

HIGHLANDS

CROSBY

Star Courier

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New Hotel in Baytown opens - see Page 3

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THURSDAY, MAY 25, 2023

P.O. DRAWER 405, HIGHLANDS, TEXAS 77562

IN THE STARS

EVENTS

Highlands Chamber Public invited Jun. 9 to plan its future

Highlands Lynchburg Chamber of Commerce is seeking community input and actions for its future. The meeting will be held Friday, June 9, 2023 at 12:00 noon at Highlands Community Center located at 604 Highlands Woods Dr, Highlands TX 77562. It is important for the Public to come and Participate. Info or suggestions, Randy Casey 832-984-4651

Crosby Fair & Rodeo Schedule

- MAY 20, Saturday**
COWPOKE PAGEANT
10:30 am CFR pavilion
- JUNE 2,3 Friday, Saturday**
BBO COOKOFF
- JUNE 2, Friday**
TWENTY TWOS
BAG OF DONUTS, 7:30pm
- JUNE 3, Saturday**
PARADE 10pm
SUNNY SAUCEDO,
7:30pm
- JUNE 8, Thursday**
BUYER'S DINNER 4pm
LIVESTOCK AUCTION,
6pm
- JUNE 9, Friday**
TYLER HALVERSON
CREED FISHER, 7:30pm
- JUNE 10, Saturday**
LITTLE WRANGLER, 10am
AUSTIN MEADE
GIOVANNIE & THE HIRED
GUNS, 7:30pm

**NOW OPEN
New Laundromat opens in Highlands**

Well known local businessman Bill Bagi has opened a new Laundromat in Highlands, known as 501 Laundromat. Bagi said that the new store has the latest Wascomat professional washers and dryers, and because of their extra large size can clean 60 lbs of laundry in an hour. The new store is now open, and operates 7 days a week, from 8am to 9pm. More details and photos on page 2 of this paper, or stop by with some laundry. Located at 501 S. Main Street, Highlands.

BIRTHDAYS

- May 23—Lisa Contreras
Doyce Hedger
Noah Keaton
Jennifer Salters
Avery Joseph Boyd
 - May 24—Lisa Dubecak
Troy King
Cindy Willingham
 - May 25—Tom Nuckols
 - May 26—Stephanie Riser
Allen Dunn
 - May 27—Bob Elkins
 - May 28—Ellen Beck
Mrs. Mark Collins
Rufus Larkin
Blake McCain
Rusty Maxey
 - May 30—Justin Hodges
 - May 31—Danielle Grooms
Rodger Simmons
 - Jun 1—Brittani & Paige Carroll
Evelyn Wotipka
 - Jun 2—Martha Keyes
Bettie Woostey
- ANNIVERSARIES**
- May 23—Ralph & Rhonda Brewer
 - Jun 1—Harold & Janice Havard
Doug & Roxanna Phillips
 - Jun 2—Glen & Nell Salters

Crosby hires new AD/Football Coach

CROSBY, TX – The Crosby ISD Board of Trustees has approved the hiring of Coach Joe Willis as the next Athletic Director and Head Football Coach at Crosby High School.

Coach Willis has a proven record. He is a State Champion who comes with 30 years of high school coaching experience in Texas, including 14 years as a head football coach. Coach Willis has coached in State Championship games twice in his career, winning a state title in 2012. That year, he led Cedar Park High School to the 4A State Championship. The team, under his direction, returned as a 5A State Finalist two years later.

Coach Willis and his teams have appeared in the playoffs 12 out of 14 seasons, for a career playoff record of 25-11. His overall coaching record is 113-62. Coach Willis was most recently the head football coach and athletic program coordinator at Tyler High School. He has



JOE WILLIS
(Photo courtesy Crosby ISD)

been named coach of the year six times, including Dave Campbell's Texas High School Football Coach of the Year in 2012.

Crosby ISD Superintendent, Mrs. Paula Patterson, would like to thank the 15 members of the community selection committee for their time interviewing candidates and

making recommendations during the process. "Coach Willis impressed us from the start. He knows how to lead a successful football program, and he knows how to win at the highest level. We are looking forward to the impact he will have on our players, academically and athletically. Coach Willis is known for

high standards on the field and in the classroom. We can't wait to see how the Crosby Athletic Program develops under his leadership once he hits the ground running."

Coach Willis is excited about joining Crosby ISD and says, "I've always appreciated Crosby. It's a dream destination for me. I want to build on the tradition and the success here. I want to be the kind of Athletic Director who helps the coaches and the kids of other programs so they can also achieve their goals as well. I'm really big on building mindset, and I believe, at my core, you have to build a physical brand. We're going to be physical and fast. It's the end of May. There's a lot of work to do and a lot of people to meet. I want to start building those relationships as soon as possible."

Legendary Coach Gary Joseph, the five-time State Champion and Head Football Coach at Katy High School, says the Crosby Cougars have found an

outstanding leader. "Coach Willis is a heck of a football coach and a better person," Joseph said. "He's going to do a great job leading the Crosby athletic program. They will be better for hiring him."

Coach Willis and his wife Amber of 26 years are the proud parents of three children: Bradley, 19; Daniel, 15; and Malia, 14.

There will be a come-and-go meet and greet session for the Crosby and Barrett Station communities to get better acquainted with Coach Willis. The public is invited to stop by anytime between 6 to 7pm on Tuesday, May 23, at the Crosby High School cafeteria.

Crosby ISD serves the needs of more than 6700 children in the communities of Crosby and Barrett Station in East Harris County, Texas. Our mission is to produce literate, responsible citizens capable of learning and applying academic and social skills successfully in any life setting. For more information, visit crosbyisd.org

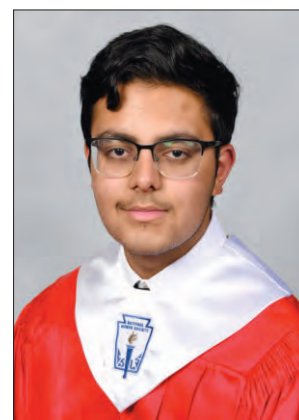
Goose Creek announces Top 10 Graduates at GCM

Goose Creek Memorial High School

- Third: Amy Sood
- Fourth: Ruel Hermoso Cabading
- Fifth: Delilah Rose Acres
- Sixth: Khoi Minh Nguyen
- Seventh: Alistair Mansing Manliguez
- