

## INSIDE: Weight Loss Informational Seminar

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THURSDAY, JANUARY 3, 2019

P.O. DRAWER 405, HIGHLANDS, TEXAS 77562

#### These stories

#### in the PRESS:

- From Vegas to Liberty
- Comprehensive Cancer Care
- Letter from Beach City Mayor
- .....And more, Page 5

### IN THE STARS

#### EVENTS

##### MON., JAN. 7 COALITION MEETING

The San Jacinto River Coalition will meet for the first time in 2019 on MONDAY January 7 at the Highlands Community Center at 6:30 PM. They typically meet on Tuesdays but in January they will meet on a MONDAY. They've had some interesting developments since they met last and look forward to discussing them with the community.

##### JANUARY 2019 PCT. 2 TRIPS

•Houston TranStar, January 8 at 8:30 a.m. Cost is \$3, lunch not included, departing May Center, contact center staff at 713-274-2434.

•Hindu Temple, Stafford, January 10 at 9 a.m. Cost is \$3, lunch not included, departing May Center, contact center staff at 713-274-2434.

##### SAT., FEB. 2 BRAS FOR THE CAUSE

A fundraiser for breast cancer patients, to be held at the Southern Lakes Estate in Crosby.

#### BIRTHDAYS

Jan 1—Linda Strickland  
Jan 2—Eleanor Prescott  
Chris Taylor  
Jan 5—Bernice Leissner  
Marvin Baker  
Marie Bobalik  
Brandon Taylor  
Jan 6—Janci New

#### ANNIVERSARIES

Jan 2—Bruce & Theresa Abbott  
Jan 5—Dale & Natalie Smith  
Jan 9—Vernon & Allie Skrabanak

#### DEATHS

Cecil Howard McBroom

## Crosby ISD Superintendent to host Community Convocation

Crosby, TEXAS, December 27, 2018 – Crosby ISD's Superintendent, Dr. Scott Davis, will host a Community Convocation Monday, January 7th at the Crosby High School Auditorium at 6:00 pm. The Community Convocation is open to all members of the Crosby/Barrett Station community and will be Davis's first opportunity to address the community at-large in an assembly format since assuming the District's superintendent position this past June. District leadership including members of the Board of Trustees

and Principals will be in attendance to welcome guests and impart a sense of solidarity as Davis articulates the direction in which he and district leaders intend to move the District forward, actively seek community input, and focus on the success of Crosby ISD students. The Convocation is expected to last no longer than an hour.

Crosby ISD staff will participate in a district convocation that morning with Dr. Davis and the message delivered will be similar to the message that

will be heard by community stakeholders that evening.

"The fall semester was difficult and no one could have imagined the trials we would face as a district and community," said Crosby ISD Superintendent Dr. Scott Davis. "However, as we begin a new year, it is important that we gather to memorialize what we've been through and reaffirm our commitment to see Crosby ISD flourish again with the support of our community. The new year marks a new beginning for all of us."

## Retiring Congressman Gene Green honored at Holiday Reception

By Gilbert Hoffman

A reception was held last Friday evening to honor retiring Congressman Gene Green, and thank him for the 26 years of service to the community he represented. Green was elected to represent Texas District 29 in 1992, and was re-elected 12 times.

Green is known for his service projects in the community, including Job Fairs, Immunization Days, Citizenship Days, Paying for College Workshops, Senior Citizens Forums, and Veterans' forums.

Prior to his terms in Congress, Green served in the Texas House and Senate. He will be succeeded by Sylvia Garcia, who won the election in November. Garcia was the keynote speaker at the reception, reprising Green's career and service to the community, and promising to con-



Host Constable Chris Diaz presents an appreciation plaque to Gene Green and wife Helen Green.

tinue his service projects.

The reception was held at the Holiday Inn on the East Freeway, hosted by Constable Chris Diaz and wife Jacinto City Mayor Ana Dia, and Amir and Sabrina Khan.

The event was attended

by about 150 friends and well-wishers, a cross section of the several communities he served, and the organizations in each of these areas, including pastors, Rotarians, civic club leaders, educators, and businessmen.



THE RECEPTION HEAD TABLE included (l to r) Hosts Chris and Ana Diaz, Helen and Gene Green, State Representative Mary Ann Perez, Host Amir Khan, and Pct. 3 Constable Sherman Eagleton, and Congresswoman-elect Sylvia Garcia, not pictured, who was speaking.

## YEAR IN REVIEW 2018

Compiled from the files of the STAR COURIER

#### JANUARY

Judge Don Coffey files for re-election. New Highlands Fire Station opens. Gene Green's vacant Congressional seat attracts 7 Democrats and 4 Republicans for the March 6 Primary Election. Josh McKinney is found dead on Mizell Street in Highlands, date Yvonne Ramirez charged. Nate Scott is the Highlands VFD Firefighter of the Year. New Highlands/Lynchburg Chamber board announced, Jim Wadzinski is president. Crosby Fire Department names Warren Thompson as Firefighter of the Year. Crosby ISD Superintendent Keith Moore resigns. Court papers reveal that the PRPs have been funding Superfund opposition citizens' groups.

#### FEBRUARY

Rotary Chili Feast is held Feb. 3rd. Steve & Linda Miller win the car in the Raffle. Bras for the Cause raises a record \$200,000 plus for Cancer. Pct. 2 Commissioner Morman speaks at the North Channel Chamber. Crosby ISD hires interim superintendent, Kirk Lewis. Don Coffey wins the Terry Davis Award from the Highlands/Lynchburg Chamber. Crosby/Huffman Chamber holds its annual awards ceremony. TxDOT holds public meetings on I-10E improvements.

