerra was in the same facility - ineligible for bond due to his parole-revocation status - while the third suspect remained on the lam.

If convicted, all three suspects could face up to 10 years in prison.

According to the *Brownfield News* archives, Guerra has past felony convictions of prohibited substance in a correctional facility and possession of methamphetamine.

TOP TEN STORIES of 2012



Terry County residents, along with the rest of the nation, took to the polls November 6 for the culmination of a months-long political battle that saw the re-election of Barack Obama to the Whitehouse on the national ballot and the election of political newcomers locally.

The bigger news in Brownfield was the several-hour delay before results were released after polls closed.

Problems with Terry County's lone vote counting machine led to a late night for poll watchers on Election Day 2012, but a trio of locally contested races were decided early the next morning.

Polling totals provided by County Clerk Kim Carter showed 3,755 Terry County residents cast a ballot in this year's election, highlighted by the race for the White House, which saw President Barack Obama (D) re-elected over challenger Mitt Romney (R) who conceded in a brief speech in the middle of the night.

Terry County's voter turnout amounted to more than 50 percent of registered voters.

Locally, Sheriff Larry Gilbreath was given another term by large margins over challenger Albert Flores.

In the race for County Attorney, political newcomer Jo'Shae Ferguson-Worley bested incumbent Ramon Gallegos by an almost 2-1 margin.

In the contest for Precinct 3 County Commissioner, another newcomer, Cecil Castilleja narrowly defeated former commissioner Don Robertson.

In all three local races, the election day tally confirmed the leader in early voting figures.

A partial hand recount following the election found an error and resulted in a full hand recount of the Precinct 3 Commissioner race.

The final tally changed by only one vote, however following the hand count.

Commissioners canvassed the vote and began discussion of a new counting machine or an electronic voting system for future elections.

The gardening bug bit dozens of local residents in 2012, as they got busy planting a variety of crops in the newly-established Brownfield Community Garden.

The garden's 60 plots were all rented by summer and the once-fallow lot on Brownfield's northwest side came to life with a wide variety of fruits and vegetables thanks to the time and effort of many.

Work began at the site -- a former irrigation pipe yard at the corner of First and Hamilton Streets -- in January when a group of local volunteers removed damaged gates and cleaned the lot.

In February, scores of Brownfield High School athletes braved single-digit temperatures to retrieve and transport more than 400 railroad ties used as dividers for paths and plots within the garden's layout.

Numerous local entities committed to helping the garden.

The City of Brownfield continues to provide water and electricity at no cost.

Water timers installed at every plot will ensure the precious resource isn't misused. The timers were donated by the South

8 The Brownfield Cal Ripken All Stars defeated Littlefield in a nail biter game to be crowned State Champs.

The Cubs defeated the Littlefield squad, 4-2, to advance to the National Regionals tournament, held in Lamesa.

Brownfield's Cal Ripken Major League All-Stars gave some tough play in the regional tournament, narrowly missing a chance to take their Cub pride halfway across the country.

After clenching district and state championships earlier in the season, the young baseball stars earned several victories in the regional tournament in Lamesa before they fell just two games away from a trip to the World Series in Winchester, Mass.

A 2-10 loss to El Dorado, Ark., cost them a chance at the championship game.

Pitcher Jaelyn Nolan was named Most Valuable Player for the tournament.

The All-Stars opened the regional tournament with a 5-4 victory over Crossett - Arkansas' state champions - before they suffered their only other loss in the tournament, 3-5, to the hosting team from Lamesa.

They also garnered a 6-3 victory over El Dorado, Ark., then beat Bentonville, Ark., 13-0 in the tournament.

Those wins gave the team a first-round bye in the single-elimination bracket.

In the next round - their first in that level of the tourney - they faced a rematch against Lamesa, but this time earned a 7-0 win with Nolan's pitching talents.



9 After months of legal wrangling and political bloviating, the dust finally settled (sort of) in March surrounding the whirlwind of events associated with the State of Texas' 2011 Congressional, State Representative, and State Senate redistricting process.

A panel of three federal judges in San Antonio approved interim electoral maps in effort to resolve differences over the decennial process, which is required by federal law for governmental entities.

As expected locally, the newly drawn District 83 which includes Terry County was not changed.

The legal wrangling primarily was in small, but densely populated districts in the state's metropolitan areas.

The announcement by the judges came after months of wrangling over the state's electoral maps, which were created in 2011 by the Republican-controlled state legislature and challenged by activists as racial gerrymanders intended to prevent the election of Latinos.

The redistricting fight delayed the state's election schedule and knocked Texas out of the so-called Super Tuesday contests on March 6, when more Americans vote in primaries or caucuses than on any other date.

The judges had been pushing state officials and opponents of the maps to reach a compromise that would let elections proceed without further delay.

Texas gained four new congressional seats to accommodate 4.3 million new residents since 2000, according to the 2010 U.S. Census. About 65 percent of the new Texans are Latinos, who more often vote for Democrats than Republicans.

10 State Senator Robert Duncan was hired early in the year as co-council, representing the West Texas Municipal Power Agency in a multi-million dollar lawsuit brought by Republic Power Partners.

Terry County Judge Butch Wagner, one of Brownfield's two representatives on WTMPA's eight-person board, told the *Brownfield News* he is confident Duncan will serve the group well.

In March, Republic Power filed an \$8.9 million lawsuit against the power agency and the city of Lubbock, claiming breach of contract for a proposed energy plan that fell apart in 2011.

In November of last year, Republic sent a letter to Lubbock and WTMPA administrators, demanding payment of the money, which they claim covered the cost of consultants, engineers and attorneys over the three-year process.

A hearing has yet to be set on the lawsuit. The WTMPA board also discussed raising each of the four member cities' dues to cover the cost of the pending legal battle.

Each of the cities -- Brownfield, Lubbock, Tulia and Floydada -- pay monthly dues based on kilowatt usage.

Lubbock pays a proportionally larger share of the dues based on population.

In related news, WTMPA announced a deal in December to purchase wind power following the end of its current electricity deal with Xcel Energy, set to expire in 2019.

County receives clean audit

Terry County's finances appear to be well-managed, according to a recent audit.

Accountant Joe Hays told commissioners Dec. 21 that the general fund had a net profit of approximately \$113,000 for the last fiscal year.

"The county fiscally is in very good shape," he said.

The commissioners also discussed a letter they received from the airport board requesting funding for an Automated Weather Observing System and agreed to look into grants.

"It's not required, but it's been requested by every pilot that lands," said Precinct 1 Commissioner Mike Swain.

Among other agenda items, the commissioners awarded County Auditor Jan Hudson the authority to balance the budget using fund balances and reserve money. They approved surety bonds for Precincts 1 and 3, the county sheriff, tax assessor/collector, justice of the peace, county constable, county attorney and county election administrator and monthly reports from the county judge and justice of the peace.

County Judge Butch Wagner presided and all four commissioners were present.

The commissioners will meet again at 10 a.m. Monday, Jan. 14 at City Hall.