

Permanent Daylight Savings,
Yes or No, page 4

Oscar Winner Best Movie,
Page 7

Crosby FD Stair Climb March 25



See Story Below. Public invited to Participate.

HIGHLANDS

CROSBY

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THURSDAY, MARCH 16, 2023

P.O. DRAWER 405, HIGHLANDS, TEXAS 77562

IN THE STARS

Spring Break March 13-17

Goose Creek CISD, Crosby ISD, and Huffman ISD will observe a Spring Break Holiday.

MAR. 25, SATURDAY Texas Historic Cemetery Workshop

Crosby Historical Society Meeting and Cemetery Application Workshop.
Saturday, March 25 at Crosby Brethren Church.
10am-11:20am Historical Society Meeting.
12pm-2pm Historic Cemetery Designation Application Workshop.
Pre-Registration required.
\$20 Fee. Contact Susan Armstrong, ose203@aol.com.
Details, see AD page 5.

MAR. 25, SATURDAY THEA fundraiser "Clean Mud for Bugs" Crawfish Boil

This is THEA's Annual fundraiser and your chance to support our work on Houston/Harris County toxic chemical contamination.
Crawfish Boil fundraiser, Saturday March 25 from 1:00pm to 4:00pm, Karbach Brewing, 2032 Karbach Street, Houston.
New this year, a KID'S Zone and a special kid's price. AND T-shirts to purchase with THEA/Mud Bug theme.
Tickets: txhea.org.

MAR. 25, SATURDAY Crosby FD Stair Climb and Walk

9/11 Memorial Stair Climb and Walk, starts at 8am at the Crosby Stadium. Funds go to Fallen Firefighters Foundation.
Everyone welcome. Register: <https://nfff.akaraisin.com/ui/crosbyvfd>

Generation Park leads Northeast growth Fastest growing area in Harris County

EAST HARRIS COUNTY – McCord Development, owners and developers of a mixed use 4230 acre project on Beltway 8, are reaching out to the surrounding communities with information about the project and its amenities, both for commercial and residential interested parties.



GONZALO ECHEVERRIA
McCord Development

Members of the North Channel Chamber of Commerce recently heard from McCord's Director of Design and Planning, Architect Gonzalo Echeverria. He spoke about the history of the project, and how the Master Plan is evolving as the development gets built-out.

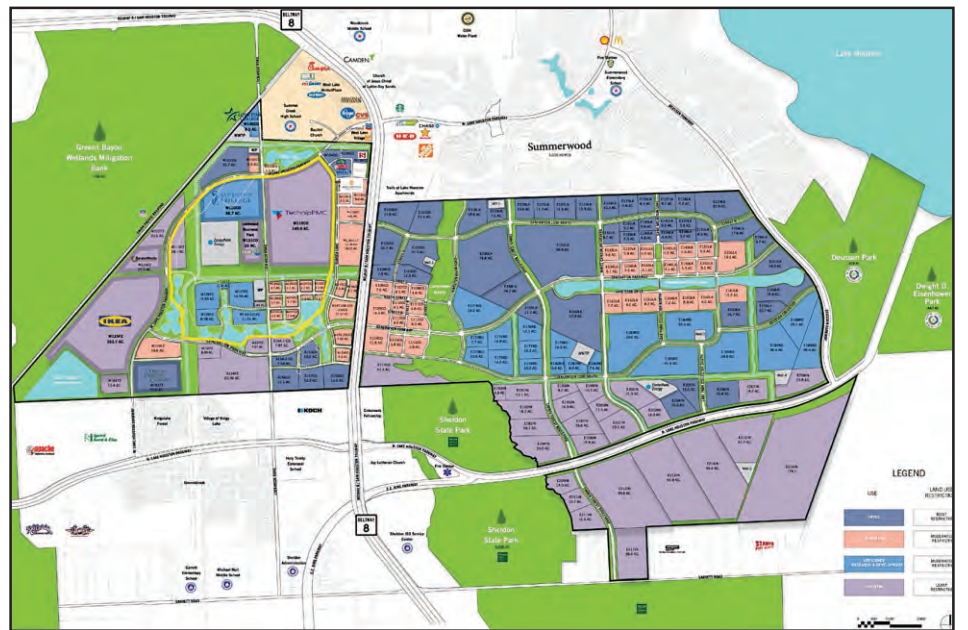
Guiding principles for

the development were an interaction between buildings, water, and nature. Although a large development, he calls it a "15-minute city" where all necessary amenities are within a 15 minute walk or bike ride. To facilitate this, the design includes a "red loop" trail, circling the site and connecting all of the mixed use buildings.

To preserve the natural beauty of the site, the design maximizes the use of natural features, with bridges over bayous, underpasses, and existing easements.

Gonzalo said that Generation Park is Houston's largest new commercial development and future home to the world's most innovative businesses. With 4,200 contiguous acres, Generation Park has the capacity and flexibility to accommodate large-scale and small-scale users alike. Its strategic location in Houston's fastest growing zip code, 77044, provides the resources companies need to grow and thrive. Unimpeded access to all of Houston's major transportation corridors means people and products move with ease. Generation Park is

*CONTINUED. See
Generation Park, P. 6*



Generation Park is a 4230 acre mixed use development bounded by Summerwood to the north, Lake Houston to the east, Sheldon State Park to the south, and Greens Bayou watershed to the west. The development spans Beltway 8. Mixed land use shown above: Orange: office and residential; Blue: Life Sciences R & D; Dark Gray: Office; and Purple: Industrial



San Jacinto College plans on developing a biotechnology program in this new building. They also have a process technology program on their Generation Park campus.

No More Late Fees at Harris County Libraries!

HARRIS COUNTY – Commissioners Court unanimously approved a proposal by Harris County Public Library (HCPL) to end library fines on books and DVDs that are returned late. With the Commissioners' backing, HCPL joins a growing number of public library systems across the country that have eliminated late fees over the last several years.

Harris County Public Library has waived late fees since March 2020 when the Covid-19 pandemic forced the closure of all its branch locations. Harris County Commissioners on Tuesday made the policy permanent. Under the new policy, patrons will still be charged for lost or damaged items, but effective at once, patrons will not be charged for returning items past their due dates, and overdue fines that are already on library users' accounts will be forgiven, though it may take



Harris County Public Library eliminates fines to ensure equal access to materials for those who may need it most.

some time for these changes to appear on library accounts.

For HCPL, like many other libraries, the decision boils down to matters of economics—both for the library and the communities it serves. Chief among them is the fact that late fees hit low-income households harder than others. Late fees—even relatively small amounts—can and do effectively block eco-

nomically disadvantaged people from using the library.