#### MARCH

Houston Rodeo Trail Rides start. Worker killed in local tire shredder plant Genan. County Attorney Vince Ryan sues Opioid manufacturers. Crosby Sports Association opens their Little League season. Primary Election Results: Lucia Bates defeats Don Coffey; Sylvia Garcia wins Democratic race for Congress. Pct. 2 Opens Juan Seguin Park at the South Lynchburg Ferry landing. Goose Creek ISD proposes 2 bond referendums totalling \$437 Million. 3 Country singers appear at the Crosby RocknC Round-up. Big Car Show is held at RocknC Round-up. Grand Parkway Section H, US59 to Hwy. 146, starts construction. Governor authorizes \$3 Million for flood mitigation study. Highlands Little League Queens are Lily Phillips, Kendra Earls, and Kamryn Schuelsky.

#### APRIL

One year anniversary of the death of Deputy Clinton Greenwood is observed. Open House held for new Highlands Fire Station #27. EPA and PRP reach an agreement to clean-up the Superfund Site in the San Jacinto River. Astrodome holds Public Viewing Party. Crosby man Sean Haddon is charged with terrorist threats to UT Austin and the Austin police. Dan Crenshaw is running for Ted Poe's Congressional seat. New Rotary Club members Andy Scott and Rachel Rivera Hernandez. Rotary Club buys appliances for Harvey victim family. Battle of San Jacinto annual Reenactment is held April 21. County Clerk Stan Stanart speaks at Rotary. Linda Martin, owner of Touch of Class salon, dies at 75.

#### MAY

New H-E-B opens in Mont Belvieu. Crosby Rodeo announces top name entertainers for the June Rodeo. Rotary awards \$30,500 in scholarships to 17 students. Baytown Youth Fair is held. Crosby top 10 students named. Sheriff holds Public Safety Forum in Crosby. Patti Bell tells Rotary about Economic Alliance Career Program. Gun threats are investigated at Huffman and Crosby schools. Crosby/Huffman Chamber hears Commissioner Morman's progress report. Crosby ISD names new Superintendent candidate Scott Davis. Former Crosby student is killed in the Santa Fe school shooting. Memorial Day Services held at Sterling-White. Crosby/Huffman Chamber hears new HCSO Patrol Captain John Morrison.

See Year in Review, PAGE 8

#### AUTO & HOME INSURANCE

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★ COMMUNITY NEWS ★

**BARRET STATION**

# Man found fatally shot inside car



A suspect is in custody after a man was found shot to death in a pickup truck in east Harris County last Saturday, Sheriff Ed Gonzalez said. When deputies arrived around 6 a.m. at Magnolia and Holly, south of Crosby, a man was dead in the passenger seat of the truck, which was parked in the driveway of a home, authorities said. The bullet had come through the passenger-side window, authorities said. A possible suspect has been detained. Investigation continues.

## Governor Abbott Sets Special Election For Texas House District 145

AUSTIN - Governor Greg Abbott today issued a proclamation announcing Tuesday, January 29, 2019, as the special election date to fill the Texas House of Representatives District 145 seat recently vacated by former Representative Carol Alvarado. Candidates who wish

to have their names placed on the special election ballot must file their applications with the Secretary of State no later than 5:00PM on Thursday, January 3, 2019. Early voting will begin on Monday, January 14, 2019.

# Covestro kicks off myON Reader Program at a school

By Susan Passmore

The joy of reading was taken to new heights for James Bowie Elementary School students as Covestro launched Renaissance myON Reader, an online individualized literacy program. Covestro, Bowie's Partner In Education through the Baytown Chamber of Commerce, donated \$10,000 through a grant for the two-year program, which provides students with a personalized library where a book is never checked out and where they can always find something of interest to read.

Donna Mohlman, community engagement specialist for Lee College, introduced the program to Bowie students during two assemblies. To add to the excitement of the kickoff, Councilman Charles Johnson, former after school program director at Bowie, challenged students to read at least 10 books to be entered in a drawing for four tickets to Pirate's Bay, donated by the City of Baytown. Johnson will present the top six readers, one from each grade level, with a \$25 gift card.

Jennifer Walsh, head of communications for Covestro, showed her enthusiasm for Renaissance myON Reader, encouraging students to read books during the holidays.

"My daughter participated in the myON Summer Reading Pilot Project in 2016, and I was pleased to see her reading level increase over the summer rather than stay stagnant or decrease as usually is the case. I want that for all students," Walsh said.

Accessible through a computer, tablet or smart phone, Renaissance myON provides students the opportunity to read books and news articles that are digitally enhanced by use of voice actors and illustrations, piquing their inter-

est. The program generates a recommended reading list for each student based on an interest inventory and the child's independent reading level.

"Seventy percent of the material offered is nonfiction and informational text similar to what is on the state STAAR," said Dr. Carl Franklin, vice president of MUSE3, LLC, a representative for Renaissance myON Reader. "Thirty percent is fiction, but 10 percent of all the material is Spanish or bilingual. We want to take students from where they are to higher reading levels."

A built-in component measures the Lexile levels of the students. Book quizzes are given to check student progress, and the recommended reading list is adjusted to the new reading level. Parents and teachers also can access the program through a computer, tablet or smart phone.

A former librarian at Highlands Elementary, Mohlman received a grant through the Goose Creek CISD Education Foundation for the myON program, and she was excited about the progress her students showed. In 2016, as a volunteer with Academic Beginnings for Children, a broad-based coalition of education, civic, business and nonprofit organizations working together for student success, she suggested piloting the program in area school districts. That summer, 17 schools in Goose Creek CISD along with the Barbers Hill ISD Kindergarten Center implemented the myON Summer Reading Pilot Project.

"Of the participating students in Goose Creek CISD, 80 percent read at least five books, with a total of 40,000 books read during the summer. Lamar Elementary was number one with more than 6,000 books read. At the



Photo by Carrie Pryor-Newman

Covestro, Partners In Education with Bowie Elementary through the Baytown Chamber of Commerce, launches the Renaissance myON Reader program at the school through a \$10,000 grant to provide students with a personalized online library. Pictured are (from left) Karen Thomas, Goose Creek CISD area executive director; Charles Johnson, Baytown city councilman; Jennifer Walsh, head of communications at Covestro; Dr. Carl Franklin, vice president of MUSE3, LLC; Donna Mohlman, community engagement specialist for Lee College; Victoria Marron, executive director of retention and transition services for Lee College and Dr. Regina Sims, Bowie principal.

