

HIGHLANDS CROSBY
Star ★ Courier

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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2020

P.O. DRAWER 405, HIGHLANDS, TEXAS 77562

These stories
in the **PRESS:**

- Student killed on his way to school
- Chambers County Sheriff's Office report
- BHI ISD teen told to cut dreadlocks receives scholarship
-And more, Page 3

IN THE STARS

EVENTS

**MON. FEB. 10
Community Conversations**

From noon - 2:00 pm. at BHISD at Wellness Center, 2200 S. Main St., Anahuac, Tx. Hosted by United Way of Greater Baytown Area & Chambers County. See ad, page 3 for more details.

**THUR. FEB. 13
Highlands Chamber Awards**

Annual Community Awards & Installation Banquet at Monument Inn, 4406 Independence Pkwy., doors open at 6 pm, dinner at 7 pm.

**THUR. FEB. 27
Crosby Awards Banquet & Board Installation**

Under the Big Top Crosby-Huffman Chamber of Commerce Annual Awards Banquet & Board Installation Banquet, 6:30 p.m. - 9 p.m. at Hilton Garden Inn Baytown, 4910 Chase Street, Baytown, TX 77521.

**FRID. MAR. 27
Crosby EF Annual Golf Tournament**

11:30 a.m. registration & lunch. 1:00 shotgun start. At Stonebridge at Newport. 281-328-9200

BIRTHDAYS

- Feb 6—Josina Hovater
- Tori Brumfield
- Feb 7—Chris Browder
- Feb 8—Leah Cathey
- Johange C. Highfield
- Jerry Hovater
- James Simpson
- Feb 9—Gerald D. Harris
- Feb 11—Carol Kelley
- Mary Mills
- Michael Parson
- Lanette Salters
- Feb 12—Shelby Hodges
- Lori Osterman
- Jed Riser
- Alania Kay Jones
- Ida Turley
- Joseph Bowen

DEATHS

- Asa Robert Hearn, 73
- Ruby Faye Bryant, 75
- Milton Lynn Rudek, 84

Bras for the Cause raises over \$180,000



Top Row: Jacob Schexnayder, Aubrey Larkin, Justin Whittredge, John Baptiste, Jeremiah Price, David Mendez, Jason "Altuve" McWhorter, Jeffrey Sparks, Troy Barringer, Herman Eagleton, Shaun Manuel, Hunter Hearn Middle Row: Jesse Sorrells, Jay Beasley, J.R.Towles, Teaque Schexnayder, Chad Ferguson, Cullen Lee, Bottom Row: Bob Ellender, Trevor Zuniga, Chris Noldan

Once again, the Crosby community rallied their overwhelming generosity supporting Bras for the Cause's 9th Annual event on February 1. The Bras for the Cause Committee is part of the Crosby Fair and Rodeo's Tough Enough to Wear Pink (TETWP). Preliminary reports show over \$180,000 was raised at the 9th annual event held at Southern Lace Estates. The

Bras for the Cause committee believes that all cancers matter and "Together We Can Make a Difference." To show that all cancers matter, Southern Lace Estates was decorated with all the cancer awareness colors throughout the room. The ladies of the BFC committee wore colored scarfs to represent a cancer that touched their lives. See *Bras for the Cause Continued on Page 6*

Kostka wins Chili raffle San Jacinto River Coalition hears EPA updates

HIGHLANDS – The Rotary Club reported another successful community benefit event, after their 45th Annual Chili Feast last Saturday.

Event chairman Andy Scott said that several hundred people attended the chili luncheon and auctions at St. Jude's church. The highlight of the event is always the drawing of the winning ticket for a new vehicle, which was won this year by David Kostka of Highlands.

Funds from the event are used by the club for scholarships and to support other youth and community activities through the year. Scott reported that the Chili Feast had 13 major sponsors this year, See *CHILI FEAST*, p. 6



David Kostka learns he was the winner of the new vehicle that Highlands Rotary club raffled off at their Chili Feast last Saturday, as daughter Haley Maxey expresses her joy.

Eastside Veterans host Super Bowl barbecue



The Eastside Veterans Celebration was at the Knights of Columbus Hall on Crosby-Dayton Road last Sunday and the discussion was mostly about football, what is wrong with California, events coming before and in November and the monument they would place inside Crosby Park. Excitement reached a frenzy as Kansas City made of the event a football game. The fair was east Texas style barbecue featuring chicken, brisket, ribs, baked beans and substantial French and Spanish elements of select dishes. Larry Stasney is still making the KoC Hall available for rent, call Eddie Foster (281) 794-5122 to join EVC.

HIGHLANDS – The San Jacinto River Coalition held their monthly meeting last Tuesday night, and director Jackie Young brought the group up to date with information recently received from the EPA.

