

Tyler Morning Telegraph

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2025

TYLERPAPER.COM

inform. inspire. involve. #inetx

\$3.00

Texas Legislature ends second session

Lawmakers leave Capitol after slew of conservative wins

KAYLA GUO AND ALEJANDRO SERRANO
The Texas Tribune

The Texas Legislature gavelled out its second overtime session with a fresh inventory of GOP victories, including a new con-

gressional map gerrymandered to maximize Republican representation, a host of socially conservative priorities that had long failed to reach the governor's desk, and unprecedented retribution leveled against the minority party. The final adjournment, coming late Wednesday in the House and shortly after midnight in the Senate, closed out a tense six and a half weeks of overtime legis-

lating, punctuated by a two-week walkout by Democratic lawmakers over GOP redistricting that prompted Republicans to end the first special session early and launch right into a second. After the Legislature resumed business, GOP lawmakers quickly pushed through much of Gov. Greg Abbott's agenda, sparking fiery debates over abortion,

SESSION >> PAGE 3A



House Speaker Dustin Burrows, R-Lubbock, oversees roll call on the House floor in Austin on Sept. 3. (Kaylee Greenlee for The Texas Tribune)

Meyer joins TMT staff

New reporter will cover government, other stories in county

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Leeza Meyer joined the Tyler Morning Telegraph on Tuesday as a multimedia reporter. "I'm thankful for this opportunity to be here and write local stories that inform and connect the community in Tyler and surrounding areas," Meyer said. "I have felt welcomed by all the staff since the first day I walked in."



Meyer will take her pen and paper to cover city and county government, local politics, city development, breaking news and other diverse stories around the area of Tyler, including opportunities to work with the Tyler Morning Telegraph's sister publications, such as ETX View Magazine. After recently graduating this May from The University of Texas at Austin with her bachelor's degree in journalism and minors in science communication and Russian, Meyer looks forward to jumping into her professional career

MEYER >> PAGE 3A



The new Smith County Courthouse is seen in downtown Tyler amid ongoing construction Thursday morning. Over 200 workers are at the site each day, helping the project stay on track despite over 100 weather days. (Jennifer Scott/Tyler Morning Telegraph)

On Track

Courthouse progresses despite weather days; county OKs fifth floor work

LEEZA MEYER

Construction of the new Smith County Courthouse remains on track despite record-breaking rain. This week, a recently approved expansion plan will add a couple additional months to the timeline of Phase 2 which is still expected to be complete by the end of 2026.

While the original construction plan remained on track to finish next fall, commissioners on Tuesday approved a fifth floor partial finish-out plan, moving the second phase's anticipated completion date to December 2026. The addition comes at no extra cost to taxpayers.

Bradley Barr, senior superintendent at Hoar Construction, and Brandy Ziegler, partner and architect at Fitzpatrick Architects, spoke to the commissioners court to provide a



The Smith County Commissioners Court voted Tuesday to finish out one of the courts on the fifth floor, as well as the public spaces, restrooms and in-custody secure spaces. There will not be any extra cost to taxpayers. (Contributed/Fitzpatrick Architects)

project update during the county's weekly meeting. Barr said the team recently experienced 113 weather days due to the

above average 66 inches of rain, but the project remains on time thanks to crews working overtime and bringing in more staff,

resulting in the completed concrete structure a week in advance. An average of 220 workers are on the construction site daily,

Barr said.

"Every day we are going to keep working hard to push forward and not give up," Barr said. "Our attitude is we can't control the weather, but we can control how we respond to that, and so we try to keep a positive attitude."

County Judge Neal Franklin said he continues to be impressed with the project's scope, including the team's transparent updates for the court and community.

"One thing that I have really appreciated about Hoar Construction in our meetings is y'all call the challenges opportunities and it's always kept really positive in our meetings and moving forward," Franklin said, commenting on previous weather concerns. "We appreciate that."

COURTHOUSE
>> PAGE 3A

FIND UP-TO-DATE COVERAGE OF EAST TEXAS AT TYLERPAPER.COM

"For you make me glad by your deeds, O Lord; I sing for joy at the works of your hands."
(Psalm 92:4)

Weather
High 96 Low 70

Cloudy
See the Tyler-East Texas 3-day forecast on Page 6A.

Stocks
DOW +350.06
NASDAQ +209.97

© 2025, TYLER MORNING TELEGRAPH



EXPERIENCE OUR E-EDITION
View our digital newspaper replica online daily at digital.tylerpaper.com

BECOME A SUBSCRIBER
Find details on home delivery and digital access at subscribe.tylerpaper.com



FOLLOW OUR TV PARTNERS
CBS 49

Call us now to get a faster response

M Parga Tree Service

Local choice for tree service. Quality-minded, reasonably priced, professionally staffed

- Big Tree Removal
- Tree Trimming
- Stump Grinding

903.283.0054

- Mistletoe Removal
- Shaping Artistic Pruning
- Free Estimates

10% off when you mention the newspaper ad | mpargatreeservicetx.com