BHISD Kindergarten Center, students read more than 5,000 online books. At the end of the trial program, schools that administered the post-test showed average gains of 87 Lexile points for the eight-week period," Mohlman said. After witnessing the success of the program, Walsh and Mohlman put their heads together on a grant for the myON Reader program for Bowie Elementary, which they were excited to receive.

"At Covestro, we're interested in building a stronger education for these students, because someday they may come and join our workforce. What they learn today from the books they read may help them find a career, a location where they will work, or even

spark their imagination to innovation and make the impossible possible," said Walsh.

To send the students off to begin their journey through the online reading program, Franklin dressed as a gingerbread man much to the delight of the students. When they returned to their classrooms, they were treated to gingerbread cookies provided by David Himsel, city councilman from Bowie's district and store manager of Kroger Marketplace. The program was delivered right on time for the holidays to allow students to travel all over the world, experiencing many adventures through online reading, as well as to give parents a solution when kids say, "I'm bored!"



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THURSDAY, JANUARY 3, 2019

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## ROUND-UP

### Programs at Sam & Carmena Goss Library

These are the events taking place at the Sam and Carmena Goss Memorial Branch Library:

•Friday, January 4 - 10:30 am, Storytime (ages 0-5 yrs)

Visit their Facebook page, Chambers County Library System, for more information and to register. Registration not required.

Call Sam and Carmena Goss Memorial Library, Mont Belvieu at 281-576-2245 with any questions.

### Full Moon Hike

Join Baytown Nature Center, 6213 Bayway Drive, Baytown, on Saturday, January 19, 2019 at 5:30 p.m. This monthly 90 minutes hike begins just after sunset. Hikers are asked to wear comfortable clothing. Small children should not attend since hikers have a better view of nocturnal animals in a relatively quiet atmosphere. Routes and start times vary monthly. Meet at the Visitor's Center unless otherwise stated. Hikers are weather permitting and free with general admission.

### Wetlands Winter Camp

Dance along to the beat as we take a journey to the Antarctic! Discover how animals adapt to living in the cold and how we impact their habitat from right here in Texas. Conclude camp enjoying snow just like penguins! January 4-9, 1st - 3rd grade, 8 am - 4 pm, \$90. Bring snack lunch & reusable water bottle each day. Call 281-420-7128 for more information.

### Winter Gator Tales

The Eddie V. Gray Wetlands Education and Recreation Center in Baytown is hosting a series of Pre-school programs for ages 3-5 every Wednesday from 10 am to 11 am as follows:

- January 9, Fur and Hair
- January 16, Feathers, Beaks and Eggs.
- January 23, Scales and Shells
- January 30, Frogs and Toads
- February 6, Animal Tails
- February 13, Bee My Valentine
- February 20, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.

The center is located at 1724 Market Street.

## Letter from Beach City's Mayor: DREDGE MATERIAL ISSUE

*Hello Neighbors!*

I have had a busy day today. This morning I attended the meeting of the Chambers County Commissioners Court as this was on their agenda. There were no actions to take today but a number of people were able to speak and express their concerns and ideas. One of the key speakers was Ms. Jackie Young. She is the Executive Director of THEA and is the person that is spearheading the removal of the San Jacinto River toxic waste pits. I visited with her at length after the meeting. She is excited to help us with our cause. My take from the meeting today is that Judge Sylvia and the Commissioners will be researching the County's options but can't do anything until the request for permit is posted in early January.

Now I will outline our (Beach City and neighbors) Initial strategy:

1) I will be asking City Council to establish parameters for an ordinance that would protect the citizens and property owners of Beach City from this and future attempts to deposit dirt, sand or dredge material that poses a potential risk to flood drainage, property values or health.

Council will meet on January 8th in a special called meeting at which time this will be presented. I will appoint a committee to prepare an ordinance to present to Council at the Regular Council Meeting on January 22 for a vote.

2) We will form a citizens coalition as soon as possible. Anyone who would like to share their expertise, experience, Talents or network that would be helpful to our cause please email me so we can get organized. I was contacted today by Guy Matthews to offer his services and experience. He is an esteemed attorney that was a key player in the fight against the toxic waste dump that wanted to locate in Cedar Crossing about 20 years ago. Many of you probably know him. Also, Ms. Young has offered to help in this area.

3) I have scheduled a town hall meeting on January 21st at 6:30 pm in the Beach City Community Building. Ms. Jackie Young will be there and I will be working to getting others. I hope the Citizens Coalition will have time to develop a presentation.

4) I ask that everyone start writing letters of concern to Congressman Babin and State Rep. Mays

Middleton. It is more effective to send a letter via US postal Service than it is to send an email. Also, Ms. Young recommends that you email a copy to me so that we can have a record of letters sent. For those that get writers block (like me), she is going to furnish a form letter that she feels would be most effective and I will share that when I get it. Personally, I think a letter from the heart would have the most impact

Finally, I would like you to know that there are a lot of people that are working on this and more to come. I urge you to resist speculation and stick to what we know. At this time we don't know what this dredge material will contain, only that there is a good possibility that it contains some level of toxic materials. FYI: There have been previous attempts to get permitted to dredge this same area that were denied. As I understand it, the last one was in 2010 and denied by the EPA. This was info from Jackie Young this morning and I hope I got the date right.

I will pass on information as it becomes available.

Jackey Lasater,  
Beach City, Mayor

## From Las Vegas to Liberty

Fans from all over the area will travel to see this World Famous Elvis ETA!

Who could beat the King of Rock and Roll with his song, "Suspicious Minds"? Not many. But there is one man who comes close — Travis Powell.

This 35-year-old North Carolina native has traveled the nation as an Elvis impersonator for years. With his whiskey-smooth vocals and "Well, thank ya, thank ya very much" lines, most people can't tell the difference.

Southeast Texas is in luck, because this smooth impersonator will perform songs from Elvis' 1968 comeback special and 1970s concert years at 7 p.m. on January 11th at the Liberty Opry Theater. In the two-part act, Powell dons a svelte, playful black leather-clad outfit like Elvis wore in the '68 comeback. Powell will also be seen wearing the iconic Las Vegas-era white jumpsuit and singing songs like "American Trilogy" and "If I Can Dream."

Houston promoter Steve Fountain has been producing Elvis tribute shows for 10 years and said Powell is one of the best. "He (Powell) takes you back in time," Fountain said. "It's as if you are watching the real Elvis in Vegas. He is amazing."

Powell has won many Elvis tribute contests, including the Potawatomi Hotel & Casino's "A Tribute to the King" competition in January, which put \$25,000 in prize money in that jeweled jumpsuit pocket of his.

Powell's love of Elvis started when he was four. "I have a VHS tape of myself in my grandparent's living room in a jumpsuit singing Elvis songs," Powell said. "I just wanted to be Elvis. He was cool to me and had an amazing voice."

Though the avid Elvis fan never got to meet his hero, Powell believes Elvis was a "great guy."



Travis Powell as famous Elvis.



"One of things that don't get mentioned much about Elvis is how he helped others," Powell said. "You can go to Greystone and see a lot of the different checks he wrote to people and different organizations. We all have our flaws, but deep down I think he was just a great guy who cared about people."

Besides having a big heart, Powell said Elvis had "it."

"He had charisma, what you'd call 'it', in the entertainment business," Powell said. "He could walk on stage and just smile and people loved him. I wanted to be Elvis." If someone had told Powell at four years old that he would be performing as the greatest entertainer of all time, he'd think they were crazy. "Second of all, I'd be like, 'Yes!'" Powell said. "I would be very happy. And I am. I

get to live the dream every day and go to work happy. I don't know too many people in this world that enjoy everything about their job. I'm very blessed."

Powell invited the community to attend this two-hour show for "a great night of good, clean fun." Special guest 16 year old Riley Jenkins will open the show performing Elvis 50's.

Riley has taken the ETA world by storm! Both Super Stars Will be backed by the Liberty Opry band!

VIP tickets cost \$35 Reserved seats are \$30.

To purchase tickets, contact Fountain at 832-312-0074 or email him at stevemdxelvis@gmail.com. There is a limited number of tickets for sale, so contact Fountain as soon as possible. For more information about Powell, visit [www.etatravispowell.com](http://www.etatravispowell.com).

## YEAR IN REVIEW 2018

from the compiled files of the BARBERS HILL DAYTON PRESS

### JANUARY:

A man was arrested after robbing two banks. Baytown woman killed her family and herself. Houston Methodist San Jacinto Hospital recognized two nurses as Daisy awards winners. Bay Area Homeless Shelter assisted the homeless on permanent housing. Chambers County offered free flu vaccinations. West Chambers County Pilot Club awarded students with books and helmets during BrainMinders Program event.

### FEBRUARY:

Baytown Crime Stoppers Board honored sponsors. Three people died in a 3-car accident in Mont Belvieu. Traffic was delayed due to construction at Cedar Bayou Lynchburg and Garth Roads. Mont Belvieu resident, Rebecca Hall, donated a piano to Sam and Carmena Goss Memorial Branch Library. Chambers County Library held fundraiser.

### MARCH:

Clydesdales parade passed thru Mont Belvieu. West Chambers County Pilot Club began preparations for annual Gala. City of Baytown earned certificate of achievement for excellence in financial reporting. Faircloth lost against Middleton in District 23. Liberty County filed lawsuit against Arke-ma for violating environmental regulations. West Chambers County Pilot Club celebrated 25th anniversary. Governor brought 500 jobs and \$500 million to Baytown area.

### APRIL:

Lee College held prescription drug abuse town hall. Volunteers helped Dayton resident rebuild after Harvey. Baytown mourned death of beloved Assistant Fire Chief. Dayton Ole Tyme Days Festival at Dayton Downtown.

### MAY:

New H-E-B opened in Mont Belvieu. Public art encouraged residents to love where you live. Goose Creek Bonds defeated. City of Baytown asked for input in proposed Rec Center. West Chambers County Pilot Club awarded scholarships. Harris County launched Harvey Open House in Baytown.

### JUNE:

Rep. Babin traveled throughout District 36. A 9 month-old girl died after left inside hot truck. \$1 Billion new Beltway 8 bridge announced. Attorney Cotten relocated law office. Officers busted \$2 million of meth on I-10.

### JULY:

United Way of Greater Baytown Area and Chambers County set dates for 'Days of Caring'. Washburn Tunnel closed for improvements. Patti Jett left City of Baytown as PR Coordinator. Baytown neighborhood stayed without water for several days.

### AUGUST:

Missing Officer found dead in Chambers County. Baytown area water authority broke ground on second water treatment facility. Baytown Special Rodeo announced to take place in September. School Districts observed first day of class.

### SEPTEMBER:

Gator Fest Cook-Off. Safety Concerns on Market Street. Pilot Club of Baytown planned 21st annual walk to end Alzheimer's. 13 ft. alligator captured during Gator Fest.

### OCTOBER:

Hospital changed name to reflect connection in bBaytown. Old River Winfree Founders Day Festival took place. Night Out in Baytown promoted Breast Cancer prevention. Texting to 911 available in Chambers County. Covestro invested \$1.7 Billion in Baytown. Chambers County won relief from Hurricane Ike cleanup costs.

### NOVEMBER:

Chambers County announced new County Engineer. City of Baytown donated trees to school. Santa arrived at San Jacinto Mall. West Nile virus case was confirmed in Chambers County.

### DECEMBER:

Work on Cedar Bayou flooding continued. Baytown Little Theater presented "A Little Christmas". First Comic and cosplay convention took place in Mont Belvieu.



## Social Security Matters

by AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor Russell Gloor  
Association of Mature American Citizens

### Ask Rusty: Maximizing Spousal Benefits

**Dear Rusty:** My husband turns 68 next year, and I will be turning 66. He plans on continuing to work and retiring at age 70 to maximize his monthly Social Security benefits. I am retiring next year due to a spinal injury. Since my monthly maximum is based on his, we are trying to figure out when mine should be activated to earn the highest benefit amount. Do I need to wait until he reaches age 70 to maximize mine, or can I activate it next year at the lesser amount and would Social Security adjust it to the higher rate when he activates his? Signed: Timing is Everything

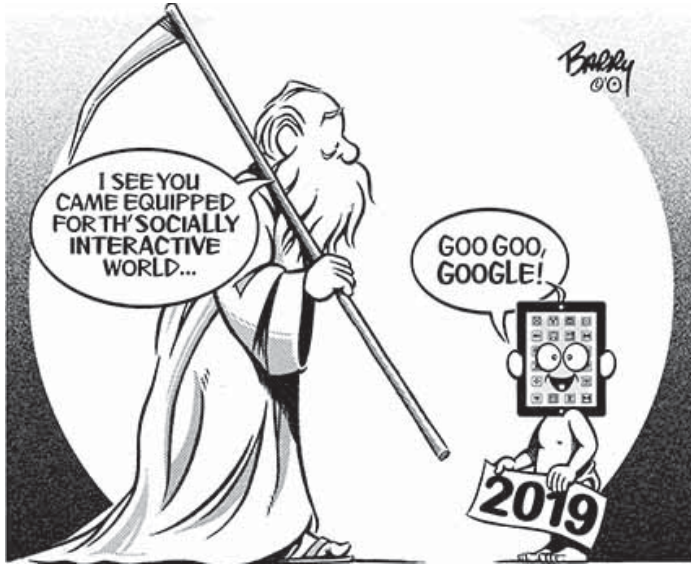
**Dear Timing:** Your eventual spousal benefit from your husband's Social Security record will be based upon his full retirement age benefit amount, not on the increased benefit he will get by waiting until he is age 70 to claim. Thus, you don't gain anything by waiting past your full retirement age and until he claims his at 70 to start your own benefits. If you will be 66 next year, I assume your year of birth is 1953, which means your full retirement age (FRA) is 66. That means at age 66 you will get 100% of the benefit you have earned from a lifetime of working. By starting your benefits at age 66, your husband can then file a "restricted application for spousal benefits only" and collect 50% of the amount you are collecting, while allowing his own Social Security retirement benefit to continue to grow (it's already growing, but without him getting a spousal benefit from your record).

He can do this because he was born before the January 2, 1954 cutoff date after which that option was eliminated. By filing the restricted application after you start your benefits, your

husband can collect a spousal benefit from you while he is still earning delayed retirement credits (DRCs) for himself, which will mean his benefit at age 70 will be 32% more than it would have been at his FRA of 66. Then, when your husband claims his own benefit at age 70, you should apply for your spousal benefit, which will be 50% of his FRA benefit amount (you get that if it is more than you are getting from your own work record). And in the intervening months between when you apply at age 66 and when he claims his own benefits at age 70, your husband will have collected about 2 years worth of spousal benefits from your work record.

One final word of caution: should you decide to claim your own Social Security benefit before you reach your full retirement age next year, your eventual spousal benefit will be somewhat reduced. Waiting until you reach your FRA to apply for your own benefit will ensure you get the maximum spousal benefit you are entitled to when your husband switches to his own Social Security benefit at age 70. And at that time you will need to apply for your spousal benefit; it will not start automatically.

*This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the AMAC Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association (NSSA). NSSA and the AMAC Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. To submit a question, visit our website ([amacfoundation.org](http://amacfoundation.org)) / programs / social-security-advisory or email us at [ssadviser@amacfoundation.org](mailto:ssadviser@amacfoundation.org).*



## Workforce commission reports continuation of employment trend

AUSTIN — Texas' seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 3.7 percent in November, remaining at the same 42-year low rate as in October, the Texas Workforce Commission reported Dec. 21.

The Texas economy added 14,000 seasonally adjusted non-farm jobs in November and annual employment growth was 3.0 percent for the month, marking 103 consecutive months of annual growth, according to the commission.

"The addition of 365,400 jobs over the year and 14,000 jobs in November demonstrates the consistency with which employers in our state create job opportunities for the highly skilled Texas workforce," said TWC Chair Ruth R. Hughs. "The Texas economy offers employers access to a competitive workforce and provides job seekers with career options in a variety of growing Texas industries. The numbers are a testament to the resilience of our Texas employers and the diversity of our Texas economy," she added.

The manufacturing sector recorded the largest private-industry employment gain over the month with 9,100 jobs added and led all industries in growth.

The Midland Metropolitan Statistical Area recorded the month's lowest unemployment rate among Texas MSAs with a non-seasonally adjusted rate of 2.1 percent, followed by the Amarillo MSA, second lowest with a rate of 2.5 percent, and the Odessa MSA, third lowest with a rate of 2.6 percent.

## STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

By Ed Sterling

### Special elections are set

Gov. Greg Abbott set Tuesday, Jan. 29, as the special election date to fill two recently vacated seats in the Texas House of Representatives.

Those seats are House District 145, vacated by former state Rep. Carol Alvarado, D-Houston, a House member since 2008, and House District 79, soon to be vacated by Rep. Joe Pickett, D-El Paso, a House member since 1995.

Alvarado in early December won a special election runoff for the Texas Senate seat vacated by Sylvia Garcia, D-Houston, who resigned from office after she was elected to the U.S. House in November. Alvarado was administered the oath of office on Dec. 21. On Dec. 15, Pickett resigned from office effective Jan. 4, citing health issues.

Candidates who wish to have their names placed on the special election ballot must file their applications with the Secretary of State no later than 5 p.m. on Jan. 3. Early voting by personal appearance will begin Jan. 14.