"The elimination of late fees makes HCPL the open, free public resource it was always meant to be," said Edward Melton, HCPL's Executive Director. "We want to remove barriers and ensure that our collections and services are

Continued. See No Late Fees, Page 5

FM2100 set to Reopen this week



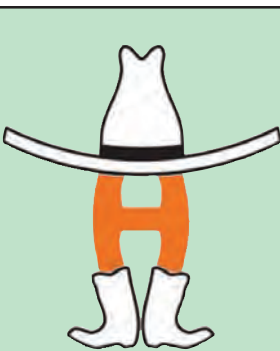
Construction work on the segment between Highlands and Crosby continues, and is scheduled for completion by the 4th quarter of 2023. Like the FM2100 segment, it will be a 5 lane highway, with a median.

TxDOT has indicated that the 8-mile segment of FM2100 being rebuilt, from South Diamondhead in Crosby to FM1960 in Huffman, is set to reopen this week.

The widening and rebuilding of FM2100 started construction in 2019, and was expected to be complete by early 2021, but delays in this section

and the segment south to Highlands extended the completion date. During construction there have been numerous serious accidents, as lanes were switched for construction.

The completed roadway, from I-10 to Huffman, will be four lanes divided by a median, and should help alleviate delays and congestion, TxDOT said.



At the Rodeo:

TUESDAY MAR 14

Machine Gun Kelly

WEDNESDAY MAR 15

Kenny Chesney

THURSDAY MAR 16

Chris Stapleton

FRIDAY MAR 17

Cody Johnson

SATURDAY MAR 18

Brad Paisley

SUNDAY MAR 19

Luke Bryan

RACHEL'S DINER

Southern Cooking Buffet -- Coming Soon

14280 FM 2100 (Across from Walmart)

281-462-7349

AUTO & HOME INSURANCE



Jeremy Rosenkranz
State Farm Agent
440 S. Main Street, Highlands, TX 77562
281-426-3512
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GOOSE CREEK CISD NEWS

CBj Student Competing for AHA Nomination

By: Kristyn Hunt Cathey, APR – Director of Communications

Jordan Jackson, a student at Cedar Bayou Junior School, is currently competing to be named the 2023 American Heart Association Teen of Impact for Houston. Each year, AHA chooses a select number of teens to compete in their Teen of Impact initiative. For eight weeks, teams compete to make the greatest impact by raising awareness and critically needed funds to support



research and education initiatives around heart disease and stroke; both of which are in the top five killers in this country.

Jordan, who has lost loved ones to cardiovascular disease, hopes to bring awareness to her community and potentially save lives. Her team goal is to raise \$20,000 through April 6th. She is currently competing against seven other nominees from the Houston area. For more information on how to support Jordan and the American Heart Association, please visit <http://www2.heart.org/goto/jordanjackson>.

Lee Girls' Powerlifting Team Heads to State



The medalists appear in the attached photo (from left to right): Celera Bejarano (1st place), Valeria Rivera (1st place), Stephanie Martinez (2nd place), Alyssa Dickens (1st place), and Sheyla Ortiz (5th place).

By: Dr. Lindsey Antonini, Gander Powerlifting Assistant Coach

After an incredible display of strength and determination, Baytown Lee's Girls' Powerlifting team placed 2nd out of 11 teams in the 5A Large school classification during the Region 4 Division 1 5A Large tournament, held in Alvin ISD on February 28th. Alyssa Dickens (Junior) placed 1st in the 105-weight class with a 605-pound total. Celera

Bejarano (Junior) placed 1st in the 220-weight class with a 780-pound total. In the 259-weight class, Valeria Rivera (Sophomore) placed 1st with an 805-pound total and Stephanie Martinez (Sophomore) placed 2nd with a 795 pound total. All four students are advancing to the 5A Large State competition in Frisco, TX on March 17-18. Additionally, Sheyla Ortiz (Freshman) placed 5th in the 114-weight

class. Alejandra Garcia (Sophomore) placed 7th in the 148-weight class. Finally, Christina Buenrostro (Sophomore) placed 7th in the 198-weight class.

Four lifters (Bejarano, Rivera, Martinez, and Dickens) qualified for the Texas High School Women's Powerlifting Association (THSWPA) State Championship that will be held in Frisco, TX on March 18th.

GCCISD Students Have "Permission" to Win Big at Spelling Bee



GCCISD Spelling Bee qualifiers Ethan Wheeler, first place; Brenda Herrera, second place and Anirudh Sunil, third place, pose with Michelle Duhon, Gentry Junior School principal, Superintendent Dr. Randal O'Brien, and Monica Juarez, Victoria Walker principal.

By: Kristyn Hunt Cathey, APR – Director of Communications

Goose Creek CISD held their annual District Spelling Bee on February 23rd. The contest went for 21 rounds, with the correct spelling of the word "permission" as the final qualifier.

Ethan Wheeler, a sixth

grader at Gentry Junior School, won first place. Brenda Herrera, a sixth grader at Horace Mann, won second place and Anirudh Sunil, a fifth grader at Victoria Walker, won third place.

The winners will head to Houston Community College's Southeast Campus Learning Hub to com-

pete in the 2023 Scripps Regional Spelling Bee on Saturday, March 25th. The three top spellers will advance to the 2023 Scripps National Spelling Bee, which will be held May 28 through June 3rd in National Harbor, Maryland.

Photo taken by Carrie Pryor-Newman:

SFA Presents Giant Opportunity to SCTHS Students



SFA present SCTHS with a banner to hang in the College and Career office. (L-R) Kelley Start, Principal of SCTHS, Sandy Conklin, Area Executive Director of Campus Leadership, Dr. Lorenzo Smith, Vice President of Academic Affairs for SFA, Vanessa Wilbourn, Regional Coordinator for SFA, Dr. Demetrius McCall, Deputy Superintendent of Administrative Services, Jade Godoy, Regional Coordinator for SFA, Kevin Foxworth, Area Executive Director of Campus Leadership and Evelyn Texas, Counselor - College & Career.

By: Kristyn Hunt Cathey, APR – Director of Communications

Stephen F. Austin State University representatives visited Stuart Career Technical High School last week to signify the new partnership between the district and the University. University representatives spent time speaking with students on several topics, including their Distinguished High School Program.

The Distinguished High School Program partners with independent school districts to offer guaranteed admission, unique scholarships, and enhanced services to eligible students. Students ranking in the top 10% can receive up to \$5,000 and students ranking in the top 11-25% with 3.0 high school GPA can earn up to \$3,000. There are several benefits of the program to stu-

dents. They include an application fee waiver, guaranteed admissions to students ranked in the top 30%, scholarship opportunities, SFA campus visit experience and more.

Before leaving the campus, SFA representatives presented the principal with a banner that will hang in their College & Career Office.

Photo taken by Carrie Pryor-Newman:

Oh, the Places You Will Go, When You Read in GCCISD

By: Kristyn Hunt Cathey, APR – Director of Communications

Read Across America Day was established by the National Education Association (NEA) in 1998. The goal of the day, which falls on the birthday of beloved children's author, Dr. Seuss, is designed to support literacy and promote the importance of reading to children of all ages.

