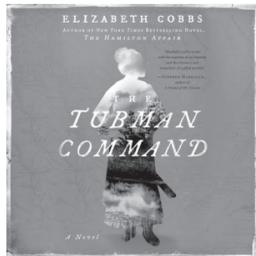


COLUMNIST | THE BOOKWORM

Harriet Tubman shows her bravery and smarts during the Civil War

“The Tubman Command” by Elizabeth Cobbs, 2019, Brilliance Audio, \$34.99, 10 discs, 12-plus hours; book, Arcade, 327 pages, \$25.99



You are the big kahuna. The boss, the one in charge, maker of decisions and teller of things to do. You're the



TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

big cheese with all the responsibility, and you aren't bad at it. So how would you do if, as in the novel, “The Tubman Command” by Elizabeth Cobbs, the lives of soldiers, women and children were in your hands?

On so many mornings, Harriet Tubman woke with the lingering feeling of her husband, John, lying next to her.

That hadn't happened in 15 years, though, not since she left him and joined the Underground Railroad. She wasn't entirely sure where he was, but she knew he'd barely recognize her. So much had changed since then.

All that was just useless thought for another day. There were more important tasks in front of Harriet. She was thinking of her meeting with Gen. David Hunter of the Union, and how he was going to help her free

a thousand slaves. Just gaining the respect of the soldiers was going to be a challenge.

Most folk thought the person they called Moses was a man. Nobody ever thought a small woman could be so brave as to snatch slaves from beneath their owner's noses, but there she was.

She was working on a plan that would boost the morale of the men, and show the Confederacy that the imposing position of Fort Sumter was no obstacle for the Union.

It was a mission that needed care. Every slave on the plantations around the Combahee River knew there were Confederate explosives buried in the Combahee's silt. At least one slave knew where they were.

Harriet had to find him and learn what he knew, but he was on the notorious Lownes plantation. She'd need to go there and get out without the overseer, Pipkin, spotting her.

She'd have to help Gen. Hunter find enough men to keep Charleston under control, too, so

she'd need to convince more black men to join the cause. Folks didn't think black soldiers could fight. They didn't think a “puny” woman could lead people to freedom, either, but they had seriously miscalculated.

It's easy to place our heroes on a pedestal. We do it all the time, but “The Tubman Command” tips perch a bit.

No, you won't think lesser of Harriet Tubman after you've heard this audiobook. Instead, you'll see that “fierce” is too small a word for Tubman's personality and her heroism — she repeatedly walked back into a plantation, after all — although author Elizabeth Cobbs reminds readers in so many ways that Tubman was still a woman, probably a mother, absolutely able to fall in love.

This is subtly done with slight liberties taken in her plot aspects, as Cobbs explains in her author's note.

That's not a distraction. It, and the performance by Heidi Franklin, enhances a tale that will thrill you and make you scream “Nooooo!”

“The Tubman Command” is perfect for Civil War buffs, novel lovers and anyone who wants a big story.

The Bookworm is Terri Schlichenmeyer. You can reach Terri at bookwormsez@yahoo.com.

COLUMNIST | BOOKS

Game Warden Joe Pickett returns in a fast-paced mystery

“Wolf Pack” by C. J. Box, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2019, 384 pages, \$27



MARK LARDAS

Montana game warden Joe Pickett is back on the job, with his seniority restored. He even has his treasured badge number back.

In “Wolf Pack” by C. J. Box, the 19th in the long-running Joe Pickett mystery series, Pickett won his job back, along with his home (Montana game wardens get a house) and his seniority. He was fired for political reasons in the previous Pickett novel.

The book opens with neighboring game warden, Katelyn Hamm, trying to track down a drone operator who has been stampeding mule deer, running them to their deaths. The drone disappeared heading to Pickett's territory where Pickett is seeking someone setting illegal traps.

The two cases converge, as Hamm discovers,

when she contacts Pickett for help. The drone and traps originate at a single compound, isolated and fenced in.

The residents of the compound are contemptuous of the wardens, warning Pickett and Hamm to leave them alone, even after those in the compound admit committing the crimes.

Pickett and Hamm discover the compound's residents have no history older than the last two years. Additionally, FBI begins running cover for those in the compound.

Two FBI agents from New York City attempt to put Pickett and Hamm in perjury traps to get the game wardens to back off. A further complication: Joe's youngest daughter has a boyfriend. He's the son of the drone operator.

The mix is made explosive by the arrival of a cartel hit team known as the Wolf Pack.

This book has all the classic elements of a box novel. One of Pickett's daughters is in danger. The bad guys aren't just the criminals; the bad guys also include arrogant agents of the federal government (in “Wolf Pack” they confuse and distract attention from the hit team).

Pickett's buddy, Nate Romanowski, is there to back Joe up (Romanoski is running a falconry business). Plus, the novel has much action and an exciting plot line.

Box fans will not be disappointed by Joe Pickett's latest adventure. If you seek a fast-paced mystery, you cannot do much better than “Wolf Pack.”

Mark Lardas, an engineer, freelance writer, amateur historian, and model-maker, lives in League City. His website is marklardas.com.

BRIEFS

Continued » C3

Contact Sabrina Stokley, tripleheartfarm@gmail.com or 832-890-3851, or Joni Lee Hall, jonileeh@yahoo.com or 409-443-1052.

» **CRYSTAL BEACH**
The Bolivar Chamber of Commerce will have

its board meeting at 5 p.m. Tuesday at the Joe Faggard Center, 1750 state Highway 87. Call 409-684-5940.

