

HIGHLANDS CROSBY
Star ★ Courier

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IN THE STARS

EVENTS

APRIL 15
Tees & Tails Golf
Crosby-Huffman Chamber of Commerce annual tourney. (281) 328-6984

April 17
San Jacinto Battle Remembrance
Re-enactment at Fort Anahuac Park, Chambers County 10am to 3pm Donations welcome. San Jacinto Day at San Jacinto Memorial Park story telling, movies and music. 10am until 3 pm Adults \$12.

April 17 & 18
Gun & Knife Show Legion Post 658
Proceeds benefit Post 658, local veterans, community projects, and scholarships. Admission \$5, accompanied kids under 12 free.

Throngs enjoy Highlands Spring Classics

HIGHLANDS - Last Sunday was the day for the Highlands Sports Racing Spring Classic at the Baytown Boat Club 1600 Clearlake Road.

There were 26 entries and 23 drivers. Eight hours, 28 minutes and 45 seconds of racing time within 825 laps.

The Boat Club was packed at \$10 per entry, Highlands seemed deserted except for the Catholic Church.

Wes Cheatam, Chris Rinker and Dustin Terry were podium finishers.

The NGK Formula 1 Powerboat Championship Season began with Wesley Cheatam in first place, Chris Rinker in second and Dustin Terry in third. Tri-Hull winner was Cory Walker, Grant Schubert was second and Whitney Fletcher was third. Tri Hulls were more than half of the racing time with Formula 1 taking up just over 10% and Formula Lights less than 30% of the laps.

Formula Lights winner was Mark Schmerbauch, Grant Schubert was second.

NGK Formula 1 Powerboat Championship heads to Port Neches.



Race Director John Schubert brought these exciting races to the San Jacinto River, this exciting conclusion is first through third taking the checkered flag to victory.

See Spring Classic Photos, Continued on Page 8

Rotary sponsors new Library Book Van

HIGHLANDS - The Harris County Public Library Stratford Branch has a new Book Van, courtesy of the Rotary Club.

Club president Andy Scott explained that every third year, the Rotary International joins with a local club to sponsor and partially pay for a community project that the club proposes.

This year the club decided to continue their support of the local Stratford Library, and students, seniors and residents that are served by the library, by providing a Mobile Van to bring the books and other resources directly to the public.



HIGHLANDS ROTARIANS pose with the new Library Van sponsored by the club. L to R, Johnny Gaeke, Robert Woodall, Weston Cotten, Chuck Radney, Carol Radney, Sheila McDonald, Club President Andy Scott, Stratford Librarian Mandy Sheffield, President-Elect Jerry Fallin, Diana Weaver, Tricia Scott, Dr. Larry White, and Denise Smith. Picture by Rotarian Gil Hoffman.

This is especially helpful this year, since access to the interior of the library has been closed, due to the pandemic. It is not known when this restriction will end, so the van will be very helpful in delivering books to community centers, schools, senior living homes, and other locations where library resources will be needed.

Librarian Mandy Sheffield points out that all library services are still available, by using the "curb-side delivery," and now by a Van that can bring the resources right to your location. You can call the library at 281-426-3521 to request an item.

COVID-19
Cases as of April 13, 2021

HOUSTON AREA
19 COUNTIES

629,936 POSITIVE
6,706 DEATHS
582,535 RECOVERED

TEXAS

2,837,160 POSITIVE
49,289 DEATHS
22,072,551 TESTS

UNITED STATES

31,345,312 POSITIVE
563,440 DEATHS
408,992,581 TESTS

WORLDWIDE

137,251,434 POSITIVE
2,957,902 DEATHS
78,208,751 RECOVERED

BIRTHDAYS

Apr 15-Harry Stewart
Cherie Zarsky
Apr 16-Louis Marie Bradbury
Morgan Little
Jason Roffe
Apr 17-Pat Van Ness
Charlie Ward
Callen Reese Tittel
Apr 18-Monica McKinney
Mark Williams
Apr 19-Benny Clark
Magon Hencke
Apr 20-April McClelland
Apr 22-Robert McDowell

ANNIVERSARIES

Apr 17-Roy & Pauline
Cutbirth
Apr 19-Vance & Cecilia
Banik
Apr 23-Jerry & Jeanette
Thompson

DEATHS

Loanda Inez Brooks
Lockridge, 85, Crosby

Leaders oppose SB7 as voter suppression

HOUSTON - Amid a national outcry against proposed restrictive voting bills in many Republican controlled states, Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner and Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo hosted a press conference Monday to voice their opposition to Texas House Bill 6 and Texas Senate Bill 7.

"These bills are going through on our watch," said Turner. "What's happening in the state of Texas, in the legislature, is wrong."

"Soon enough, we will have taken the largest step back since Jim Crow," said Hidalgo. "The dominoes of basic voting rights are



Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo



Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner

starting to fall."

Lt Governor Dan Patrick also held a news conference in Austin this week, angrily defending the bills and accusing opponents of lying about whether they restricted or limited vot-

ing, and especially minority voters.

Among other items, Texas HB 6 would prohibit government officials

Continued. See SB7 OPPOSITION, page 2

Sen. Alvarado sponsors Casino legislation

By Jada Mier

AUSTIN - New, bipartisan legislation was introduced in the House HJR 133 by Rep. John Kuempel, R-Seguin. In the Senate SJR 49 was introduced by Sen. Carol Alvarado, D-Houston. Both bills seek to legalize casino gambling and sports betting in the Lone Star State through a constitutional amendment. The bills by state Rep. John Kuempel, R-Seguin, and Sen. Carol Alvarado, D-Houston, would allow four casino resorts to be built in Austin, the Dallas-Fort Worth area, Houston and San Antonio and would also legalize sports wagering. The state's three federally-recognized Indi-



STATE SENATOR CAROL ALVARADO

an tribes would also be able to expand full-fledged gambling, including slot machines, on their land, a right the state has long denied them.