Goose Creek CISD ele-

mentary schools celebrated literacy the week of February 27th with various activities, including Dr. Seuss costume parades, classroom readings with district leaders and more. In a special twist, Travis Elementary School was one of several schools from around the country featured on the official Dr. Seuss Instagram page.

All photos taken by Carrie Pryor-Newman:



Olivia Juarez and Riley Hutchinson, Travis students, holding up the book that the United Way handed out to their class.



Harlem Elementary School office staff dress the part for Read Across America Day. (L-R) Lillian Swart, nurse; Tera Weatherly, ISS; Betty Baca, principal; Michael Garza, CS3; Maricela Carbajal, Attendance Clerk and Patty Alegria, receptionist.



Rusty Scenac, United Way Board member, reading "Cat in the Hat" to Cindy Botting's first grade class. United Way also handed out books to the class.

Barbers Hill Press

Dayton

Serving Mont Belvieu, Dayton, Baytown and surrounding communities since 1995

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THURSDAY, MARCH 16, 2023

MONT BELVIEU, TEXAS 77580

ON THE HILL

West Chambers County Pilot Club Annual Gala set for April 1



(L-r) West Chambers County Pilot Club Director Linda Polk, and "Flamingo on the Hill" Gala Silver Sponsor Lisa Dagle Bean

West Chambers County Pilot Club, Inc. will hold its annual fundraising Gala on Saturday, April 1, 2023 from 6:00 P.M.-10:00 P.M. at Barbers Hill High School, Mont Belvieu TX. The theme of this year's Gala is "Flamingo on the Hill". There will be dinner, a live and silent auction.

A drawing with the 1st prize - \$1000.00, and 2nd prize - \$500.00 will be held at the Gala. Tickets are \$5.00 each. Dinner tickets are \$10.00 each.

FREE Income Tax Preparation and Electronic Filing

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program offered by South Texas College of Law Houston
Where: Jones Public Library, 801 S. Cleveland Street, Suite A Dayton, Texas
When: Friday, March 24, 2023 1pm - 5pm
The VITA Program offers free tax return preparation and electronic filing to low and moderate-income individuals and families (generally, \$60,000 and below). Returns are prepared by IRS certified tax preparers from South Texas College of Law Houston.
• No appointment necessary
• Walk-ins welcome
What to bring:
• Proof of identity (such as valid driver's license or other government issued picture ID)
• W2 and any 1099 forms
• Social Security or ITIN number cards for all family members
• Copy of last year's tax return (if available)
• Total paid for daycare provider last year and provider's tax identifying number
• Any other tax documents
• Bring a personal check to allow for direct deposit of your return.
This free service is an initiative of the Tax Law Society at South Texas College of Law Houston. For general information, call 936.258.7060 | For tax questions, call 713.646.1761

5 workers win \$28m lawsuit vs ExxonMobil

ExxonMobil to pay over \$28 million to 5 workers injured in 2019 plant explosion

BAYTOWN, Texas – According to a news release from a Houston law firm, they were able to secure over \$28 million on behalf of five plant workers who were injured in an explosion at ExxonMobil Baytown Olefins Plant on July 31, 2019.

The explosion was caused after a line ruptured due to build up of an industrial byproduct, popcorn polymer. The impact from the explosion destroyed the tower and created a fireball approximately 900 feet tall.

The law firm of Abraham, Watkins, Nichols, Agosto, Aziz & Stogner claim that ExxonMobil



Flames and smoke shoot from a stack at the ExxonMobil plant in Baytown, Texas, during a fire that started July 31, 2019. (Contributed photo)

had knowledge for decades that popcorn polymer was an extremely hazardous substance that could lead to a large plant explosion and that the company did nothing to implement safety practices to avoid such an event.

ExxonMobil was also accused by the firm that it withheld knowledge of those risks and never warned any of the plant workers who have filed lawsuits against the company for injuries suffered in the explosion, including the workers represented by the firm.

During the trial and three-and-a-half years of litigation, ExxonMobil denied all allegations. The company also disputed the injuries that each plant worker suffered in the explosion, according to the release.

After three weeks of tri-

al, the jury returned a verdict finding ExxonMobil 100% responsible for the explosion and awarded \$28,951,000 in damages to compensate the plant workers for their injuries.

Over the past 10 years, it was noted that OSHA has fined ExxonMobil's Baytown complex for eight safety violations, seven of which were classified as serious, the release reads.

Other injuries at the Baytown complex reported from lawsuits filed in Harris County against the company over the last decade range from Benzene exposure to electrocutions, as well as several others suffering multiple injuries during explosions and fire evacuations.

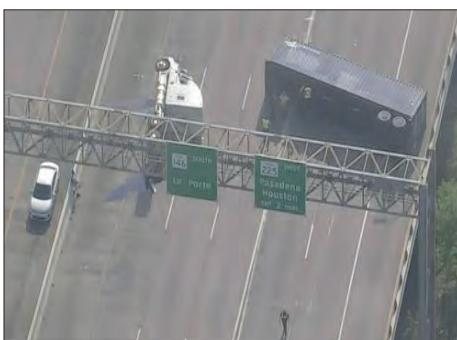
This newspaper asked ExxonMobil for a comment or statement on the lawsuit, but to date no response has been received.

18-wheeler accident on Fred Hartman Bridge Shuts Down all Southbound Lanes

Credit to Author: Chloe Alexander

HOUSTON — An 18-wheeler crash blocked all southbound lanes on the Fred Hartman Bridge last Wednesday afternoon. The trailer appeared to have come unhooked from the tractor. It's unknown if anyone was injured.

Air 11 flew over the scene where it spotted the 18-wheeler in two pieces. The trailer appeared to have come unhooked from the tractor.



Houston Transtar reported that this was the only vehicle involved in the crash. The cause of the accident is under investigation.

Lee College Launches 'Freedom from Smoking' Program

BAYTOWN, TX, Mar. 8, 2023 – Lee College is launching a new program to help smokers kick the habit for good and live tobacco-free lives. Starting Tuesday, Mar. 21 through Tuesday, May 2, Lee College will offer a "Freedom from Smoking" class in the Phyllis Davis Conference Room (909 Decker Drive)

The six-week program, developed by the American Lung Association, is offered at no cost to all Baytown residents. To register, contact Lee College Workforce at 281-425-6311

Lee College has been a tobacco-free campus since 2018 and continues to support tobacco control education and cessation resources for the campus community. The goal is to create a tobacco-free environment for staff, faculty and students, on and off campus.

Key achievements include:

Launching first ever "Peers Against Tobacco" student organization

Certifying two tobacco treatment specialists to assist with implementing tobacco cessation programs

Integrating tobacco control into curriculum of five classes

Incorporating tobacco-free living information at campus events and implementing a comprehensive tobacco control campaign designed in partnership with University of Texas at Austin's Center for Health Communication

Houston Methodist Hospital Baytown

Do Breast Implants Affect Mammograms

Perhaps you've read or heard that breast implants complicate mammogram readings, prompting you to wonder whether yours make the screening guidelines inapplicable for you. Maybe you're even considering skipping your annual mammogram, questioning its worth.

But Dr. Ana Benveniste, breast radiologist at Houston Methodist Baytown Hospital, stresses that all women benefit from getting an annual mammogram — including those with breast implants.

"If we can find and treat breast cancer early, it's almost always curable," says Dr. Benveniste. "And the only way we can do that is if you come in for your annual screening mammogram. Having breast implants doesn't change that."

Do breast implants cause breast cancer?

The two most common types of breast implants used today, saline and silicone, aren't associated with an increased risk of breast cancer. This means that a woman doesn't need to be screened earlier or more frequently just because she has breast implants. There are very unusual cancers related to breast implants such as "Breast Implant-Associated Lymphoma" (BIA-ALCL) - it is a type of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma (cancer of the immune

system and it is not a breast cancer) and "Breast implant-associated squamous cell carcinoma" (BIA-SCC) – it is a very rare but potentially aggressive, epithelial-based tumor that appears to emanate from the breast implant capsule (it is not a breast cancer).

Primary risk factors for breast cancer include:

- Increasing age
- Breast density
- Mutations (changes) in certain genes, such as BRCA1 and BRCA2
- Family history of breast cancer

How often should you get a mammogram?

The breast cancer screening guidelines for women with an average lifetime risk of developing breast cancer with breast implants are the same as for women without them. "It's still an annual screening mammogram — once a year — starting at age 40," says Dr. Benveniste. "This is the gold standard recommendation that all women benefit from, which the data has proven over and over."

If your risk of developing breast cancer is high, however, your doctor may recommend beginning annual mammograms earlier — as early as age 30. But having implants doesn't put you at high-



Dr. Ana Benveniste

er risk.

Reasons a woman may be at higher risk for breast cancer include:

Genetic testing has revealed that you carry a gene mutation that increases your risk of breast cancer

Having a parent, sibling or child with a known breast cancer gene mutation

Undergoing radiation therapy to the chest under the age of 25

Having Li-Fraumeni syndrome, Cowden syndrome or Bannayan-Riley-Ruvalcaba syndrome, all rare genetic disorders that increase the risk of certain cancers

Do breast implants affect mammograms?

In short, yes.

Breast implants make it harder to see the entirety of your breast tissue on a mam-

mogram, potentially obscuring findings.

"On a normal mammogram, we evaluate the tissue all the way from the nipple through the pectoralis muscle to the chest wall," explains Dr. Benveniste. "However, when you have an implant, the posterior tissue of the breast is blocked from the mammographic field of view. Since we don't have a clear view all the way back to the chest wall, findings could be missed."

Both common types of implants, saline and silicone, affect mammogram readings in a similar fashion.

Not to worry, though. Mammography technologists know how to work around this, which is why it's important to let your breast-care team know if you have implants before or at your appointment.

How are mammograms done with breast implants?

In addition to taking the traditional full-field views of your breasts — two images per breast — several more pictures are taken of women with implants. These extra images, called implant-displaced views, help the radiologist evaluate tissue that would otherwise be blocked by the implants.

"After the standard images are taken, the mammography technologist manually pushes

the implant back while pulling the breast tissue forward — in front of the implant — and compressing it," says Dr. Benveniste. "Two more images are then taken. This process helps penetrate as much of the breast tissue as possible, providing images in which the implants are no longer obscuring the tissue."

This is repeated for the other breast — leading to four images per breast, eight images total.

While more images are needed because of breast implants, Dr. Benveniste notes that there isn't any exam instead of the mammogram recommended for women with implants.

Can a mammogram cause a breast implant to rupture?

A critical part of a mammogram is compression of the breast tissue, which may have you wondering whether your implants are at risk for rupturing during the process.

According to a recent review, breast implant rupture during a mammogram is extremely rare.

In short, worrying about an implant rupturing is no reason to skip your mammogram.

To schedule a mammogram, visit houstonmethodist.org/womens-services or call 346.292.7465.

OPINION PAGE

OPINION
By Paul Bettencourt
Texas State Senator

Let Voters decide whether to keep Daylight Savings Time... or Not

Sen. Paul Bettencourt & Rep. Mike Schofield Say Let Texans Vote on Daylight Saving Time! SJR 86 lets voters decide to eliminate time shift that occurs this weekend; Fall vote stops "spring forward"

Austin, TX – Senator Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) filed SB 2329 & SJR 86 to let Texans vote on eliminating Daylight Saving Time. If the voters approve, this would group Texas with Arizona and Hawaii, the only two states that do not currently observe Daylight Saving Time in the United States.

"When you think of hot-button public policy issues, what usually comes to mind are things such as property tax relief and school finance and pension reform. However, the issue of Daylight Saving Time has roused passions on both sides of the debate for over 100 years," said Senator Bettencourt. "Texans like me want to be on one time, and the Federal government doesn't give us the option to vote to remain on standard time. SJR 86 gives Texans the opportunity to vote on the issue and settle the debate once and for all in the Lone Star State!" He added.

SB 2329 & SJR 86 would apply to all portions of Texas using Central Standard Time and Mountain Standard Time. If passed, the bill would require a vote on the November 7, 2023, General Election, where Texas voters would decide whether or not to abolish Daylight Saving Time. If approved by the voters, the change would take effect in 2024. Daylight Saving Time was first enacted in the United States during World War I but was repealed in 1919 over the Veto of President Woodrow Wilson. It was restarted during World War II, but it was repealed again three weeks after the end of the war during the Truman Administration. A patchwork quilt remained until Congress passed the Uniform Time Act in 1966, which allows States to remain on standard time if they wish.

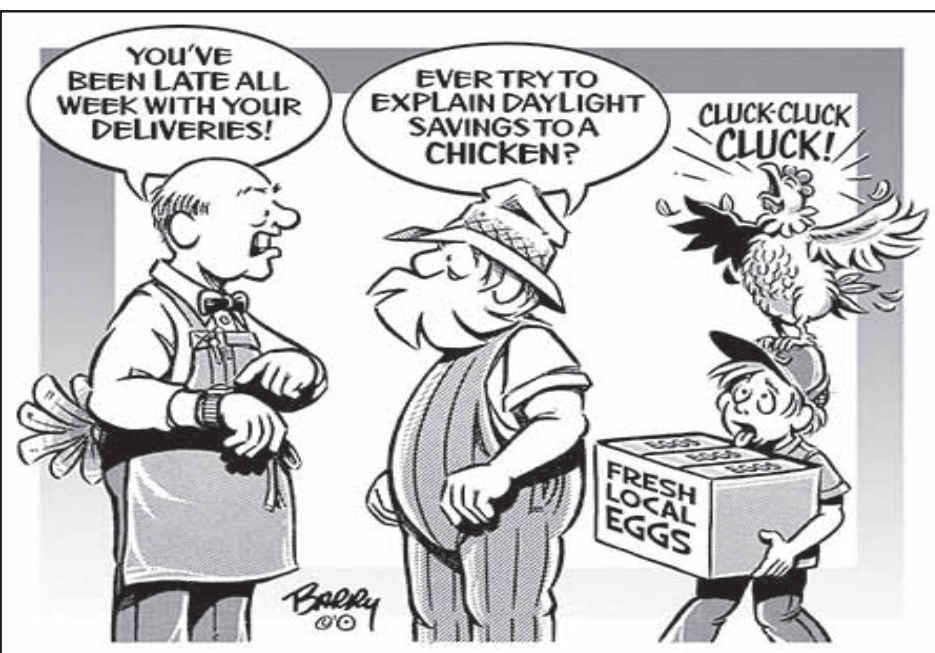
"Texans are tired of having to change their clocks and lose an hour's sleep for no reason," said Rep. Mike Schofield (R-Katy, Cypress), the House author of the bill (HB 417 & HJR 22.) "People would like to get home from work and play with their kids without it being dark half the time. There's no reason not to fix this."

One major justification given for Daylight Saving Time is that it reduces energy consumption. However, studies on the issue have been mixed, with a 2008 Department of Energy study finding that an extended Daylight Saving Time "saved about 0.5 percent (1.3 billion kilowatt hours) in total electricity per day" over a four-week extension. A University of California Santa Barbara study however found that when Indiana moved to a statewide system in 2006 it caused a 1% increase in residential electricity use. At the Federal level U.S. Senator Marco Rubio (R-Florida) reintroduced legislation to make Daylight Saving Time permanent and end the twice a year adjustment of clocks.

"Instead of fall back and spring forward, it would be a fall vote to stop a spring forward!" Concluded Senator Bettencourt.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The above Opinion piece would eliminate Daylight Savings Time in Texas, just as Arizona and Hawaii do not observe it. The rest of the country would still be on Daylight Savings Time. HOWEVER, Senator Marc Rubio of Florida has introduced a bill in the U.S. Congress that would permanently KEEP Daylight Savings Time all 12 months, in all states nationally. It is not known whether this bill will be acted upon favorably, or adopted.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Opinions expressed here are not necessarily that of this newspaper or its staff. YOUR OPINION is welcome. Send a letter for possible publication to Grafikpress Newspapers, 5906 Star Lane, Houston TX 77057 or an email to GRAFIKSTAR@aol.com. Please limit your words to about 200. Letters will be subject to editing. Thank you.



THE POSTSCRIPT
By Carrie Classon

"More Useful"

I spent last week trying to be useful. I volunteered for a writers' conference in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, where my husband, Peter, and I stay. I love writers' conferences. I love that people will travel from far away just to talk about writing, to meet other writers, to learn about writing, to listen to established writers, and to eat. It was a terrific week, although it was tiring because I ended up as the designated conference sheepdog.

Every event of this kind needs at least one sheepdog, and since I had fewer administrative and computer skills than other volunteers, I was happy to do it. Being a conference sheepdog is exactly like being a real sheepdog except, instead of sheep, there are lost writers wandering around and getting separated from the herd—and I didn't actually nip at their heels.

Instead, I did my best to help them get to their workshop or other event. I tried to keep them in a tight group, and when I found a lost writer, bleating in the lobby, I restored them to the herd.

"Are you always here?" the writers started asking me on the second or third day.

"Always," I told them.

I figured, in a strange hotel, in a strange country, trying to do things they had never done before, having one person they could count on at the entrance of the hotel every morning might make the whole thing a little less daunting.

And I had fun. I sat in on several talks and discussions with writers, and I had a lot of interesting conversations with a lot of folks. At the end of the week, I had blisters on my feet, and I was very tired, but the conference went well, and I was proud I'd had a small part in it.

It got me thinking about how important volunteers are. I have to confess, I don't volunteer a lot. My parents volunteer for all sorts of things. They help homebound seniors (who I suspect are considerably younger than they are). They help with church projects and funerals and fundraisers. My parents are an active part of their community up north, and I know they make a big difference.

I have a friend who has been busy painting a set for a theater production all week. "I was on my hands and knees all day painting!" she told me. I felt bad complaining about my blisters.

I don't do many things like that. I'm thinking I should do more.

Because volunteers of all stripes make things possible that would not otherwise happen—and the things that happen because of volunteers are some of the nicest parts of being in a community.

Volunteers help arts organizations and libraries. They help older members of their community, people new to their community, old people within their community, and people outside their community and around the world. Volunteers put out fires, teach children to read, organize concerts and festivals and parades and potlucks. Volunteers invest more than money. They spend their time. They give their hearts. Volunteers make wherever they live a better place to be.

"Thank you for volunteering!" the writers said as they left the conference for the last time. I don't think I deserve a lot of thanks just for being a sheepdog. That's how I am, naturally.

And I gained a new appreciation for how important being a volunteer could be. The blisters on my paws have healed and I am already thinking of ways I could be more useful in the future.

Till next time, Carrie Carrie's memoir is "Blue Yarn." Learn more about her writing at CarrieClasson.com.

STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS
By Gary Borders



House Pushes Armed Officer at All School

Under legislation prioritized by House Speaker Dade Phelan, every Texas school would have an armed police officer, and aspiring teachers would receive extra support.

The Dallas Morning News reported the bill would also provide \$15,000 in annual funding for safety measures for each school in the state. Another bill would increase the annual allotment per student for safety measures from \$10 to \$100.

Another House measure is aimed at improving teacher retention and recruitment, The Morning News reported. The measure, sponsored by state Rep. Harold Dutton, D-Houston, would create a new grant to help prospective teachers pursuing special education or bilingual certification, and would increase funding for educator mentoring. Special education and bilingual teacher positions are especially hard to fill in Texas.

RISE IN CAR INSURANCE RATES CAUSING STICKER SHOCK

Average statewide auto insurance rates are up nearly 24% over last year, according to a report by the Texas Standard. That is the highest increase in at least 20 years, according to the Texas Department of Insurance. That comes on top of increased costs for vehicles both new and used, and higher fuel costs.

Michael Schnurman, a business columnist with The Morning News, was interviewed on the Standard and had this to say, in part:

"There are several elements that play into it. One...is the higher values of cars and used cars in particular – they really shot up during the pandemic," he said. "But the claims are also up a lot...When driving resumed, the number of accidents and the severity of accidents has really been a lot higher. If you look at fatalities, I think they were up 18%."

Schnurman suggested consumers shop around for auto insurance and look for discounts for bundling it with homeowners' insurance or



multiple vehicles on the same account.