### Regent chair is elected

Kevin Eltife, appointed in 2017 by Gov. Abbott to a six-year term on The University of Texas System Board of Regents, was unanimously elected chairman of the board on Dec. 20.

A native of Tyler, Eltife has a resume that includes service on the Tyler City Council as a councilmember, as mayor of Tyler, and as state senator for District 1.

While mayor of Tyler, Eltife received national recognition for the creation of a "pay as you go" business plan that strategically eliminated general obligation bond debt and lowered property tax rates.

As a state senator, Eltife was noted for his bipartisan cooperation and his leadership in finance, economic development, open government, health and human services, and government organization.

The UT board of regents oversees 14 higher education institutions, an enrollment of more than 235,000 students and an operating budget of \$19.5 billion.

### Coalition includes Paxton

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton on Dec. 20 announced that he and 38 state attorneys general had sent a letter to congressional leaders, asking them "to fully consider criminal justice reforms" like those contained in the federal FIRST STEP Act (House Resolution 5682).

The letter explains that many states already have enacted criminal justice reforms similar to those in the FIRST STEP Act to great success, such as incentivizing federal inmates to participate in recidivism-reducing programs such as vocational training and academic courses.

H.R. 5682 also would put more tools in the hands of prosecutors, allowing them to seek the most appropriate sentence for an individual's crimes, Paxton said.

"This legislation provides additional tools and flexibility to the Federal Bureau of Prisons, better equipping our correctional system to ensure that people coming back into our communities are prepared to do so as responsible citizens who do not pose a risk to our communities," coalition members wrote in the letter to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, House Speaker Paul Ryan and House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi.

## 5 Tips to Shed Those Pounds in the New Year

(StatePoint) Maybe you want more energy, or perhaps you want to lose weight and keep it off for good. Whatever your goals, a new year means a fresh start to become the best version of yourself.

Here are five tips from Nutrisystem experts to get your scale moving in the right direction and support your long-term health.

1. Skip "diet" drinks: Of course, you know not to order the regular cola with your meal, but you figure the lower-calorie diet version is an okay choice. Not necessarily. One recent review of research found that artificial sweeteners often used in diet drinks may not be as beneficial for weight management as intended, and that drinking them regularly may be linked to an increased body mass index. If you want something fizzy, opt for seltzer with lemon or lime. But if you can't stop dreaming of that diet soda, it doesn't have to be completely off-limits. Just try to cut back. Moderation is key!

2. Drink more water: Every part of your body needs water to work properly. When you don't get enough, your body can't perform normal functions, which can drain your energy. More fatigue means less physical activity. Plus, mild dehydration is often masked as hunger -- prompting you to grab a snack when all you really need is water. Nutrisystem experts recommend drinking at least eight, 8-ounce glasses daily.

3. Slow down: It takes 20 minutes for the "I'm full" signals from your stomach to reach your brain. When you inhale your food, it's much easier to eat more than your body really needs. One review of 23 studies found that fast eaters were about twice as likely to be obese, compared to slow eaters. To help slow down, take smaller bites, chew 10 to 15 times and put your fork down between each bite.

4. Don't eyeball portions: "The super-sized meals at restaurants have given us a skewed view of proper portion size," says registered dietitian for Nutrisystem, Courtney McCormick.

Even if you're tracking your food intake with an app or food journal, overestimating portions can sabotage progress.

McCormick's solution: Measure portions -- not forever, but for a while at the start. Doing so will help you get a visual of what portions should actually look like. You may also consider eliminating some of the guesswork with a program, such as Nutrisystem, that offers pre-portioned, nutritionally-balanced meals.

5. Reduce stress: Stress can cause your body to burn calories more slowly, which could lead to weight gain, according to a study. Plus, stress increases hormones that stimulate appetite, and the foods you'll crave for comfort tend to be high in fat and sugar. Help manage stress with deep breathing, meditation, exercise, hanging out with friends or listening to music.

More tips on jump-starting your weight loss goals can be found at [nutrisystem.com](http://nutrisystem.com).

With these tips for the new year, you'll be on the road to realistic weight loss achievement and have more energy for your day-to-day life.



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Southern Crushed Concrete, LLC, has applied to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) for renewal of Air Quality Permit No. 40072, which would authorize continued operation of a Rock Crushing Facility located at 15015 East Freeway, Channelview, Harris County, Texas 77530. Additional information concerning this application is contained in the public notice section of this newspaper.

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★ LIFESTYLE PAGE ★

# OBITUARIES

## Cecil Howard McBroom

Cecil Howard McBroom, 59, passed away December 24, 2018 at his home in Houston, Texas.

Cecil was born on October 23, 1959 to parents Cecil Sr. and Doris McBroom in Baytown, Texas. He enjoyed spending time with his family and friends, especially during the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, where he was a lifetime member who volunteered with them for over 35 years. Cecil also spent much of his time volunteering at numerous senior centers, as well as schools. He was also known for his heavy involvement in political campaigns.

Cecil is preceded in death by his parents, as well as his brother, William Henry Davis, Jr. He is survived by his son, Anthony McBroom; brother and sister-in-law, Rex McBroom and Cathy Carnew; sister and brother-in-law, Theresa and Charles McMichael; as well as numerous extended family members and dear friends.



The family invites you to join them for a visitation on Monday, December 31, 2018 from 11:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. in the chapel of Carter-Conley Funeral Home. In lieu of flowers, please make donations to the 100 Club in Cecil's honor.