"Now is the time to let

CONTINUED SEE CASINO LEGISLATION, PAGE 6

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FM 1942 crash closes highway

CROSBY Sometime nearly 5 p.m. an apparent accident in the 3100 block of FM 1942 occurred that looked like a head on collision.

The passenger vehicles were more than 20 yards apart after the vehicles came to rest and that tends to indicate speeds at near those that road signs indicate.

Life Flight helicopters were called for both occupants of the vehicles by HCESD#5, the ambulance service for Crosby. Harris County Sheriff's Deputies shut down the highway from Holy Road west and Krampota east.

Traffic at those locations was backed up for miles and a lengthy wait



This automobile ravelled fartherest past the point of impact across the highway and into a ditch. the left front of the vehicle is crushed in completely. This car seems to have been eastbound.



This SUV seems to have stopped abruptly after impact and have less damage to the cockpit than the car. This vehicle was westbound

before the extractions and investigations could be concluded.

For some time, traffic on that highway had been heavy beginning when schools let out and going until the end of the daylight.

An industrial parking lot, new residences and commercial venues have populated the once Shell Road to capacity and TX-DoT has made some emergency adaptations but growth in the vicinity has surpassed the adaptations. The venue remanis the principle venue between Crosby and Mont Belvieu with few cut off roadways.

The relative conditions of both drivers isn't told at this time.

Two now accused of murder of 17 year old Highlands lad

HIGHLANDS – April 5, around 5:00 p.m., investigators with the Harris County Sheriff's Office Homicide Unit received information of a possible body dumped in a field behind a church on Wallisville Road in east Harris County.

Now two local youths nearly the same age as the victim are charged with murder of Abraham Mata, 17-years-old, of Highlands.

Multiple stab wounds were found on the body and the body had either been killed there or dragged not far to the location upon which it was located.

Investigators along with uniformed deputies conducted a search of the area and discovered the remains of Mata about 200 yards behind The Second Baptist Church on the 400 block Wallisville Road. The remains had been partially buried under brush and tree branches to conceal it.

The last vehicle to leave the area was Harris County Institute of Forensic Science at about 11:00p.m. that day.

Detectives began asking about the last known associates and location of Mata and



CHRIS PAZ OF HIGHLANDS



LEROY LOPEZ OF BAYTOWN

leaned that he was last seen with Leroy Lopez and Christopher Paz both 17-years-old.

Paz lives on Wallisville Road, Lopez is from Baytown frequently a visitor to Highlands. Both are now charged with murder in the death of Mata but what motive caused the killing has yet to be made clear.

This is not Paz first brush with the law over a violent incident. Precinct 3 Constables Deputies picked up this youth for an incident in which he allegedly hurled a brick at a family member.

Both Paz and Lopez are still in Harris County jail on unrelated charges.

Man shot dead in Highlands home

HIGHLANDS – At about midday on Monday, April 12, a homeowner called 911 saying an erractly acting man had entered his home and refused to leave; before deputies arrived that same man had shot the other man.

Deputies were notified of a home invasion call at 12:15 p.m. in the 900 block of Jones Road. The homeowner indicated that a man entered his home without invitation, "acting all crazy" and refused to leave when asked to do so. Harris County Sheriff's District 3 Deputies were travelling to the scene when a man was gunned

down inside the home.

A call went out for EMS and when they arrived the man that had been shot was determined to be deceased.

The homeowner said that the man that entered his home was acting as if disturbed. Later the man began to act more aggressive, he said the home invader threatened to kill the homeowner and was advancing upon him. The homeowner said he was in fear for his life and shot the man.

Pending conclusion of an investigation the case will go to the Harris County Grand Jury to determine if a crime was committed.

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CROSBY'S HOME TOWN HOME CARE

Barbers Hill Dayton Press

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THURSDAY, APRIL 15, 2021

MONT BELVIEU, TEXAS 77580

ON THE HILL

Chambers County Youth Rodeo

Save the date for the 2021 Chambers County Youth Livestock Show and Ranch Rodeo:

- Chambers County Ranch Rodeo – Friday April 16 through Sunday April 18, 2021
- Chambers County Horse Show – Saturday, April 24, 2021
- Chambers County Youth Livestock Show – Wednesday, April 28 through Saturday, May 1, 2021

Dayton Chamber hosts Jones Library Art Wall event

The Chamber of Commerce is hosting a ribbon-cutting for the Jones Public Library Art Wall this Wednesday, April 14th, at 4 PM. The library will also be unveiling our newly decorated Texas Room at this time.
Jones Public Library
801 S Cleveland St
Ste A
Dayton TX 77535

Eagle Open Golf Tournament

Date: April 16, 2021
Time: 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM CDT

Event Description: Our Annual Eagle Open Golf Tournament will be held on Friday, April 16, 2021! Stick around for a Crawfish Boil provided by the City of Mont Belvieu.

Event Sponsors:
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Gallant Builders
Targa Resources
Community Toyota,
Community Honda,
Community Kia
LANXESS Corporation
Enterprise Products Operating LLC
Purcell Construction, Inc.
Barbers Hill Bank

Location:
Eagle Pointe Golf Club
Mont Belvieu, TX
Date/Time
Information:
Friday, April 16, 2021
8:30AM - Registration & Breakfast
10:30AM - Shotgun Start
Contact Information:
Ashley Wells
Please contact the Chamber office, 281-576-5440 or
Ashley@thewcccc.com for your reservation.

Baytown Mayor Receives Vaccine at Houston Methodist Baytown

BAYTOWN — (April 1, 2021) — Taking advantage of the state's decision to make the COVID-19 vaccine available to all Texans age 16 and over, Baytown Mayor Brandon Capetillo received his first dose of the vaccine on March 31.

The Texas Department of State Health Services opened registration for the vaccine to all Texans 16 and older on March 29, while still asking providers to prioritize appointments for people 80 and older. Capetillo said he is happy to do his part to help bring the COVID-19 pandemic to an end.

