

Capital murder case ends in mistrial



Darius Gates

Hallsville man charged in shooting deaths of father, son

BY ROBIN Y. RICHARDSON robin.richardson@marshallnesmessenger.com

MARSHALL -- The capital murder trial of a man charged in the June 2023 deaths of a father and son in Hallsville ended this past week in a mistrial. Harrison County District Attorney Reid McCain said the trial of Darius Gates Jr., 28, ended Thursday “be-

cause of inadvertent discussion of the facts and evidence of the case prior to the closing of evidence by the jury.” Gates is charged in the capital murder of Duane and Keyan Jernigan. First Assistant District Attorney Madison Hood said the prosecution will seek a retrial in early 2026. As Judge Brad Morin of the 71st Judicial District Court declared a mistri-

al Thursday, family, friends and loved ones of the defendant and the victims waited outside of the courtroom. Eventually, they were allowed inside the then-emptied courtroom where Hood broke the news. As family members sobbed, Rosie Harris, the maternal grandmother of Keyan Jernigan, offered to pray. Directing all to bow their heads and hold hands, she thanked God for bringing them this far.

“This is the day that the Lord has made, and we will rejoice and be glad in it,” said Harris, reminding that God says in the Bible that vengeance belongs to Him. “Not our will, but your will be done,” she said. “All is well. “Don’t be disheartened,” she encouraged her family. “It had to happen this way.”

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CELEBRATION OF CULTURE

Two-day Paisanos of East Texas event brings crowds to downtown Longview



Andres Hernandez hands a cup of food to Mariah Jacobs on Saturday during the East Texas Culture Fest in downtown Longview. (Jordan Green/Longview News-Journal Photo)

NEWS-JOURNAL STAFF

The annual East Texas Culture Fest brought music, food, shopping and children’s activities Saturday and Sunday to the Heritage Plaza area in downtown Longview. The free event is hosted by Paisanos of East Texas, a nonprofit organization that focuses “on celebrating and preserving our community’s cultural heritage.” Attendees found food trucks, drink vendors, a beer garden and various booths. For more information, find Paisanos Of East Texas on Facebook.



Gabriella Contreras, 10, pets a pony Saturday during the East Texas Culture Fest in downtown Longview. (Jordan Green/Longview News-Journal Photo)



Ameri Shaye sings Saturday during the East Texas Culture Fest in downtown Longview. (Jordan Green/Longview News-Journal Photo)

Texas GOP censures 5 lawmakers but rejects primary ballot bans

BY RENZO DOWNEY The Texas Tribune

The Texas GOP has voted to censure five of its own in the Texas House yet stopped short of banning them from the 2026 primary ballot, rejecting an untested provision that some House members say would have violated their constitutional right to appear on the ballot.

The State Republican Executive Committee, the party’s governing board, met in the state Capitol on Saturday to consider whether to reprimand 10 Republican House members for being insufficiently conservative. In the end, the board rejected half of the censures and dismissed attempts to bar them from the March primary, a deescalation of intraparty tension that reached

a fever pitch at the start of this year. The SREC concurred with local censure resolutions against Reps. Stan Lambert of Abilene, Angelia Orr of Itasca, Jared Patterson of Frisco, Gary VanDeaver of New Boston and Dade Phelan of Beaumont, a former speaker. Texas House Speaker Dustin Burrows escaped censure, as did Reps. Angie Chen

Button of Garland, Cody Harris of Palestine, Jeff Leach of Allen, and Morgan Meyer of University Park. Lambert and Phelan have announced their retirements. Under the Texas GOP’s censure rule, lawmakers can be reprimanded for working against the state party’s legislative priorities or the broader principles outlined in the party platform and preamble. For members facing rebuke

on Saturday, transgressions included voting for Burrows as speaker and advancing this year’s House rules package, which banned Democrats from serving as committee chairs but left them with other means of influence. The Texas GOP overhauled its censure rule at its 2024 convention amid backlash to the

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Today's weather

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