She said that after not hearing any new information from the agency for several months, they now had emailed her and were planning on holding a Community Advisory Committee meeting in Houston next week. These groups are supposed to be an interface between the public and the EPA on environmental concerns, but have rarely occurred. In spite of its name, the meeting is not open to the public community.

EPA reported in the recent email that they had conducted sonar exams after tropical storm Imelda of the waste pits cap and liner. They determined that the liner had not been torn where a loose barge had grounded, due to a heavy rock coverage at that point. However, they conceded that the site was

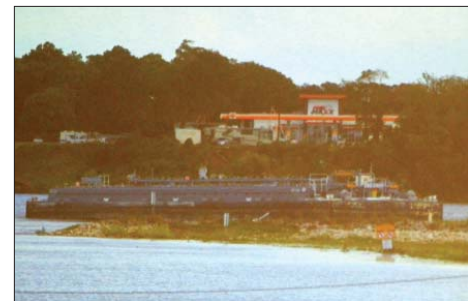
a "dynamic environment" subject to continued change. They said that some erosion had occurred during the flood, and some new deposition of new soil. Some of the site had been



Jackie Young

repaired, and more work was scheduled.

Young revealed that about 39% of the remedial design package had been completed, and the South site was due to be announced in April, and the North in May. At that time, negotiations with the Responsible Parties can enter into serious legal and financial talks.



A barge and tugboat pass the Waste Pits in the channel of the San Jacinto River. The barge traffic was one of the topics discussed at this week's Coalition meeting.

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★ COMMUNITY NEWS ★

Huffman ISD Students Selected as Texas All-State Musicians

Huffman ISD HS Band Director, Mr. Chris Wurtz, is proud to announce that two Hargrave High School band students have been selected to perform in Texas All-State Music ensembles. Ian McGregor, a Senior and pianist with the Hargrave HS Jazz Band, will perform with the Texas All-State Jazz Ensemble. Ruben Dominguez, a Senior and trombonist with the Hargrave HS Honor Band, will perform in the Texas All-State Symphonic Band. TMEA All-State Concerts will be held in San Antonio, Saturday, February 15, 2020 at the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center as part of the 2020 Texas Music Educators Association Clinic/Convention. McGregor and Dominguez were chosen for this prestigious honor through a competitive process held this school year across the state at District, Region, and Area levels.

High school students selected to perform in the All-State concerts have competed through auditions to qualify at the state level. All-State is the highest honor a Texas music student can receive. 1,795 students are selected through a process that began with over 66,800 students from around the state vying for this honor to perform in one of 15 en-



Ruben Dominguez, a Senior and trombonist with the Hargrave High School Honor Band, will perform in the Texas All-State Symphonic Band at the 2020 Texas Music Educators Association Convention.



Ian McGregor, a Senior and pianist with the Hargrave High School Jazz Band, will perform with the Texas All-State Jazz Ensemble at the 2020 Texas Music Educators Association Convention.

sembles (bands, orchestras, and choirs). Texas Music Educators Association sponsors the Texas All-State competition. This competitive process begins throughout the state in auditions hosted by 33 TMEA Regions. Individual musicians perform selected music for a panel of judges who rank each instrument or voice part. From this ranking, a select group of musicians advances from their Region to compete against musicians from other areas in eight TMEA Area competitions. The highest-ranking

musicians judged at the TMEA Area competitions qualify to perform in a TMEA All-State music group. Only the top 2.6% of musicians who initially audition become All-State musicians.

These All-State students participate in three days of rehearsals directed by nationally recognized conductors during the TMEA Clinic/Convention. Their performances for thousands of attendees bring this extraordinary event to a close. For the All-State concert schedule and conductor information, go to the Performances section of www.tmea.org/convention. The Texas Music Educators Association is an association of over 13,500 school music educators dedicated to promoting excellence in music education. Go to www.tmea.org/convention for more information. The 2020 convention will be even more distinct because TMEA is celebrating 100 years as a music educators association.

Babin Announces 2020 Congressional Art Competition for Area High School Students



Rep. Babin with the 36th Congressional District's 2019 Congressional Art Competition Winner. (L to R: Tyra Baxter, Crosby ISD art teacher; Rep. Babin; Julian Lopez, winner; and family).

Intent to Participate Application Due By Friday, February 14, 2020

DEER PARK, TX – U.S. Congressman Brian Babin (TX-36) will once again host a Congressional Art Competition in 2020. Students in grades 9-12 wishing to participate must reside within the 36th Congressional District of Texas. All entries must follow the theme "Memories of the Battleship Texas," and depictions may include a time the student personally visited the

U.S.S. Texas (BB-35) or of the Battleship Texas in combat during her tours in the First or Second World Wars.

Teachers or home school students must submit an intent to apply application no later than Friday, February 14. The first place recipient must be able to participate in the national awards reception in Washington, DC. Round-trip airfare and accommodations for two in Washington will be provided.

The first place entry will

represent the 36th District for one year in an exhibit in the Cannon Tunnel of the United States Capitol Building in Washington, DC. The second and third place entries will be displayed for one year in Congressman Babin's Washington and District offices, respectively.

For more information or to sign up, please contact Mrs. Beverly Ferguson, Regional Director of Community Relations, at 832-780-0966 or by email at tx36artcompetition@gmail.com.

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Ex-Pct. 3 Cpt. Hagee charged, out on bond

Capt. Jack Hagee, 74, the public face for Precinct 3 Constable's Office back in the days of Ken Jones' administration, has now been arrested, charged and has bonded out on a total of \$60,000 for aggravated sexual assault of a child under the age of 14 and indecency with a child based on an allegation of serial incidents.

The 38 year old woman alleged that the incidents happened about three times a week until she was about 13 years old. She says she first reported the incidents to her aunt and that her aunt's husband, Pastor John Hagee, confronted Jack. The pastor told police he then received a confession that he had "touched her."

Baytown Police Department headed the investigation and alleged the incidents happened between 1989 until 1997. The woman reported the crimes in 2018 but she indicates they happened between her ages of 5 years old and 13. Hagee was her adoptive father. The statute of limitations in Texas was once 10 years after the victim's 18 birthday but



mation received by me that he was ever engaged in any type of criminal conduct, much less the heinous types of offenses for which he now stands charged."

Hagee appeared Monday before a Harris County District Court judge. An emergency protection order barring Hagee from leaving Texas, going near schools or contact with the victim or her family was issued.

His bond totalled \$65,000. Aggravated assault charge drew \$40,000 and an indecency was \$25,000.

Jack Hagee's attorney, Michael Turner, said decades-old allegations can be challenging. The allegations and chains of evidence will make this a difficult case for whatever verdict arises according to attorneys.

"As you know, cases like this that are filed 20 to 30 years later are very difficult," Turner said. "These charges were just filed last week, so we have a lot of investigating to do. We're looking forward to having our day in court."

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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2020

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ROUND-UP

Goss Library events

These are the events taking place at the Sam and Carmena Goss Memorial Library the week of Monday, February 10, 2020.

- Tuesday, February 11 - 10:00 am, Baby & Me (ages 0-24 mos)
- Tuesday, February 11 - 4:30 pm, Movie Day showing Maleficent, refreshments will be served (all ages)
- Thursday, February 13 - 4:00 pm, Kids Valentine Party (ages 0-11 yrs)
- Thursday, February 13 - 5:00 pm, "Tween Craft" V-Day Cards (ages 7-11)
- Friday, February 14 - 10:30 am & 2:00 pm, Storytime (ages 0-5 yrs)
- Friday, February 14 - 2:00 pm, Movie for adults, An Affair to Remember (ages 18 & up)

Sam and Carmena Goss Memorial Library, Mont Belvieu, (281) 576-2245.

Battleship TEXAS Foundation accepting proposals for Battleship TEXAS's new home

LA PORTE— The Battleship TEXAS Foundation (BTF) is now accepting proposals for the selection of a home port for the Battleship TEXAS after it returns from major repairs. The request for proposal (RFP) opened Jan. 21.

After the proposals have been submitted, the BTF will conduct a fair and extensive evaluation and select the location best suited to the future needs of the Battleship TEXAS. Anyone wishing to submit a proposal must contact the BTF through info@battleship.org to request the RFP package.

Currently, the BTF and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) are preparing the ship for transportation to a shipyard. There, repairs will include replacement of the hull from the waterline down and new paint, along with other necessary improvements.

The ship is tentatively scheduled to depart her current berth between April-August 2020 and be in the shipyard for a period of about twelve-months. Once the battleship leaves the shipyard, the ship should be arriving in its new berth around August 2021. Following a period to prepare the ship for re-opening, the plan is to have it receiving visitors by early 2022.

The BTF is a nonprofit foundation that was founded in 1999. Its mission is to preserve and enhance the Battleship TEXAS and develop this historic ship into a premier museum and visitor attraction. In 2019 the BTF and TPWD entered a 99-year memorandum of understanding/lease with TPWD whereby the BTF would operate and maintain the Battleship TEXAS for TPWD and the State of Texas.

Dayton Student killed on way to school

At approximately 6:47 a.m. last Thursday, Jan. 30, 2020, Dayton police were notified of an auto-pedestrian crash at the intersection of HWY 321 and CR 676, approximately 2 miles north of Dayton High School.

Upon arrival, responding officers learned that the pedestrian was attempting to cross HWY 321 when he was struck by a southbound vehicle. The pedestrian was pronounced dead at the scene.

The driver of the vehicle remained at the scene and is cooperating with police. The deceased is Tyrese Manigo, a 14-year-old 8th grader at Woodrow Wilson Jr. High School.

This is an active investigation as the police try to determine the exact circumstances of this incident. At this time criminal charges are not expected. Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) Sgt. Robert Willoughby is on-site and conducting acci-

dent reconstruction. Motorists are asked to find an alternate route as traffic is being rerouted for the duration of the reconstruction, which is expected to continue throughout the morning.

"It is always tragic to see a loss of life in this way, but it is especially difficult when the loss is a child," said Police Chief Robert Vine. "Our heartfelt prayers go out to the family of this young man and all involved."

Liberty County Deputy Whitten dies unexpectedly

Liberty County deputy recovering from being shot in the neck in May has died from apparent heart attack, officials say.

Deputy Richard Whitten, pictured to the right, was shot by a murder suspect in the neck and was recovering at Memorial Herman at the Texas Medical Center. According to reports, he was in physical



therapy when he suffered a heart attack.

Whitten had been with the department for four years and was off duty when he was shot back on May 29, 2019 at the B Dependable plumbing shop located on FM Road 321.

Whitten is survived by his wife of 14 years, Kami Heard Whitten and their two children.

Chambers County Sheriff's Office reports to the community

Sheriff Brian Hawthorne recently reported that within the past year, the Chambers County Sheriff's Office conducted a large scale investigation of those responsible for selling illegal narcotics in Chambers County.

According to reports, assisted by the Chambers County District Attorney's Office, indictments were obtained in 16 felony delivery cases resulting in warrants being issued for 14 individuals; most of these indictments were for un-

dercover methamphetamine buys.

On January 28, 2020, the Chambers County Sheriff's Office, assisted by the Department of Public Safety, Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, Baytown Police Department and the US Marshal's Service served arrest warrants on these individuals; only one subject remains outstanding from the warrant roundup. While serving arrest warrants, deputies made two additional cases for possession of methamphetamine.

The results from this yearlong investigation resulted in 23 search warrants and 266 arrests.

The Chambers County Sheriff's Office is committed to the citizens of Chambers County by working to dismantle drug trafficking organizations effecting the communities.

The Chambers County Sheriff's Office requests if you know of any illicit drug trafficking in your neighborhood to please call at 409-267-2500.

Community Conversations

hosted by United Way of Greater Baytown Area & Chambers County

Your opinion counts.

Attend one of United Way's community conversations to share your thoughts.

LET'S CHAT!



Greater Baytown Area & Chambers County

Register today.

RSVP to admin@unitedwaygbacc.org or call 281.424.5922 x 1001 if you are interested in participating. Snacks, sandwiches or breakfast items will be provided.

JAN 15
WEDNESDAY
4-6PM

Sterling Municipal Library
1 Mary Elizabeth Wilbanks Ave., Baytown

JAN 22
WEDNESDAY
7:30-9:30AM

Sterling Municipal Library
1 Mary Elizabeth Wilbanks Ave., Baytown

JAN 27
MONDAY
NOON-2PM

1410 Lilton, Sonnier Ave.
Winnie

FEB 06
THURSDAY
1-3PM

Barbers Hill ISD Eagle's Nest
600 Eagle Drive, Mont Belvieu

FEB 10
MONDAY
NOON-2PM

Wellness Center
2200 S. Main St., Anahuac

healthy options
support services
available resources
get involved

unitedwaygbacc.org

f t y p i n

We Love our LHS friends for stopping by for Play Doh with a mixture of Bingo!

BRIGHTER DAYS
ASSISTED LIVING

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OPINION PAGE



A terrible trip, thanks to a terrible TxDOT

I drive a lot around Harris County, to cover the stories and people that fill the columns of this newspaper. One of the most common trips I take is from my office in the Galleria area, to Highlands and Channelview. Usually with normal traffic this trip takes me about 35-40 minutes. With really bad traffic it can take over an hour.

But this Saturday, my normal trip turned into a nightmare, which I blame on the poor management or stupidity of TxDOT, the Texas transportation agency.

You see, that trip turned into a journey of over 4 hours, most of it spent sitting in a traffic jam in Channelview, with no movement at all of the cars and trucks.