"The sooner our citizens are vaccinated the quicker we will be able to return to our normal routines," Capetillo said. "I encourage everyone who can to register to be vaccinated."

To date, nearly 10 million Texans have received a dose of the vaccine since it was made available in December 2020. Houston Methodist serves as a state-designated vaccine hub and has administered over 483,210 vaccines. Houston Methodist Baytown Hospital's vaccine center has administered thousands of doses to Baytown area residents.

"Houston Methodist Baytown is a great resource for the COVID-19



Mayor Brandon Capetillo Receives Vaccine

vaccine. The process is well coordinated, making the experience efficient," Capetillo said.

While Texas Governor Greg Abbott lifted the statewide mask mandate and allowed businesses to operate at 100% on March 10, Dr. Shawn Tittle, Houston Methodist Baytown chief medical officer/quality officer, said even though the number of people vaccinated has risen and infections and hospi-

talizations continue to drop across the state, area residents must not let their guard down too soon.

"As emerging virus variants threaten another potential spike in cases, we must continue to practice the virus mitigation practices—wearing masks, practicing social distancing, avoiding large crowds and practicing proper hand hygiene—that we know are effective in preventing the spread," Tittle said.

Houston Methodist Baytown Hospital is leading the fight against COVID-19 in the Baytown area, not only as a vaccine hub, but also in providing cutting edge treatments to combat the disease.

Following the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's approval in December of an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) for a therapy consisting of monoclonal antibody—referred to as Bam-

lanivimab—in treating the coronavirus, the hospital opened a special infusion clinic dedicated to providing the intravenous therapy for adults who are at high risk of developing severe COVID-19 symptoms. The experimental therapy has shown to be effective in preventing mild COVID-19 infections from getting worse and helps reduce hospitalizations by interfering with the ability of the virus to infect the patient's cells.

Houston Methodist Baytown Hospital is taking every necessary precaution during the coronavirus pandemic to keep you and our staff members safe, including, screening all patients, ensuring only those without COVID-19 symptoms are seen in the office; wearing masks and personal protective equipment (PPE) while providing patient care; reorganizing waiting rooms and check-in lines to ensure social distancing, and implementing additional sanitation processes to disinfect all equipment and surfaces.

Houston Methodist provides a wealth of coronavirus and COVID-19 vaccine information at houstonmethodist.org/coronavirus/coronavirus-resources.

Middleton against Taxpayer supported lobbying

OPINION, by Mayes Middleton

Last month, the Chambers County Commissioners Court voted 4-1 in favor of a resolution opposing the ban on taxpayer-funded lobbying (HB 749). In a time when Texans in Chambers County are suffering in the wake of a worst winter storm in a generation, the Commissioners Court decided a main priority for the county was taking more of your tax money to give to insid-

er Austin lobbyists.

The resolution authored by Commissioner Tommy Hammond was supported by Judge Jimmy Sylvia, and Commissioners Mark Tice, Tommy Hammond, and Billy Combs. Only one Commissioner supported Chambers County taxpayers in opposing the measure. Commissioner Jimmy Gore was the lone "no" vote on the court.

The Chambers County Republican Party recently condemned the Commissioners Court's actions and called for them to rescind the resolution.



RALLY TO SUPPORT BAN ON TAXPAYER-FUNDED LOBBYING

Last week, I was honored to welcome Texans from all across our state to the Capitol to support several conservative priorities, including House Bill 749—the ban on taxpayer-funded lobbying. I am glad to have their support for this vital legislation! You can see pictures of the rally.

Learn Symptoms of Respiratory Illness

BAYTOWN — (April 9, 2021) — Respiratory conditions can take many forms; from mild nuisance cases to severe issues, including lung cancer. Understanding the symptoms and early detection of potentially severe illnesses are key to preserving lung health.

There are steps you can take to prevent disease and boost your respiratory health in case you do get sick. Dr. Houssam Oueini, a pulmonologist with Houston Methodist Baytown Hospital, emphasizes that taking good care of your quality of life and protect against respiratory illnesses. It's important to know that anyone can have mild to severe symptoms with either COVID-19 or flu.

"More serious complications from respiratory illness are a bigger issue for older adults and anyone who may have underlying health conditions. Yet, it's possible to experience severe symptoms at any age," Oueini said.

Monitor your symptoms if you're not feeling well. Mild symptoms include

having a low-grade fever, nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat, mild cough and mild body aches. If you experience such symptoms, get tested for COVID-19. Stay home and isolate yourself from others to avoid spreading illness, even if you test negative for COVID-19.

For moderate symptoms, including fever over 100.4 degrees, persistent cough, temporary shortness of breath and feeling like you need to stay in bed. Oueini stresses getting tested for COVID-19 and contacting your doctor about worsening symptoms.

"If you experience severe symptoms, including difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, wheezing, pain or pressure in the chest, confusion, trouble staying awake and bluish lips or face, you should seek emergency medical care," Oueini said.

Mild cases of respiratory illness can often be managed with rest, fluids and fever-reducing medicines at home. However, don't wait to see a doctor if you're in a high-risk group and experiencing worsen-



DR. HOUSSAM OUEINI

ing symptoms. Mild or moderate symptoms can quickly become severe for older adults and those who have heart disease, diabetes, cancer or chronic respiratory problems.

If you have chronic respiratory conditions, such as asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), it's important to manage the condition closely with your doctor. "There are things we are doing to reduce exposure risk for patients, including telehealth appointments and video visits," said Oueini.

Oueini recommends taking steps like getting regular exercise, quitting smoking and vaping and minimizing exposure to allergens to keep your lungs healthy.

"The best thing everyone can do to help protect each other is to follow recommended respiratory practices," said Oueini.

New Lung Cancer Screening Guidelines
The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) released its revised 2021 guidelines that established those who meet the following criteria as eligible for lung cancer screening tests:

- Adults aged 50 to 80 years
- A tobacco smoking history of 20 pack-years
- Current smokers or those who have quit within the past 15 years
- No current signs or symptoms of lung cancer
- No chest CT scan in the last year

The revised guidelines are designed to make more people eligible for screening. A written order is required for all lung cancer screening procedures. For more information on the Lung Cancer Screening Program at Houston Meth-

odist Baytown, call 281-420-8809 or visit houstonmethodist.org/lung-screening.

Houston Methodist Baytown Hospital is taking every necessary precaution during the coronavirus pandemic to keep you and our staff members safe, including, screening all patients, ensuring only those without COVID-19 symptoms are seen in the office; wearing masks and personal protective equipment (PPE) while providing patient care; reorganizing waiting rooms and check-in lines to ensure social distancing, and implementing additional sanitation processes to disinfect all equipment and surfaces.

The experts with Houston Methodist Lung Associates at Baytown—Dr. Oueini, Skantha Manjunath, MD and Dr. Shawn Tittle—provide care for a wide range of respiratory conditions, such as asthma, COPD, pulmonary fibrosis and emphysema. For more information and to schedule an appointment, visit houstonmethodist.org/baytown, or call 281-428-4510.

★ OPINION PAGE ★

COUNTY CONNECTION
Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo



Have You Signed Up for a Vaccine Yet?

Last week, I followed my own advice and got vaccinated! I want to thank every frontline health worker and Harris County Public Health employee who has been working to save lives for the past year. Now more than ever we have reason to be hopeful and proud of the work we're doing together to beat the coronavirus. More than 1 million people have received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine in Harris County. Over 750,000 people have signed up for our waitlist and our call center has fielded more than half a million calls and registered over 27,000 people by phone. Our Health Department is vaccinating a larger proportion of vulnerable groups compared to others. This is what progress looks like.



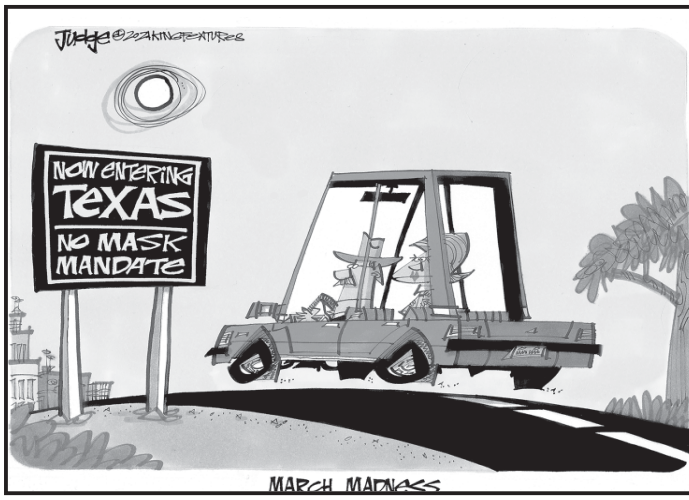
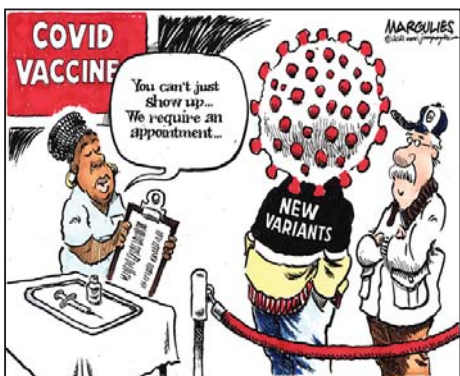
But as County Judge it's my job to look beyond the immediate challenges of limited supply of vaccines and toward our next obstacle. If you look around the corner you'll see evidence that there is a very large proportion of our community that remains wary of getting vaccinated. One national survey shows that up to 40% of Texans say they will either not get a COVID-19 vaccine or are undecided on whether or not to do so. So here's the bottom line — Harris County will never reach herd immunity if up to 40% of our residents refuse to get vaccinated. Vaccine hesitancy is a clear and present danger to our collective health and our ability to pull through this crisis. We need to do more than just offer vaccines and hope folks will show up to receive it.

That's why we launched the Stay Smart, Do Your Part media campaign to reach folks where they are through ads and by going door-to-door in the hardest-hit neighborhoods. It's why we've built a registration process that builds equity by prioritizing vulnerable communities and targeting high risk zip codes. We've provided vaccines at over 77 locations across our County, including communities of faith, homeless shelters, and assisted living facilities. We are providing transportation support for those who need it. But we need everyone to do more. Clinics, hospitals, and pharmacies must make sure they're doing outreach in underserved communities. Vaccine providers must make registration easier for elderly folks and working families and drop any ID requirements that may discourage undocumented or uninsured residents from getting a vaccine. As for our residents, the gates are now open for everyone 16 and over. If you can drive a car, you can and should get a vaccine. Please visit ReadyHarris.org or call 832-927-8787 to sign up for our waitlist now. If you already received your vaccine, help us spread the word to your network and community!


This is on all of us — the sooner we are vaccinated, the sooner we can get back to doing the things we love. We've waited so long for this pandemic to end so that we can return to normal. The remedy is here, we just have to take it.

Go get vaccinated!

Sincerely,
Lina Hidalgo



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS
By Gary Borders



Governor rules "No government mandated vaccine passports"

Gov. Greg Abbott issued an executive order last week banning state agencies, cities or counties from creating a "vaccine passport" requirement.

In addition, organizations that receive public funds are prohibited from requiring consumers to prove they have received the COVID-19 vaccine. That includes businesses that receive money from the state in return for providing goods and services.

However, nursing homes and other long-term care facilities can still require that their residents are vaccinated under his order.

"Every day, Texans are returning to normal life as more people get the safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine. But, as I've said all along, these vaccines are always voluntary and never forced," Abbott said.