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*To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck what is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance...*

ECCLESIASTES 3: 1-4

The Old Town Astronomical Clock in Prague, Czech Republic

# BIBLE TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey—

1. For possible new year's resolutions, Proverbs 16:3 says, "Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be ..."? Resolved, Established, Directed, Bountiful

2. Psalm 37:5 instructs us to, "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to ..."? Nurture, Pass, Action, Light

3. Which book proclaims the first day of the new year is for resting and a memorial sounding the trumpet? Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers

4. 2 Corinthians 5:17 and Galatians 2:20 are among the verses to focus on what in a new year? Blessings, Moving forward, Grace, Church attendance

5. In which month of the religious calendar did the new year begin in the Bible? 3rd, 5th, 7th, 9th 6. From James 1:5, what may one lack, and if they ask God, it shall be given? Love, Wisdom, Truth, Goals

**ANSWERS:** 1) Established; 2) Pass; 3) Leviticus; 4) Moving forward; 5) 7th; 6) Wisdom

# TxDOT SEEKING PUBLIC INPUT ON FUTURE OF RAIL TRANSPORTATION IN TEXAS

AUSTIN — The Texas Department of Transportation is seeking public input on an update to the Texas Rail Plan, which includes a list of current and future rail projects that the public will have the opportunity to learn about and submit comments. The plan also keeps inventory of all rail lines; analyzes rail service goals and contributions to the economy; catalogs and assesses potential infrastructure

projects; and examines finance strategies for projects and services.

The public can review and provide input on the plan via the online meeting. There also is a survey and online form to submit public comments until Jan. 8, 2019 at [www.surveymonkey.com/r/TexasRailPlan](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TexasRailPlan). These options provide an opportunity for the public to comment on all rail-related issues in Texas, both

freight and passenger, as well as existing and future projects and programs.

The rail system is a critical component of our thriving economy, safely connecting industries, ports and people. Per federal requirements, states must have a state rail plan that is updated every four years to establish policy, priorities and implementation strategies for freight and passenger rail in the state.

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Psalm: 46:1

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**ROMANS 8:18**

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Be alert. Continue strong in the faith. Have courage and be strong.  
1 Corinthians 16:13

Rise in the presence of the aged, show respect for the elderly and revere your God.  
Leviticus 19:32

ASK THE EXPERTS

# Comprehensive Cancer Care

BAYTOWN — (December 14, 2018) — From fear to anxiety to grief, a cancer diagnosis unleashes an avalanche of emotions, but with a wide range of services at its disposal, the multidisciplinary team of cancer specialists at the Houston Methodist Cancer Center at Baytown gives Baytown area patients and their families an experienced team to guide them on their cancer treatment journey.

In addition to medical and radiation oncologists, surgeons and nurses, the cancer center team includes cancer-specific patient navigators and social workers who are skilled at helping guide patients through the often confusing and intimidating cancer treatment landscape.

Earlier this year, the Baytown hospital increased its commitment to providing unparalleled cancer care and services by investing \$2 million in a project to renovate and upgrade facilities at the cancer center building, located at 4021 Garth Road. Thoracic surgeon Dr. Shawn Tittle, the center's medical director, says the project is designed to keep the center on the leading edge of cancer care for years to come.

"Baytown was at the forefront of establishing a separate, community-focused cancer center over 20 years ago when the cancer center was built," Tittle said. "This project represents a re-set to once again ask, 'What does the best in community cancer care look like and how do we update and remodel our facilities to reflect that?'"

The project, slated for completion by the end of the year, involves remodeling the entire interior of the building in order to add services and improve the patient experience. Tittle says the project includes the addition of 12 private and semi-private infusion therapy suites, updating conference/meeting facilities, patient waiting areas, and improving building infrastructure and techno-



Artist rendering of new infusion therapy suites

logical capabilities.

"Patients want to be treated in a nice, clean facility and they want to have access to cutting edge technology," Tittle said. "We want the center to provide an unparalleled Houston Methodist Experience, so we're also providing the best environment for treatment, which includes using warmer colors and offering other comforts that patients expect in the delivery of care."

A centerpiece of the project is the addition of the infusion therapy suites, in which patients can receive treatments such as chemotherapy administered by specialized nurses trained in infection prevention and injection port access.

Tittle says the cancer center remains focused on providing key personnel in several critical areas in order to enhance the patient experience and to offer assistance for patients and families who may become overwhelmed amid the numerous decisions that must be made following a cancer diagnosis.

The center has added highly skilled medical and radiation oncologists, breast radiologists and breast surgeons to the staff, as well as specialized nurses, patient navigators and social workers. Building expanded offices to provide easier access to these vital professionals is a key element of the renovation project. The renovated facility will also house a pharmacy dedicated to ser-

ving the pharmaceutical needs of cancer patients and will be staffed by certified oncology pharmacists.

Tittle adds that having a full, multidisciplinary team in Baytown eliminates the need for patients and families to leave home in order to have access to such complete cancer care, and studies show that this kind of approach allows patients to proceed through treatment with better outcomes.

For more information regarding the full range of services provided by the Houston Methodist Cancer Center at Baytown, visit [houstonmethodist.org/baytown](http://houstonmethodist.org/baytown), or call 844-454-PINK.

### About Houston Methodist Baytown Hospital

Houston Methodist Baytown Hospital has provided Baytown and East Houston with quality medical care since opening its doors in 1948. The hospital has grown throughout the years with the community, providing comprehensive care at all stages of life. As a health care leader, the hospital is proud to have a fully integrated residency program focused on educating and inspiring future practitioners. Today, Houston Methodist Baytown provides some of the most advanced and innovative procedures while never losing focus on compassionate and patient-centered care. [Houstonmethodist.org/baytown](http://Houstonmethodist.org/baytown).

# Learn the facts about flu season

BAYTOWN — (December 20, 2018) — As the hustle and bustle of the holiday season reaches its climax, keep in mind that flu season is still going strong, so it's a good idea to take steps to stay healthy and learn the facts about flu.

Fact: Flu affects millions of people worldwide every year. Most people recover from the illness in less than two weeks, but the flu can lead to more serious conditions, such as pneumonia. Flu-related illnesses result in hundreds of thousands of hospitalizations and tens of thousands of deaths every year, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Fact: "Everyone ages six months and older should get a flu shot this flu season and every year," said Dr. Katasha Lindley, a family medicine doctor with Houston Methodist Baytown Hospital. Vaccinations are especially important for people at high risk for flu-related complications, including:

- Those with chronic conditions, such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease, kidney disease and liver disease
- Children younger than age five, especially those younger than age two
- Adults at least age 65
- Nursing home and other long-term care residents
- Pregnant women and women up to two weeks postpartum



Dr. Katasha Lindley

Lindley adds that people with severe allergies to chicken eggs should talk to their doctor before getting vaccinated.