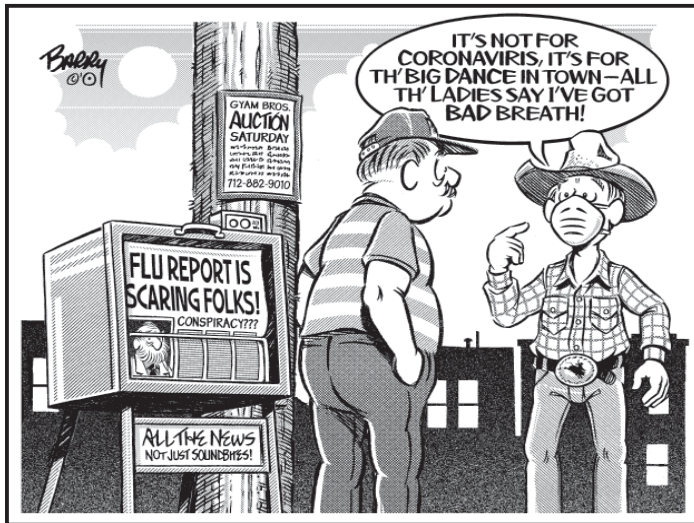
A TxDOT contractor

was installing stripes between lanes on the I-10 bridge, and had closed two lanes. Only one lane was open to traffic and the three normal lanes plus entrance ramps from the frontage road made the road full of vehicles.

TxDOT could have accomplished the work by closing only one lane, and helping hapless drivers by posting an electric sign that there was a serious, 4 hour delay ahead. Or how about some traffic control and restricting the entrance ramp traffic? Or how about scheduling the work at night or time of day with less traffic?

It seems that TxDOT doesn't care much about the public, and the hardships they suffer by so much construction around the county.

What's your opinion or experience? Write to me.



Abbott joins officials in response to virus originating in China

AUSTIN — Gov. Greg Abbott on Jan. 30 commented on a White House briefing about actions to stem the transmission of novel coronavirus in the United States.

Speakers at the briefing concerning the outbreak of the new respiratory illness that originated in Wuhan, China, included U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar, Robert Redfield, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases at the National Institutes of Health.

"The State of Texas is continuing to collaborate with our local, state and federal partners as updates come in on the status of the coronavirus," Abbott said. "Our local communities will have the resources they need to respond to any potential cases of the coronavirus in their area, and we remain committed to ensuring the health and safety of all Texans."

On Jan. 27, Abbott met with state health and emergency management officials for a briefing on the same topic. "The Lone Star State will remain vigilant to protect the health and safety of all Texans," Abbott said.

The Texas Department of State Health Services is working with local health departments to assess people with respiratory illness and recent travel to the province of Hubei, China, for possible 2019 novel coronavirus testing.

The DSHS said travelers should monitor themselves for symptoms and contact their health care provider if they develop fever, cough or shortness of breath within 14 days of being in Hubei. The agency urged Texas health care professionals to ask patients with respiratory symptoms about their travel history and contact their local or regional health department if they think a patient may have novel coronavirus. The state had not posted the



number of diagnosed cases of the disease in Texas as of Feb. 2.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says the best way to prevent infection is to take precautions to avoid exposure to novel coronavirus — precautions which are similar to those the agency recommends to avoid influenza.

Abbott attends signing

Gov. Abbott on Jan. 29 joined President Donald Trump for the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement ceremonial bill signing in Washington, D.C.

The agreement, Abbott said, modernizes the 25-year-old North American Free Trade Agreement "and will support mutually beneficial trade leading to freer markets, fairer trade and robust economic growth in North America."

It is estimated that the USMCA will have a positive impact of \$17.6 billion on Texas' annual gross product and create 164,700 new jobs in the state, according to December 2019 projections from the Waco-based Perryman Group. The USMCA also allows Texas increased access to trade with Mexico and Canada, the state's two largest export partners, according to the governor's office.

Law aids in unsolved cases

The Texas Department of Public Safety on Jan. 30 said law enforcement agencies have identified suspects in more than 45 unsolved cases thanks in part to the implementation of House Bill 1399, the Krystal Jean Baker Act.

The new law, which took effect Sept. 1, 2019,

authorizes the collection of DNA samples from individuals charged with certain felonies and compares the samples through the Combined DNA Index System database in an effort to clear unsolved cases.

"By allowing us to collect and enter DNA evidence from offenders in a much quicker time frame, we are able to make a critical connection to previous crimes committed by the same offender. We are aiming to stop these criminals from committing any other violent acts against innocent people," said DPS Director Steven McCraw.

According to the DPS, Baker was 13 years old when she was abducted, sexually assaulted and killed in 1996. DNA evidence was collected at the time of her death but no arrests were made. In 2010, the perpetrator was arrested on an unrelated charge in Louisiana. DNA taken at the time of the arrest linked him to Baker's murder and he ultimately pleaded guilty.



"This is 'bout the best time of year," said Steve, "to get out and do something fun, like go to a rodeo."

"Awful cold out there right now, Steve," said Doc, who has more degrees than a thermometer. "I guess it's a good thing they have all those building rodeos these days."

"Well, that would take all the sport out of it, wouldn't it?" Steve said. "Dud, pass the sugar please."

Dud passed the sugar. "Don't know what you mean, Steve. Why would it take all the sport out of rodeo if the folks in the stands were comfortable?"

"Cold factor," he said. "What?"

Now Steve was our resident cowboy here at the Mule Barn truck stop's philosophy counter. He still worked on ranches and lived in bunkhouses and saddled his horses one at a time, but his rodeo days were far behind him. It's a sport with a very short career ... one way or another.

"You see," Steve said, "when it's cold, the rough stock bucks harder ... specially the broncs. Not sure why, but you can see it even with broke horses. On a cold morning, they're liable to hump their backs and hop a few limes just for fun, or to shake out the kinks. Same with rodeo broncs. With them, I think it's just more fun, though."

"Well, I can see where watching broncs in cold weather would make it more fun to watch," Doc said.

"That's only half of it," Steve said, grinning. "Those poor cowboys who ride them are cold and stiff, too. Doesn't help much with riding rank stock. And that's the reason it's more fun to watch a rodeo in cold weather. It tends to rain frozen cowboys."

Brought to you by Ol' Jimmy Dollar, Slim's children's book about a happy hounddog man and his "kids." See it at riograndebooks.com.



Social Security Matters

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

Ask Rusty – About Warnings to Make Sure I "file properly"

Dear Rusty: I am currently 63 years old and planning to delay retirement until 70 to maximize my benefit. I've been seeing a lot of financial planners advertising claims that you can lose thousands of dollars in benefits if you don't "file properly." Is there really anything more to it than simply applying for benefits when you are ready to retire? Do I really need to pay a financial advisor just to tell me how to apply to get the most benefits? Signed: Skeptical

Dear Skeptical: Nearly all the advertisements you see using language like that have an underlying purpose of trying to sell you something — usually a book, a subscription, or financial services. The phrase "losing thousands if you don't file properly" are very generic words meant to lure you into contacting them so they can sell something to you. Reality is that "filing properly" means simply choosing the right age to file for benefits given your specific personal circumstances. And personal circumstances are different for everyone. There aren't any tricks in the filing process itself — it's really quite straightforward, and you can get all your Social Security filing questions answered here at The AMAC Foundation's Social Security Advisory Service. Our staff of Social Security Advisors are fully trained and certified by the National Social Security Association (NSSA®), and we have years of experience on this complex topic. We provide Social Security information and answers to several thousand people each year, without a fee because we are a not-for-profit entity operating only on donations. And contacting us is easy at either ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org, or 1.888.750.2622.

As for when you should file, everyone's personal situation is different, and your marital status should always be considered. But as an individual, waiting until

age 70 will give you the maximum benefit available to you. If you are now 63, your age 70 benefit will be 29.3% more than it would be at your full retirement age of 66 years and 4 months, and about 65% more than you'd get at age 64. And provided you are in good health and expect at least average longevity (about 84) not only will your monthly payment be more, but you'll collect more in cumulative lifetime benefits by waiting. And here's an extra bonus — if you are married and you predecease your wife, her survivor benefit will be based upon that larger amount you were receiving because you delayed claiming. If she has reached her full retirement age, as your widow your wife will get 100% of your actual benefit. But if you were to claim earlier, your wife's survivor benefit would be based on that smaller amount.

The answer to your specific question is that there is no magical way to apply for benefits once you determine the age at which you wish to file. You can file by calling the Social Security Administration directly, either at their general number (1.800.772.1213) or your local office (find it at www.ssa.gov/locator), or you can also file online at www.ssa.gov/retire. Filing online is by far the easiest and most efficient way to complete and submit your application for benefits.

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) / programs / social-security-advisory) or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org.



OIG Is VA's Watchdog---

Since 2012, the Office of Inspector General for the Department of Veterans Affairs has saved us \$1.4 billion. They do this by showing up unannounced to do inspections, audits, reviews, assessments or investigations. They scrutinize paperwork, conduct interviews and get to the bottom of what's going on.

The recent inspection of a facility estimated that the VA was about to spend \$261 million over the next five years on sleep apnea devices that veterans weren't using. Veterans were given the devices and only half were being used, with no staff follow-up.

The OIG recommendation was to loan the devices to veterans instead and keep track of the usage. This move is expected to save \$39 million per year for the sleep apnea devices and \$12 million per year for the supplies.

The VA has been spending \$450 million, split between four vendors, on contracts for medical and surgical supplies on the East coast. Because supplies of this nature must be delivered on time every time, the OIG dug around to see if anybody in the VA was keeping an eye on what was being delivered. In addition, the supplier was to report monthly about the order fulfillment levels. So what did the OIG discover: that nobody in VA was watching and the vendors were using funny math to report their deliveries. Correct orders only were received 40% of the time. This calculated to \$16.8 million in incorrect payments made to vendors in one year.

The OIG also looked at undelivered orders in a different investigation. Specifically, had prices changed between ordering and the delivery? Were the items still needed? Should the orders be canceled? Could the money be spent elsewhere? If budgeted money isn't spent in a fiscal year, it gets erased and vanishes. OIG discovered that \$132 million could have been spent elsewhere had anyone been paying attention to undelivered orders.

I still say, whatever the OIG's budget is, double it. We'll still come out ahead.

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★ ASK THE EXPERTS ★

Bras for the Cause,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Before over 500 guests, 21 male celebrity models danced in the annual "fashion show", modeling bras of varied themes; Astros favorite, Jose Altuve A.K.A. Jason McWhorter. Crosby Applebees manager, Justin Whittredge stepped on stage as Genie from Aladdin complete with magic lamp. Returning for the second year was Crosby's own J.R. Towles. This year our former hometown Astro decided he wasn't going to "Take no bull from cancer," so he dressed as a bull rider complete with a barrel. New was hometown favorite ball player, Hunter Hearn, drafted by the Phillies last year and a "hit" dressed in gear. Another newbie, Cullen Lee strutted as a

peacock shaking feathers. Right off the floor, he was already looking forward to next year. Ending the night, were two favorites and big money makers, Jacob Schexnayder wearing his Fiesta Donkey and his cousin Teaque Scexnayder who Yabbadabba-dood the crowd with his Fred Flinstone theme. Teaque's bra was auctioned off for \$30,000 and Jacob's for \$23,000. The total for the live auction was \$118,000 thanks to all of our models. These models, with John Baptiste, Jesse Sorrells, Trevor Zuniga, Herman Eagleton, Aubrey Larkin, Shaun Manuel, Jay Beasley, Jeremiah Price, Troy Barringer, Bob Ellender, Chad Ferguson, Chris Noldan,

David Mendez, and Jeffrey Sparks brought in a record breaking \$6,000 in tips alone! Indicating how every dollar adds up. Tipping models Saturday, made one part of this success. Guest speaker David Mendez spoke of a local patient helped by BFC funds, stressing how important funds from this single event are and benefit people with cancer. Second speaker Melissa Owen, a teacher at Barrett Elementary, bravely told of her journey with cancer and how the funds made a life difference. The BFC Committee all took the stage to donate gift cards to the Methodist Cancer Center and The Candlelighters Childhood Cancer Alliance.

Coaches recognized for receiving State Honors

John Tremmel (second from right), Ross S. Sterling High School head tennis coach, is recognized at a recent meeting of the Goose Creek CISD Board of Trustees for receiving the Ike Groce Vision Award from the Texas Tennis Coaches Association. The award is presented to the coach who demonstrates a clear vision for his team, players and program. Pictured are (from left) Lee Martinez, assistant athletic director; Agustin Loredo III, board president; Tremmel and Dr. Randal O'Brien, Goose Creek CISD superintendent.



William Freeman (second from right), head boys soccer coach at Goose Creek Memorial High School, is congratulated at a recent meeting of the Goose Creek CISD Board of Trustees for being named the 2019 Texas Association of Soccer Coaches (TASCO) Region III Boys Soccer Coach of the Year. Freeman's teams advanced to the Regional Finals in 2016 and 2019 as well as to Bi-District Finals in 2017 and 2018. Pictured are (from left) Lee Martinez, assistant athletic director; Agustin Loredo III, board president; Freeman and Dr. Randal O'Brien, Goose Creek CISD superintendent.





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45th Annual Highlands Rotary CHILI FEAST

sold 600 raffle tickets, and raised about \$60,000 in net proceeds for its projects. The winner of the vehicle has a choice of a new pickup truck, SUV, or sports car as furnished by Turner Chevrolet.

In addition to the Raffle, events included a Live Auction, a Silent Auction, a Card Draw for a shotgun, and bowls and bowls of Chester's Famous Chili. Rotarians were aided in the event by the Interact Club of Chinquapin, and the Highlands Horizons club. Club president Sheila McDonald thanked everyone in the community that supported the Chili Feast and contributed to its success.



Chili Feast chairman Andy Scott at the microphone.



Special guests Constable Sherman Eagleton, and Judge Joe Stephens.



State Representative Briscoe Cain brought his wife and family.