VACCINES CONTINUE STEADY RISE ACROSS STATE

As of Sunday, just more than 9 million Texans have received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, and 5.46 million are fully vaccinated, according to the Texas Department of State Health Services. DSHS urges those who have not been vaccinated to go to the state's Texas Public Health Vaccine Scheduler, which can be found at getthevaccine.dshs.texas.gov.

Meanwhile, the state's weekly shipment of COVID-19 vaccines dropped this week after a manufacturing error in a Baltimore plant ruined a 15-million batch of the single-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

Last week, the state received 2.5 million doses from the three manufacturers, an amount that dropped to 1.9 million this week, as J&J plays catchup. The company has pledged to deliver 100 million doses nationwide by the end of May, according to an NPR report. J&J reduced its Texas allocation this week by about 350,000.

COVID-19 CASES RISE, BUT DEATHS DROP



The number of new COVID-19 cases in Texas rose to 24,333 last week, up more than 2,500 from the previous week, according to the Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center.

The number of deaths decreased to 512, down nearly 20 percent from the previous week.

At its peak in January, the state recorded more than four-fold the number of deaths with 2,311 recorded in a single week. At this point, nearly 50,000 Texans have died from COVID-19.

The number of lab-confirmed COVID-19 patients hospitalized stayed steady at 2,804, according to DSHS.

CONTEMPT ORDER AGAINST SALON OWNER TOSSED OUT

The Texas State Supreme Court on Friday threw out a contempt order against a Dallas salon owner who refused to close last year when all non-essential businesses were ordered.

Shelley Luther tore up a cease-and-desist order from Dallas County and was fined \$7,000 and sentenced to a week in jail. The high court ruled unanimously that the restraining order was too vague, and that the contempt of court decree issued by a district judge should be voided as well.

Luther's defiance sparked national coverage, prompting Abbott to reverse part of his order that called for jail time for business owners who did not shut down last year after the

pandemic outbreak.

Luther ran as a Republican for state Senate last year, losing in a December runoff to Drew Springer, R-Muenster.

PAXTON DRAWING POTENTIAL HIGH-PROFILE OPPONENTS

Two candidates with famous surnames are planning to run against Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton in 2022, according to several media outlets.

Paxton, under indictment since 2015 on securities fraud charges, is also battling a whistleblower lawsuit filed by former employees accusing him of bribery and improper dealings with an Austin investor. He denies wrongdoing in both cases.

Democrat Joe Jaworski, a former Galveston mayor and a grandson of Watergate prosecutor Leon Jaworski, announced his plans to run last summer. And last week, George P. Bush, state land commissioner and grandson of President George H.W. Bush, told a talk-radio host that he is considering challenging Paxton next year in the Republican primary.

Paxton has indicated he will run for a third term.

ABBOTT DEMANDS SHUTDOWN OF SAN ANTONIO MINOR FACILITY

The governor's latest salvo against the federally run unaccompanied minor facilities included a letter to Vice President Kamala Harris, who has been tapped to head the effort dealing with a large influx of unaccompanied minors seeking entrance into the United States.

Abbott's letter demanded the Biden administration shut down a facility in San Antonio under investigation by the state for allegations of child abuse and neglect.

"The Biden administration opened the borders and failed to plan for the influx of unaccompanied children crossing the border, and now we are faced with our worst fears—allegations of child abuse and neglect," Abbott said.

To date, there has been no direct response from Harris.

SOON, MORE TEXANS WILL HAVE TO DIAL 10 DIGITS TO MAKE LOCAL CALLS

Folks living in the Panhandle, El Paso area, South Texas, and Deep East Texas will soon have to join the majority of Texans and use all 10 digits when making local calls.

Last summer, the Federal Communications Commission approved "988" as the abbreviated dialing number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. In Texas, the 254, 361, 409, 806, 830, 915 and 940 area codes all contain the 988 prefix.

A "permissive dialing period" begins April 24, during which seven-digit calls will still go through. But after Oct. 24, in those area codes, only calls dialed with 10 digits will be connected.

THE POSTSCRIPT
By Carrie Classon

Stable Footing

The tree was lying on its side when I got to it.

It was a nice-looking pine tree, fluffy and full and as tall as me. The strong winds coupled with some unstable footing had caused it to fall over. This seemed too sad to simply walk by. I went over to the tree and, with a little effort, got it standing upright again. It looked much happier. I finished my walk, feeling I had done my part.

The next day, it was lying on its side again.

I examined it more closely. It had been relying on the rotting remains of another fallen pine to stand upright and the old log had finally given way, taking the young pine with it. I set my hiking poles down and hauled a couple of large rocks lying nearby over to the base of the pine, propping it back up.

The next day, it had fallen over again. This was going to be a bigger project than I expected. I hauled a lot of rocks over and piled them at the base of the young tree. "There! That should hold you." That night, as I sat on the patio, I noticed how the wind was picking up. "I bet my tree has fallen again," I thought.

I was right.

So, on the fourth day, I found another downed log, similar to the one my tree had been relying on, but not as rotten, and hauled it over. I jammed one end into the soil and propped the other end against the narrow tree trunk. A family of bikers nearby watched me curiously, as I piled rocks on top of the log to further secure it.

"Just helping this little tree!" I explained. They smiled, assuming I was crazy, I'm sure.

Yesterday, I returned to the tree. It was standing upright. "Hurray!" I said aloud. At that moment, I remembered my husband, Peter, and I had decided to move.

So far, this decision has resulted in little action on our part. But yesterday Peter ordered a moving van, so presumably things will become very real very soon.

We have lots of good reasons to move.

My parents and my sister and most of my relatives live in the Midwest, as does most of Peter's family. Particularly during the pandemic, we realized how much we missed family, how many occasions we had missed, and how quickly time passes.

And so, we have decided to make the move and we are both filled with mixed feelings because it is hard to leave a place, no matter how many reasons there are to be somewhere else.

Standing in front of this little tree, hoping it would now become a huge, towering pine, I felt a small pang because I would never know. That is the hardest thing about moving. I will never know what I will miss, not living here.