» **GALVESTON United Way of Galveston will have its Workplace Giving Campaign Kick-Off Luncheon** from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Thursday in the Frances Anne Moody

Ballroom of Moody Gardens Hotel, 7 Hope Blvd.

Tickets are \$40 per person or a table of eight is available for \$320. Pre-registration is required by Aug. 30.

To register, call 409-762-4357.

Email business calendar items to business@galnews.com or call 409-683-5239.

NOTICE OF 2019 TAX YEAR PROPOSED PROPERTY TAX RATE FOR CITY OF GALVESTON

A tax rate of \$0.579885 per \$100 valuation has been proposed for adoption by the governing body of City of Galveston. This rate exceeds the lower of the effective or rollback tax rate, and state law requires that two public hearings be held by the governing body before adopting the proposed tax rate.

The governing body of City of Galveston proposes to use revenue attributable to the tax rate increase for the purpose of providing increased pay and benefits for public safety personnel.

PROPOSED TAX RATE	\$0.579885 per \$100
PRECEDING YEAR'S TAX RATE	\$0.561000 per \$100
EFFECTIVE TAX RATE	\$0.538771 per \$100
ROLLBACK TAX RATE	\$0.582433 per \$100

The effective tax rate is the total tax rate needed to raise the same amount of property tax revenue for City of Galveston from the same properties in both the 2018 tax year and the 2019 tax year.

The rollback tax rate is the highest tax rate that City of Galveston may adopt before voters are entitled to petition for an election to limit the rate that may be approved to the rollback rate.

YOUR TAXES OWED UNDER ANY OF THE ABOVE RATES CAN BE CALCULATED AS FOLLOWS:

$$\text{property tax amount} = (\text{rate}) \times (\text{taxable value of your property}) / 100$$

For assistance or detailed information about tax calculations, please contact:

Cheryl E. Johnson, PCC
County Tax Assessor Collector
722 Moody, Galveston, Texas
(409) 765-3277
cheryl.e.johnson@co.galveston.tx.us
www.galcotax.com

You are urged to attend and express your views at the following public hearing on the proposed tax rate:

Second Hearing: September 12, 2019 at 9:00 AM at 2nd Floor Council Chamber, 823 Rosenberg Street, Galveston, TX 77550.

2019 Property Tax Rates in College of the Mainland

This notice concerns the 2019 property tax rates for College of the Mainland. It presents information about three tax rates. Last year's tax rate is the actual tax rate the taxing unit used to determine property taxes last year. This year's effective tax rate would impose the same total taxes as last year if you compare properties taxed in both years. This year's rollback tax rate is the highest tax rate the taxing unit can set before taxpayers start rollback procedures. In each case these rates are found by dividing the total amount of taxes by the tax base (the total value of taxable property) with adjustments as required by state law. The rates are given per \$100 of property value.

Last year's tax rate:	
Last year's operating taxes	\$21,669,845
Last year's debt taxes	\$0
Last year's total taxes	\$21,669,845
Last year's tax base	\$10,185,351,696
Last year's total tax rate	\$0.212755/\$100

This year's effective tax rate:	
Last year's adjusted taxes (after subtracting taxes on lost property)	\$20,935,505
÷ This year's adjusted tax base (after subtracting value of new property)	\$10,249,720,192
= This year's effective tax rate (maximum rate unless unit publishes notices and holds hearings)	\$0.204254/\$100

This year's rollback tax rate:	
Last year's adjusted operating taxes (after subtracting taxes on lost property and adjusting for any transferred function, tax increment financing, state criminal justice mandate, and/or enhanced indigent healthcare expenditures)	\$20,935,505
÷ This year's adjusted tax base	\$10,249,720,192
= This year's effective operating rate	\$0.204254/\$100
x 1.08 = this year's maximum operating rate	\$0.220594/\$100
+ This year's debt rate	\$0.011425/\$100
= This year's total rollback rate	\$0.232019/\$100

Statement of Increase/Decrease

If College of the Mainland adopts a 2019 tax rate equal to the effective tax rate of \$0.204254 per \$100 of value, taxes would decrease compared to 2018 taxes by \$-217,927.

Schedule A - Unencumbered Fund Balance

The following estimated balances will be left in the unit's property tax accounts at the end of the fiscal year. These balances are not encumbered by a corresponding debt obligation.

Type of Property Tax Fund	Balance
General Fund	7,983,895

Schedule B - 2019 Debt Service

The unit plans to pay the following amounts for long-term debts that are secured by property taxes. These amounts will be paid from property tax revenues (or additional sales tax revenues, if applicable).

Description of Debt	Principal or Contract Payment to be Paid from Property Taxes	Interest to be Paid from Property Taxes	Other Amounts to be Paid	Total Payment
	495,000	705,000	0	1,200,000
Total required for 2019 debt service				\$1,200,000
- Amount (if any) paid from Schedule A				\$0
- Amount (if any) paid from other resources				\$0
- Excess collections last year				\$0
= Total to be paid from taxes in 2019				\$1,200,000
+ Amount added in anticipation that the unit will collect only 100.00% of its taxes in 2019				\$0
= Total debt levy				\$1,200,000

This notice contains a summary of actual effective and rollback tax rates' calculations. You can inspect a copy of the full calculations at 722 Moody, Galveston, Texas 77550.

Name of person preparing this notice: Cheryl E. Johnson, PCC
Title: Galveston County Tax Assessor Collector
Date Prepared: 08/29/2019