Rotarians Larry White and Diana Weaver with Miss Highlands and Jr. Miss Highlands pull tickets.



Live Auction items: Above, a quilt, at Right, a child's go-cart.



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NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that Original Letters of Administration for Docket No. 480658; Estate of EDWARD GILLESPIE WHEELER Deceased; In Probate Court No. 4, of Harris County, Texas, Deceased, were issued on January 23, 2020.

MARY LYNNE MORRIS

The residence address of the administrator is in Harris County, Texas. The mailing address is:

c/o Weston Cotten 1500 Wallisville Rd Highlands, TX 77562

All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them within the time and in the manner prescribed by law. Dated this January 28, 2020

Weston Cotten

by WESTON COTTEN Attorney for the Estate

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that Original Letters of Administration for Docket No. 480665; Estate of RICHARD C. DEPEW Deceased; In Probate Court No. 1 of Harris County, Texas, Deceased, were issued on January 21, 2020.

RHONDA DEPEW

The residence address of the administrator is in Harris County, Texas. The mailing address is:

c/o Weston Cotten 1500 Wallisville Rd Highlands, TX 77562

All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them within the time and in the manner prescribed by law. Dated this January 28, 2020

Weston Cotten

by WESTON COTTEN Attorney for the Estate

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that Original Letters of Administration for Docket No. 481252; Estate of JEANNINE BIRNINGHAM Deceased; In Probate Court No. 3 of Harris County, Texas, Deceased, were issued on January 21, 2020.

TERRI ANN BIRMINGHAM LAPETINA AKA TERRI ANN BIRMINGHAM

The residence address of the administrator is in Harris County, Texas. The mailing address is:

c/o Weston Cotten 1500 Wallisville Rd Highlands, TX 77562

All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them within the time and in the manner prescribed by law. Dated this January 27, 2020

Weston Cotten

by WESTON COTTEN Attorney for the Estate

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that Original Letters of Administration for Docket No. 481258; Estate of EDWIN KEITH NEWSOM Deceased; In Probate Court No. 4, of Harris County, Texas, Deceased, were issued on January 21, 2020.

MARY J. TURNER COOLING

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All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them within the time and in the manner prescribed by law. Dated this January 28, 2020

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by WESTON COTTEN Attorney for the Estate

LEGAL NOTICE

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Notice is hereby given that Original Letters of Administration for Docket No. 480667; Estate of BILL LEE HOSKINS Deceased; In Probate Court No. 1, of Harris County, Texas, Deceased, were issued on January 16, 2020.

JERRY DEAN HOSKINS

The residence address of the administrator is in Harris County, Texas. The mailing address is:

c/o Weston Cotten 1500 Wallisville Rd Highlands, TX 77562

All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them within the time and in the manner prescribed by law. Dated this January 27, 2020

Weston Cotten

by WESTON COTTEN Attorney for the Estate

LEGAL NOTICE

LEGAL NOTICE

Channelview ISD Property Foreclosure Auction; February 4, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.; Bayou City Event Center at 9401 Knight Rd, Houston, TX 77045; Cause Number 2005-24661; TRACT 1: LT 12 BLK 5 FOREST RIVER ESTATES; HCAD # 0836240000012; Property Address: 0 Laurelwood Dr, Channelview, TX 77530. Opening Bid: \$8,500.00; call 832.777.3373 for more information.

LEGAL NOTICE

LEGAL NOTICE

Channelview ISD Property Foreclosure Auction; February 4, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.; Bayou City Event Center at 9401 Knight Rd, Houston, TX 77045; Cause Number 2007-20313; TRACT 1: LT 26 BLK 6 FOREST RIVER ESTATES; HCAD #0836250000026; Property Address: 0 Water Oak Dr, Channelview, TX 77530 and TRACT 2: LT 27 BLK 6 FOREST RIVER ESTATES; HCAD # 0836250000027; Property Address: 0 Water Oak Dr, Channelview, TX 77530 Opening Bid: \$16,000.00; call 832.777.3373 for more information

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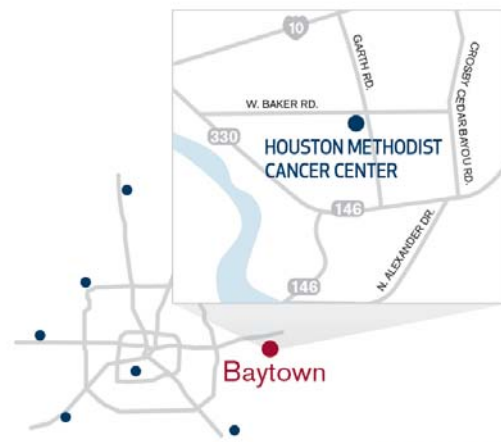
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