But I was never going to know.

This tree may outlive me by hundreds of years, or it may perish by the end of the summer. I will never know this, nor will I know what any path I have not taken might hold.

Instead, I imagine, because that is all I can do to keep myself upright. I imagine spending my mother's next birthday with her and I imagine going to the theater with my oldest friend and I imagine seeing my nephew graduate.

And, in the back of my mind, I imagine this tree standing tall for hundreds of years after I am dead, on stable footing because of me.

Till next time,
Carrie

Carrie Classon's memoir is called, "Blue Yarn." Learn more at CarrieClasson.com

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★ MILESTONES PAGE ★

★
OBITUARIES

LOANDA INEZ BROOKS LOCKRIDGE

Loanda Inez Brooks Lockridge was born January 23, 1936 in Morgan City, AL and passed away on Tuesday, the 6th of April 2021, joining her beloved Bill. She is preceded in death by her parents, Homer and Myrtle Brooks; her older brother, Harold Brooks; and her husband, Dr William E Lockridge.



Loanda grew up in the mountains of Alabama with her parents and two older brothers. Working and attending College in Huntsville, AL she met the love of her life, Sgt. Lockridge, while he was stationed at Redstone Arsenal. After he graduated from Officer Candidates' School their adventures and travels began. They finally settled in El Paso, TX where they raised their family; Bill and Loanda were married for 59 years until his death in 2015. In El Paso, Loanda became Avis Rent-a-Car's District Manager for 25+ years. Loanda joined the Soroptimist Club of El Paso becoming a mentor for other young business women and served as President for two years. Her

second and final career was Real Estate. She loved the wheeling and dealing of Real Estate and was Licensed in both Texas and New Mexico. Upon Bill's retirement, they built their dream home in Ruidoso, NM, where they spent their summers and spent their winters in their home next door to their daughter in Crosby, TX. Loanda loved adventure, and with her big heart and sweet disposition she was always up for a challenge. She received her Pilots License in 1974; she parascialed with her granddaughters; sky dived with her grandsons; zip-lined; white-water rafted; paraglided; went to four

Super Bowls and even snowmobiled thru Montana. Loanda loved to travel but her most favorite thing in the world was to dance; she is now dancing in Heaven!

Loanda is survived by her brother, Herman Brooks (Zelma); sister-in-law Nellie Brooks; her two children, Stephen Lockridge (Roseanna); and Wendy Reed (Chris), and her five grandchildren, Rodney Reed (Helen), Justin Reed (Lindsey), Joshua Lockridge, Sarah Long (David) and Kelly Rogers (Jacob); and seven great grandchildren.

A Visitation and Funeral Service will be held at Sterling White Funeral Home in Highlands, TX on Wednesday, the 14th of April, Visitation 1:00 p.m. with Service at 2:00 p.m. In lieu of customary remembrances, the family request you consider a donation to Alzheimer's Foundation of America at alzfdn.org.

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Social Security Matters

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

Can I Still Suspend My Social Security Benefits?

Dear Rusty: Is it still possible to suspend Social Security benefits for a time? And, if so, how often? Signed: Curious Senior

Dear Curious Senior: If you have already reached your full retirement age and are receiving Social Security benefits which you claimed earlier, you can voluntarily suspend your benefits to earn Delayed Retirement Credits (DRCs) and get a higher benefit amount when your payments are resumed. While your benefit payments are suspended, you will earn an additional .67% for each full month of suspension (8% per full year of suspension). If you wish to do so, you can sus-

pend until you are 70 years old, after which you will no longer receive Delayed Retirement Credits, and your benefit will have reached maximum.

At age 70, Social Security will automatically restart your benefit at the higher amount, as appropriate for the number of DRCs you earned while suspended. If you prefer or need the money sooner, you can request that your benefit be restarted earlier than age 70.

You can voluntarily suspend and restart benefits more than once if that is necessary, but the process requires some lead time to stop/restart benefits and there are other important factors to consider. If you suspend your personal SS retirement benefit now to

gain a higher payment amount later, while you are suspended no other benefits based on your record (such as a spousal or other dependent benefits) will be paid. And, if you currently have your Medicare premium deducted from your Social Security benefit, suspending your SS benefits will require you to make alternate arrangements for direct payment of your Medicare premium(s). You would need to pay your Medicare premium via mail or by direct withdrawal from your bank account, or by charging a credit/debit card. If you decide to suspend your Social Security payments, you will need to contact Social Security directly at 1.800.772.1213 (or call your local SS office) to do so. When requesting your benefit suspension, you can also make arrangements through Social Security to pay your Medicare premium separately.

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Crosby American Legion
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Crosby ISD
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14670 FM 2100 Crosby,

Urgent Care MDs
No appointment needed
9 until 9
14405 FM 2100, Crosby
(832) 821-9780

Neighbors Emergency Center
No appointment needed
14120 FM 2100, Crosby, TX
(281) 328-7770

Crosby Community Center (when open)
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(281) 462-0543

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Alvarado sponsors Casino Legislation,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

voters decide on legalizing casino gaming across Texas," Alvarado said in a statement. "Texas loses billions of dollars a year to our neighboring states that allow gaming and this measure would bring that revenue back to Texas, create tens of thousands of jobs and cut down on illegal gambling."

The number of casinos would be capped at four, not counting those built by tribes on Indian land. Three tribes currently operate casinos here, with limited gaming, slot machines, and Vegas-style table games. These are the Kickapoo tribe in Eagle Pass, the Tigua tribe in El Paso, and the Alabama-Coushatta tribe in Livingston. The state filed a lawsuit in 2017 to close these because they violated the Texas constitution ban on gambling, but federal Indian Gaming law allowed them, and the matter remains unresolved in the courts. Limited gambling would also be allowed at certain racetracks.

Senator Alvarado introduced the bill saying "Bill SJR 49 is not to approve gambling but it's to give the voters the opportunity to vote on gaming. So, if it passed there would be an election in November and Texans would go to the polls and vote on it. We would then come back in the next session which is in 2023 and pass the enabling legislation which would get into the specifics of gaming."

Alvarado wanted to really emphasize that this is really just to let the voters decide. She explained that plan is not just gaming but a 4-5-star hotel, restaurants, shops, an entertainment complex as well as conference and convention center space. "This is about gaming but it's about so much more, it's about creating jobs, 185,000 jobs created through construction and development, 70,000 jobs that would be direct and ongoing."

Weighing in on the probability of the bill being passed Alvarado says "I am prepared for a tough uphill climb I've been filing the gaming casino bill since 2009. This is the first time I have some republican support. John Kuempel the author of the bill is a republican, so we have a democrat in the senate and a republican in the house which is encouraging." There are only regions where these destination resorts would be but no specific locations. She encourages people to call their Texas legislators to support the bill. She says she hopes that people focus on the attraction of boosting our economy and creating jobs. "Coming off the heels of the pandemic a lot of people lost their jobs, we have to continue to find ways to grow our economy. Although this would be six years out we have to start someplace and I think this is one way to generate jobs."

SB7 Opposition,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

from sending mail-in ballot applications to voters. In addition, it would require anyone providing help to a disabled voter at the polls to show an ID and share why they're helping the disabled individual.

Texas SB 7 would require people to have legitimate reasons to vote by mail, get rid of drive-thru voting, and allow poll watchers to record video.

"Texas is on the list to potentially become a state known for Jim Crow tactics in 2021," said Bishop James Dixon from the NAACP Houston.

"A poll watcher will be going around video recording," said Turner. "Do you know how intimidating that is?"

Texas State Senator Bryan Hughes drafted Senate Bill 7.

"We've had situations where a poll worker says 'x' happened, and the election worker says that didn't happen, and there's no evidence," said Hughes. "That's the reason for allowing videos."

"To those who say there's no evidence of widespread voter fraud, my question to them is how much fraud is acceptable?" said Hughes. "How much is enough? Shouldn't elections be fair? Shouldn't they be accurate? That's what the bill is about."

Hughes, and Republican members of the Texas legislature, believe these proposed bills aren't about preventing votes. SB 7 would also involve a tracking system for mail-in ballots and a type of voting "receipt".

Judge Hidalgo strongly

criticized the proposed legislation, issuing this statement:

"During the historic 2020 presidential election, Harris County instituted various innovative and groundbreaking methods to ensure that every eligible resident had the ability to exercise their constitutional rights to vote, such as tripling the number of Early Vote locations, establishing drive-thru voting, and expanding polling hours, including a one day 24-hour voting location. We had the highest turnout in a generation - almost 70% of registered voters voted. Now these advances in equity and access are under direct attack by proposed state legislation SB7 and related bills.

"The proposed voting restrictions in SB7 are political theater that sadly harms voters of both parties," said Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo. "Policies grounded in the Big Lie - the falsehood that mass voter fraud exists - are wrong and only harm our democracy. I'm saddened to see any legislative proposal designed to limit voting hours or access to the ballot box. Increasing access to voting shouldn't be a partisan issue."

SB7 would restrict information on how to vote by mail, preventing the County from sending voters mail-in ballot applications. SB7 would also limit voting hours and would completely stop 24-hour voting, shutting out thousands of voters such as first responders and medical workers who work non-traditional hours. It would

eliminate drive-through voting, encourage harassment of voters inside polling locations by allowing individuals to approach and record voters inside the polling location, and would lead to long lines by dictating Harris County's distribution of voting machines.

We call on leaders, companies, and individuals to make their voice heard against bills that create obstacles to voting, under the guise of voter fraud, of which there is no substantial evidence.

A handful of large companies have voiced their opposition to these proposed bills. American Airlines said in a statement, "...As a Texas-based business, we must stand up for the rights of our team members and customers who call Texas home, and honor the sacrifices made by generations of Americans to protect and expand the right to vote..."

"Read the bill," said Texas State Senator Paul Bettencourt. "There's a lot of good things in it and not what's being said. [We're going to] fight for what is right, which is voter integrity. As Senator Hughes says, he's trying to make it easy to vote, but hard to cheat. That's what SB 7 is all about."

"If by chance these bills get through, there is a price for voter suppression," said Turner.

Neither of these proposed bills have been approved. They can still be changed or rejected.

-- Article modified from a story by Matthew Seedorff, FOX26.

TOP TEN MOVIES —

1. Godzilla vs. Kong (PG-13) Alexander Skarsgard, Millie Bobby Brown
 2. The Unholy (PG-13) Jeffrey Dean Morgan, Cricket Brown
 3. Nobody (R) Bob Odenkirk, Aleksey Serebryakov
 4. Raya and the Last Dragon (PG) animated
 5. Tom & Jerry (PG) Chloe Grace Moretz, Colin Jost
 6. The Courier (PG-13) Benedict Cumberbatch, Merab Ninidze
 7. The Girl Who Believes in Miracles (PG) Mira Sorvino, Austyn Johnson
 8. Chaos Walking (PG-13) Tom Holland, Daisy Ridley
 9. The Croods: A New Age (PG) animated
 10. French Exit (R) Michelle Pfeiffer, Lucas Hedges
- Source: Box Office Mojo (c) 2021 King Features Synd., Inc.

TOP TEN VIDEO, DVD

- for release week of March 12, 2021 —Video on Demand
1. News of the World (PG-13) Tom Hanks
 2. Promising Young Woman (R) Carey Mulligan
 3. The Little Things (R) Denzel Washington
 4. The Croods: A New Age (PG) animated
 5. SpongeBob Movie: Sponge on the Run (PG) animated
 6. Cosmic Sin (R) Frank Grillo
 7. Monster Hunter (PG-13) Milla Jovovich
 8. Six Minutes to Midnight (PG-13) Nigel Lindsay
 9. Let Him Go (R) Diane Lane
 10. SAS: Red Notice (R) Sam Heughan

Amber Waves



R.F.D.