PUC RECOMMENDS HEFTY FINE AGAINST POWER COMPANY

The Public Utility Commission has recommended that the Texas-New Mexico Power Company pay a \$1.74 million fine for inaccurate estimates of its customers' electric usage.

In a report released last week, the PUC said the power company failed to correct a violation of an order to install new meters that can be read remotely in a timely manner.

The commission said "TNMP's new meter rollout was significantly delayed," resulting in the utility "estimating thousands of meters for months on end."

The investigation found that TNMP was given three-years' notice that the "communication backbone" of its metering system was going to be discontinued by its third-party provider but failed to produce a plan until halfway through that timeframe. It also failed to have a backup plan in case its vendor could not provide the 170,000 new meters on schedule, according to the PUC.

TEXAS SENATE PASSES FIRST BILL OF SESSION

The Texas Senate last week passed a bill that would close a loophole in state law that allowed gun sales to people between the ages of 16 and 18 who have been involuntarily hospitalized for mental illness. The Texas Tribune reported it was the first bill passed by the Senate this session.

Courts are supposed to report all involuntary mental health hospitalizations to the Texas Department of Public Safety, which then sends them to the FBI's national background check system. However, problems with how existing state law was written led to those hospitalizations not being reported by courts.

The measure comes after an 18-year-old shooter in Uvalde with a history of mental health problems killed 19 students and two teachers at Robb Elementary last year. However, since that shooter was never hospitalized, closing the loophole would not have prevented him from legally buying two assault rifles.

WOMEN SUE STATE OVER ABORTION BAN

Five women are suing the state, saying its near-total abortion ban resulted in them being denied abortions despite complications in their pregnancies that put their lives and fetuses at risk. The Austin American-Statesman reported the Center for Reproductive Rights filed the suit, which asks the courts to clarify what qualifies as a "medical emergency" exception in the law.

"Politicians in Texas are prohibiting health care that they don't understand; they could do something but they're not, and it's killing us," Lauren Miller, one of the plaintiffs, said. "It shouldn't be controversial for an individual to make health care decisions for themselves in consultation with their doctor. But you can't get that in Texas anymore."

The Statesman reported that Miller was pregnant with twins when doctors told her one of the babies had a severe genetic condition and was not going to survive, which threatened her life and the life of the other baby. She ended up traveling to Colorado to have an abortion and is scheduled to give birth to the healthy remaining twin this month.

DROUGHT MAP SPREADS IN PARTS OF STATE

Drought conditions by the end of February covered 62% of the state, up nine percentage points from a month earlier, according to Dr. Mark Wentzel, hydrologist with the Texas Water Development Board. Drought-free areas include all of East Texas up to Dallas County to the west and Jefferson County to the south. The most severe drought conditions are in the far northern edge of the Panhandle, the counties surrounding San Antonio, and nearly all of South Texas.

"The latest seasonal drought outlook from the National Weather Service is optimistic for East and North Central Texas," Wentzel wrote. "Through the end of May, that part of the state is expected to remain drought-free. Unfortunately, drought is expected to expand in the rest of the state."

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LETTERS To The Editor

Precinct Chairs needed in Crosby

There are 1150 precincts throughout Harris County. Because we are so large, it is important to have one designated patriot to serve as a precinct chair. Sadly, many of the precincts in our part of Harris County do not have precinct chairs.

Precinct chairs should encourage citizens to get out the vote. Important elections ahead and you can remind residents that it is important that their voice is heard through the voting system, either in-person voting or voting my

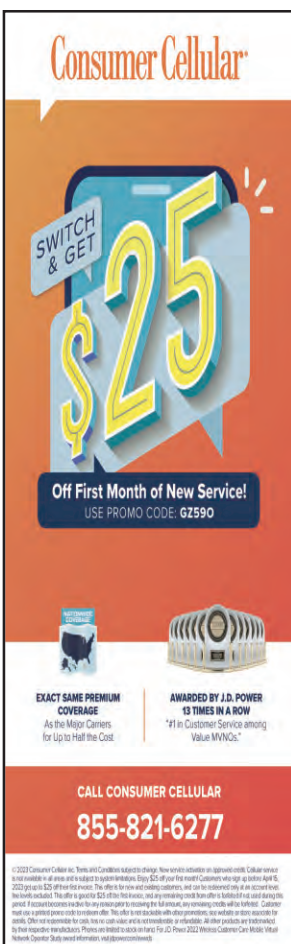
mail. Whatever you do VOTE!

Precinct chairs may serve as a community organizer and an encourager.

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s/Jodie Dornak



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No More Late Fees,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

available equitably," Melton continues, "A late fee should not keep someone from the information and resources that can literally change their lives for the better."

Other factors in the decision to do away with late fines include the fact late fees generate less revenue than it takes to collect and process them, that fines have proven to be an ineffective deterrent to late returns, and most importantly, that libraries that have stopped assessing late fees have seen significant growth in library use, circulation, library

card applications and returned the materials.

"We hope, and the experience of libraries that have gone fine-free bears this out, that this will bring people back to our libraries," said Linda Stevens, HCPL's Division Director for Programs, Partnerships and Outreach, "not only to check out books and DVDs, but for things like our early literacy story times, Family Place Learning Centers and all the other interactive, educational programs we offer."

About Harris County

Public Library:

The Harris County Public Library (HCPL) mission is to provide information and resources to enrich lives and strengthen communities through innovative services within and beyond our walls. The library has an annual circulation of over 10 million items and is a network of 26 community-focused branch libraries and is committed to providing excellent customer service, strong collections, and cutting-edge information technology for the 21st Century. Visit www.hcpl.net for more information

Judge Stephens speaks to a class at Crosby Middle School



Judge Joe Stephens recently spoke to a class at Crosby Middle School, about the pitfalls of vaping and the keys to success. Judge Stephens thanked Robert Destin for the opportunity. He also said that the students were a very attentive group, and that they were on the right path because they listened and had great questions. He praised Crosby ISD and its faculty, staff and administration for doing a great job of educating their students.

Crosby Historical Society Meeting and Texas Historic Cemetery Designation Application Workshop

Saturday, March 25, 2023 Crosby Brethren Church 5216 First St. Crosby, TX Crosby Historical Society Meeting 10:00 am-11:20 am

Texas Historic Cemetery Designation Application Workshop 12:00 am - 2:00 pm PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED for Workshop FEE \$20.00 To pre-register contact Susan Armstrong ose203@aol.com

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Generation Park Development,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

located:
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Redemption Square, the 52-acre mixed-use lifestyle district comprised of class A offices, hotels, luxury apartments, restaurants, shops and daily services, is designed to provide all the amenities your employees want and need in one central location and promotes a healthy walkable and bikeable lifestyle. Adjacent to Generation Park you will find thousands of homes, Texas' best schools, and a plethora of recreation in the Lake Houston community.

Over 2 million square feet of improvements have been completed at Generation Park to date, including corporate headquarters, retail, luxury apartments, and a hotel. Many of these first buildings are in an area on Beltway 8 known as Redemption Square. Already built in this area are offices, residential apartments and condos, a Courtyard by Marriott hotel, and the FMC Headquarters building. Additionally, an area known as College Crossing that house Lone Star College Kingwood, and San Jacinto College.



Overall view, with buildings integrated with water and nature: Beltway 8 at right.



Office Building in Redemption Square.



Proposed plan for a San Jacinto College campus in Generation Park.

Goose Creek Travis Elem. Assistant Principal arrested on drug charges

BAYTOWN, Texas – An elementary school campus assistant principal was arrested and charged after dropping a bag of cocaine in an employee bathroom at a Goose Creek Consolidated Independent School District campus, according to court documents.

Jessica Trice Sanchez, 40, of Houston, has been charged with possession of controlled substance in a drug-free zone.

A staff member found the cocaine and then alerted the school's principal. The campus police department began the investigation and learned Sanchez dropped cocaine in the bathroom. Police said she also had additional cocaine in her vehicle.

Sanchez was arrested. She is now out on \$5,000 bond.

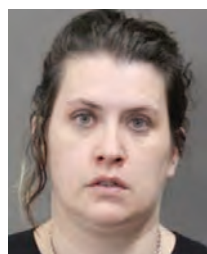
Travis Elementary School released the following statement regarding the incident:

"As educators, we must adhere to high professional standards as an example for our students, fellow colleagues and our community. When a colleague fails to meet those standards, we must be honest and transparent about those failures. Yesterday, a staff member made an irresponsible decision to bring illegal drugs into our school; specifically, into an employee bathroom, for personal use, to which no student had access.

"The drugs were found by a fellow staff member,

who then alerted the principal. The principal contacted the GCCISD Police Department, who began a thorough investigation. Upon the conclusion of the investigation, the employee was arrested for possession of a controlled substance and the DA is moving forward with pressing charges. Goose Creek CISD is committed to maintaining an alcohol- and drug-free environment and will not tolerate the use of alcohol and illegal drugs in the workplace or at any school-related or school-sanctioned activities, on or off school property. Employees who use or are under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs as defined by the Texas Controlled Substances Act during working hours may be dismissed and the employee's criminal record will be reported to the Division of Investigations for TEA.

"We are cooperating fully with the criminal investigation and will move forward swiftly to end the staff member's employment with the district. We will not, under any circumstances, tolerate this type of behavior in our schools. Our campuses are a safe haven for students and we will not have students in unsafe environments. We apologize that this happened, and we will continue to do our best to provide a safe, positive environment for students to learn."



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<p>LEGAL NOTICE</p> <p>CROSBY MUNICIPAL UTILITY DISTRICT</p> <p>NOTICE OF ADOPTION OF RULES</p> <p>Notice is hereby given that the Board of the Directors of Crosby Municipal Utility District at a meeting held on the 27th day of February 2023 adopted an Ordinance Adopting Amended Rates and Fees for Services and Rules and Regulations; Establishing Certain Other Policies; and Providing Penalties and Violations Thereof. A copy of the Ordinance is on file at the principal office of the District, 103 W. Wahl Street, Crosby, Harris County, Texas, where it may be read in full.</p> <p><i>Henry Scheiber</i> President, Board of Directors</p> <p>10-2T</p>	<p>LEGAL NOTICE</p>	<p>LEGAL NOTICE</p>	<p>HELP WANTED</p> <p>NEWSPAPER MARKETING/SALES PERSON</p> <p>Position available for AD SALES representative. Experience helpful but not necessary. Possible to work from home. Suitable for Part Time, or Full Time. Commission plus. Send letter of interest to GRAFIKSTAR@aol.com or call 713-252-8000.</p>	<p>HELP WANTED</p> <p>NEWSPAPER MARKETING/SALES PERSON</p> <p>Position available for AD SALES representative. Experience helpful but not necessary. Possible to work from home. Suitable for Part Time, or Full Time. Commission plus. Send letter of interest to GRAFIKSTAR@aol.com or call 713-252-8000.</p>	<p>LEGAL NOTICE</p>	<p>LEGAL NOTICE</p>	<p>LEGAL NOTICE</p>	<p>LEGAL NOTICE</p>

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Stephanie Hsu, Michelle Yeoh and Ke Huy Quan star as the Wang family in "Everything Everywhere All at Once."

"Everything Everywhere All at Once"

"Everything Everywhere All at Once" (R) — Evelyn Quan lives in a state of chaos in her everyday life. She is the owner of a laundromat and mother to her misunderstood daughter, Joy, and a million other tasks always seem to snatch up her attention. Because of this, her relationships begin to fall apart, leading up to one seemingly ordinary day when her life gets flipped upside down. A version of her husband, Waymond, from an alternate universe, visits her in need of her help from the evil Jobu Tupaki, who plans to destroy each existing universe one by one. As this alternate Waymond teach-

es her about the multiverse, Evelyn learns she has a much bigger purpose than she ever imagined in the fight against Jobu. With Michelle Yeoh and Ke Huy Quan taking home Golden Globes for this visually stunning film, "Everything Everywhere All at Once" is incredibly profound — and a must-watch. Out now. (Showtime) "You People" (R) — Ezra Cohen (Jonah Hill) hasn't had much luck in his quest for love, although marriage is something he definitely sees in his future. When he accidentally wanders into Amira's (Lauren London) car, thinking that she's his Uber driver, he

begs her for the chance to make it up to her. Ezra and Amira begin to hit it off, and Ezra finally feels like he's found the right person for him. As he makes plans to propose to Amira, Ezra's friend, Sam, tells him he needs to speak with Amira's family. So, Ezra sits down with Amira's parents (Eddie Murphy and Nia Long), and he finds that integrating his Jewish family with Amira's Black family isn't as seamless as he thought it'd be. Julia Louis-Dreyfus and Mike Epps also star in this relatable comedy film, co-written by Hill and director Kenya Barris. "You People" premieres Jan. 27. (Netflix) "Shotgun Wedding" (R) — Originally starring Armie Hammer as the male lead before abuse allegations came out against him, this romantic comedy film about a destination wedding replaced him with Josh Duhamel in the male lead role, with Jennifer Lopez as his opposite. They play a couple named Tom and Darcy, who are about to say their "I do's" in the perfect tropical setting. At first, Tom and Darcy think the worst of their worries will be dealing with their eccentric family members. But then, right before the wedding, plans get interrupted by a heavily loaded gang of criminals. The criminals take Tom and Darcy's families hostage, but the couple manages to escape and attempts to get help while simultaneously running from the captors. Is there any better way to start the rest of your lives together? This Prime Video original film premieres Jan. 27. (Prime Video) (c) 2023 King Features Synd., Inc.