Fact: A flu vaccine can't cause the flu. The vaccine is made from inactivated, noninfectious viruses or no viruses at all. "People who develop flu-like symptoms after receiving a flu shot were going to get sick anyway," Lindley said. "Their illness is not a result of having received the vaccine."

Fact: A vaccination isn't a guarantee against the flu. "Take additional steps to protect yourself, such as avoiding people who have the flu, washing your hands often and maintaining a healthy lifestyle to support your immune system," Lindley said. "That includes eating right, exercising, getting enough sleep and managing stress."

Fact: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends flu vaccination begin soon after the vac-

cine becomes available, if possible, by the end of October. Immunity lasts through a flu season for most people. However, it's not too late to get vaccinated, even in January or later, as long as flu viruses circulate.

Take steps to protect yourself and your family from the flu by getting vaccinated. Houston Methodist Baytown Hospital makes getting a flu shot quick and easy. Call 832-556-6936, or visit [houstonmethodist.org/baytown](http://houstonmethodist.org/baytown) to schedule an appointment with a primary care physician.

### About Houston Methodist Baytown Hospital

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## Year in Review 2018,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

### JUNE

EPA holds Community meeting about the Waste Pits in Highlands. County will seek \$2.5 Billion in August vote for flood relief. Crosby holds Rodeo Cook-off and Parade. 12-year-old girl dies at Magnolia Gardens, trying to save her mother from drowning. Crosby Livestock Show sets sale record of \$375,000; steer sells for \$25,000. "Tough Enough" awards \$150,000 to 2 organizations. Eastside Veterans name Citizen of the Year Christy Graves. Highlands Rotary installs Denise Smith as president, and new officers and board. Newspaper reveals that Immigrant kids are housed in Harris County. Crosby Little League 6U Boys qualify for the LL World Series. The \$1 Billion Beltway 8 Bridge over the Ship Channel is underway. Attorney Weston Cotten relocates his Law Office to Highlands.

### JULY

Scott Stephens heads a national Heart Screening Foundation. HCA opens a new Emergency Facility on Beltway 8. Highlands man is charged with stealing the historic Ima Hogg jewel, a brooch. Crosby woman, Aliecia Pruitt, is killed on a motorcycle on US90. Sylvia Garcia resigns from the Texas Senate, will run for Congress to replace Gene Green. EPA Chief Scott Pruitt resigns. Waste Pits need repairs to the containment cap. Flood debris is started to be cleaned from Lake Houston.

### AUGUST

Newspaper publisher, and Rotarian, Alton Neatherlin dies at 87 on July 27. FBI's Christina Garza speaks at Rotary. Arkema is indicted for toxic releases in their plant fire during Hurricane Harvey. Superintendent Randy O'Brien is supported by the public in his position at Goose Creek CISD. Renowned Surgeon Dr. Joe Agris speaks at Rotary. Crosby ISD has Financial problems. New Educators luncheon held in Crosby. New JP Candidate Lucia Bates speaks at Rotary. Harris County \$2.5 Billion Flood Bonds approved by voters. Wrist Bands are used to monitor toxin exposure in East Harris County.

### SEPTEMBER

EPA conducts interviews of residents in Highlands. Rotary holds Washer Tournament Sept. 15, raised about \$8000 for Polio Plus. Texas Renaissance Festival scheduled for October and November. GatorFest is a big success in Chambers County. Highlands Jamboree Theme is "Happy Days" set for October 6.

### OCTOBER

Jackie Young is honored nationally as "Champion for Change." Constable Eagleton speaks at Rotary. Miss Highlands Pageant held October 13; Miss Highlands is Kaitlyn Rolin; Jr. Miss Highlands is Payton Radle. San Jacinto Hospital changes its name to Houston Methodist Baytown Hospital. Crosby Homecoming Queen is Maggie Hearn, King is Dayton Berezoski. Crosby ISD cuts staff in "Fiscal Emergency." Czech Fest held at Crosby Sacred Heart Church. Tent Revival held in Highlands by the Ministerial Association. Highlands/Lynchburg Chamber holds its Jamboree, "Happy Days" parade and Festival. Highlands Fire Department holds its annual BBQ and Raffle. Highlands Rotary receives District 5890 recognition for 100% participation in Polio Plus.

### NOVEMBER

Crosby ISD staff cuts climb to 129; Pre-K hours trimmed. Kids & Adults enjoy the Pumpkin Patch at Crosby Methodist Church. Highlands student hit on Wallisville Road on way to school. Nov. 6 Election Results: Emmett, Morman, and Beto are defeated. Winners are Lina Hidalgo, Adrian Garcia, Sylvia Garcia, Ted Cruz, Lucia Bates. Eastside Veterans hold salute to Military. Chinquapin Prep celebrates 50 year anniversary. Crosby Band raises enough money for Chicago tour. Judge Stephens gives out 1300 turkeys at Thanksgiving. Rotary announces the 44th Annual Chili Feats and Car Raffle for Feb. 2, 2019.

### DECEMBER

Rotary celebrates its 70th Anniversary with a Dinner and Historical Review in words and pictures at Monument Inn. Chester Stasney honored for 51 years in Rotary. Santa arrives in Highlands on a Fire Truck. Photos are taken at the Gazebo with Santa. Hot Chocolate is served by Rotary at the fire station. Santa appears at the Crosby Community Center Holiday events. Crosby Christmas Parade is the largest, longest. Organizations share Christmas at B.P. Hopper School. Holiday music at Raceway, by Crosby students. Clothe-A-child held at Crosby Church. Holiday music presented by Highlands Show Choir students at Rotary and Chamber.



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