The Spats



Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆

◆ Moderate ◆◆ Challenging
◆◆◆ HOO BOY!

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HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTNOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

1. The Martiana Trench in the Pacific Ocean; 2. The Treclaps Tattler; 3. Wuthering Heights; 4. Dagebahr; 5. 2004; 6. Four; 7. Gin; 8. 1967; 9. Flax; 10. Epidemiology

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Posting Date April 12, 2021 King Crossword

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ACROSS

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- 5 "Ben- —"
- 8 Lawman Wyatt
- 12 "Frozen" snow queen
- 13 "Right you —!"
- 14 Computer brand
- 15 Slightly
- 16 Actress Long
- 17 Hindu royal
- 18 Tidy up
- 20 Toto, to Dorothy
- 22 Peyton's brother
- 23 Commonest English word
- 24 Easter entrees
- 27 Vinegar variety
- 32 X-ray's cousin
- 33 Chopper abbr.
- 34 Hostel
- 35 "Becoming" author Obama
- 38 Read quickly
- 39 Knock
- 40 Wildebeest
- 42 "Yippee!"
- 45 Held up
- 49 "Mamma Mia" group
- 50 Gardner of Hollywood
- 52 Actress Kate
- 6 Swiss canton
- 7 Harvest
- 8 Sultry singer Kitt
- 9 Campus figure
- 10 Gambling mecca
- 11 Bluenose
- 19 Chicago transport
- 21 UFO crew
- 24 "Let me think ..."
- 25 "Exodus" hero
- 26 Germs
- 28 Rocker Rose
- 29 "Shampoo" Oscar winner
- 30 — pickle
- 31 Blitzer's channel
- 36 Badger
- 37 Clean-air org.
- 38 Hand in
- 41 "Forget it!"
- 42 Corridor
- 43 Theater award
- 44 Tug
- 46 Innocent one
- 47 Ms.
- 48 Brockovich
- 49 June honorees
- 51 Half of XIV

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Trivia test

1. GEOGRAPHY: What is the deepest point in Earth's oceans?
2. COMICS: What is the name of the newspaper in the "Shoe" comic strip?
3. LITERATURE: Which 19th-century novel features the characters Catherine and Heathcliff?
4. MOVIES: What was the name of Yoda's home planet in the "Star Wars" movie series?
5. BUSINESS: When did the social media service Facebook launch?
6. MUSIC: How many strings does a cello have?
7. FOOD & DRINK: What kind of alcohol is distilled from juniper berries?
8. HISTORY: In what year did the first human heart transplant take place?
9. SCIENCE: Which plant can be processed to make linseed oil?
10. LANGUAGE: What is the scientific study of diseases and their effects on population called?

Answers

King Crossword



Solution time: 25 mins.

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Highlands Speedboat races,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



It seemed that most of Highlands came out for the races or the food sold in the refreshment area. There was hardly a parking space to be found inside or at the adjacent parking lot.



All the racing does have its wear and tear on the engines as this once prideful leader limps back to the bay for some mechanical work. Highlanders watched from the comfort of lawn chair sipping America's favorite beverage.



Making a real race of it after making the turn two races at right angle for third place breaking out of the wake inclination to avoid resistance. Ahead the darker boat pushes the throttle down in the straight away. Most races Sunday were about skill in driving rather than most powerful engine.



Rounding the turn demonstrates much of the strategic play of the races, some gained on their competitors in the turn while others lost ground.

DPS Reminder: DL Expiration Waiver Ends in April

AUSTIN – The Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) is reminding the public the waiver on expiration dates for driver licenses (DLs) and identification cards (IDs) ends on April 14, 2021. Customers who need to renew are urged to make an appointment or renew on-line today.

The waiver, granted by Governor Greg Abbott in March due to the COVID-19 pandemic, applied to DLs, commercial DLs, commercial learner permits, ID cards and election identification certificates that expired on or after March 13, 2020.

"Driver License employees have worked diligently to help Texans during challenging times and should be commended for their dedication," said DPS Director Steven McCraw. "The Driver License Division has innovated to better serve constituents by implementing a new appointment solution to improve services and by providing extended hours at several locations across the state."

Online renewals still a convenient option

Many Texans are eligible to skip the trip to the office entirely by renewing their DL/ID card or changing their address online at Texas.gov. Customers can also renew by phone at 1-866-DL-RENEW (1-866-357-3639). The requirements and cost for online and phone renewal are the same as in-person transactions.

Expanded office hours

To assist customers needing in-office DL services, designated high-volume offices are offering expanded hours from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Friday.

Scheduling an appointment

Services at driver license offices are now conducted by appointment only. To schedule an appointment or check availability, visit the online appointment scheduler. If you are unable to find an appointment at the office of your choice, check back for availability at that office or other locations nearby. Please check often as availability does change.

If you are unable to make your scheduled appointment, please reschedule or cancel it ahead of time. While the department is working to serve as many customers as possible, people with appointments not showing up continues to be a major obstacle. In December 2020, for example, approximately 31% of people were no-shows for their appointments.

The appointment system, which debuted in May 2020, is designed to provide additional convenience, reducing the time Texans wait in line. Customers can book appointments for a specific day and time, up to six months in advance, and show up 30 minutes or less before their scheduled time. Customers can check-in using the kiosk inside the office or from their mobile device.

All offices offer a limited number of same-day appointments. These appointments are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Customers who book these appointments can leave the DL office until their designated time.

Additionally, most offices also offer customers without an appointment a spot on a "standby" list. These customers are required to wait in the office and are assisted in the event of a cancellation or no-show. The number of standby appointments available is limited to ensure all customers who are placed on the list will be served by the end of the day.

To ensure a safe environment, COVID-19 protocols have been implemented at DL offices.

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