HOLLYWOOD by Tony Rizzo

HOLLYWOOD — Vancouver-born Ryan Reynolds, now 46, is returning to Canada to build a 1.2-million-square-foot movie studio in Markham, Ontario, Canada, for a mere \$1.5 billion. Reynolds got more gold than Fort Knox from starring and producing "Deadpool" (2016), which cost \$58 million and made \$782.6 million, and "Deadpool 2" (2018), which cost \$110 million and made \$785.8 million. The upcoming "Deadpool 3" will cost \$200 million and costar Hugh Jackman and Leslie Uggams.

Lest we forget Tom Cruise, whose "Top Gun: Maverick" grossed upward of \$1.4 billion, making it the 12th top grossing film of all time. "Maverick" falls behind No. 1 grosser "Avatar" (\$2.9 billion), No. 2 "Avengers: Endgame" (\$2.7 billion) and newcomer and No. 3 "Avatar: The Way Of Water" (\$2.2 billion).

Cruise began shooting "Mission: Impossible — Dead Reckoning Part One" and "Dead Reckoning Part Two" back in February 2020, but they were shut down due to COVID and restarted shooting March 24, 2022. The films wrapped December 2022, with a total cost of \$290 million. "Part One" opens July 2023 and "Part Two" opens June 2024. "Mission Impossible: Fallout" (2018) cost \$178 million and grossed \$791.7 million. Need we say more?

Patricia Heaton (who filmed 209 episodes of "Everybody Loves Raymond" and 215 episodes of "The Middle," before being disappointed by only 18 episodes of CBS' "Carol's Second Act") is moving back into movies with the psychological thriller "The Beldham," co-starring Corbin Bernsen. Heaton's already completed "Mending the Line," with Brian Cox, and "The Unbreakable Boy," with Zachary Levi. Bernsen has the upcoming HBO miniseries "White House Plumbers," with Woody Harrelson, Justin Theroux, Donnell Gleeson and Lena Headey, as well as the Showtime series "The Curse," starring Emma Stone, due soon.



Raquel Welch ("The Three Musketeers")

Here's a final word on Raquel Welch, who died Feb. 15 at 82. When she passed, the last vestige of the classic Hollywood sex symbol went with her. The many times I saw her, she created the kind of stir accorded with Elizabeth Taylor or Marlene Dietrich, and she was always beautiful, approachable, glamorous and — above all — classy.

In 1973, I was writing five columns a month for movie magazines, and I was taken by her stunning performance in "The Three Musketeers" (and said so in print). One night, while covering an "A list" party at a private club, I saw Raquel Welch walking toward me. She said, "Hi, you've been pointed out to me as Tony Rizzo." I nodded that I was, and she continued, "I spend a small fortune on clipping services and have read several articles you've written praising my acting. I just wanted to thank you in person." She extended her hand, then turned and walked away. I said, "Don't let me down," to which she replied: "Don't worry I won't!" Now that was class! (c) 2023 King Features Synd., Inc.

ENTERTAINMENT

Amber Waves

Comic strip by Dave T. Phipps about winter sports and snow.

Comic strip by Gary Kopervas about Monopoly and game changers.

Comic strip by Jeff Pickering about getting fat and seeing easier.

Comic strip by Randy Milholland about Popeye and leprechauns.

Comic strip about Olive and leprechauns.

Comic strip about Hocus-Focus and pies.

Comic strip about Just Like Cats & Dogs and money.

CryptoQuip puzzle with a clue: G equals O.

Scramblers puzzle with words: Spy TANGE, Think PONIE, Please MARCH, Cherish ARODE.

King Crossword

King Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down.

Weekly SUDOKU

Weekly SUDOKU puzzle grid by Linda Thistle.

WORD LADDERS

Word Ladders puzzle starting with clam and ending with play.

Trivia test

Trivia test questions and answers about movies, geography, and general knowledge.

King Crossword answers and solution time: 24 mins.



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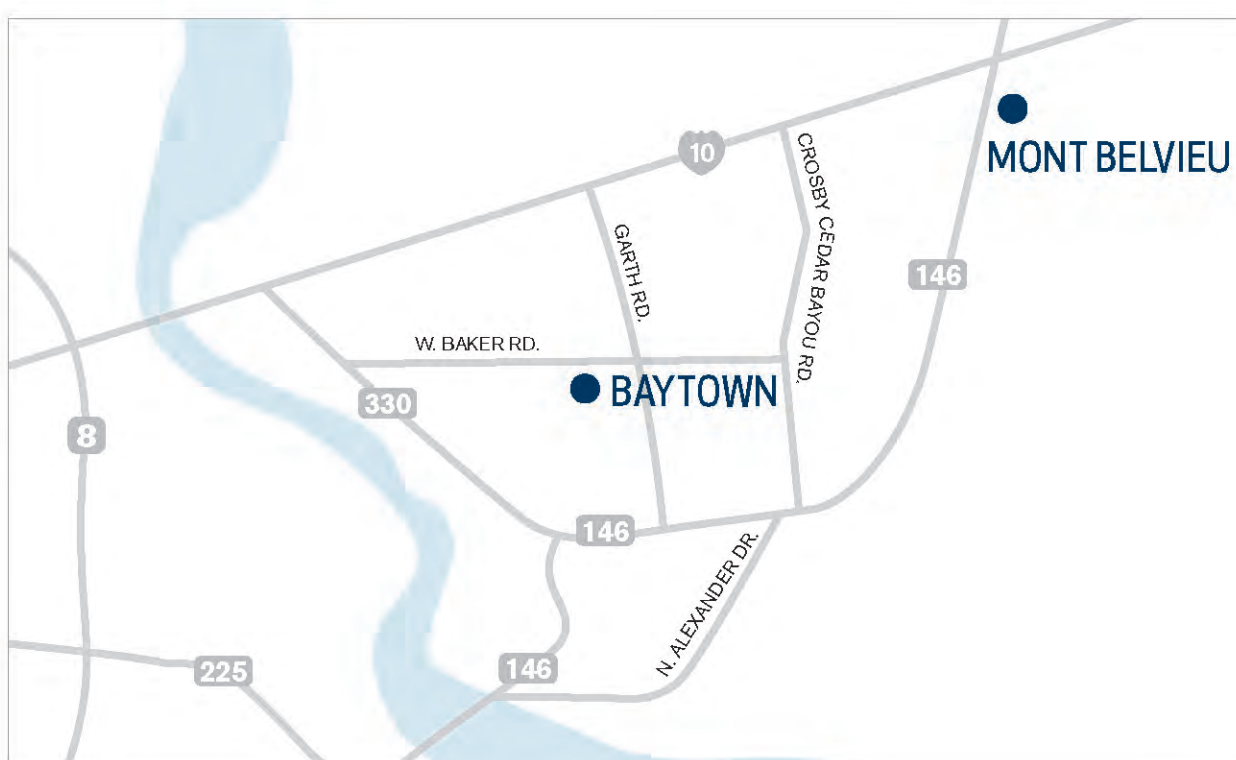
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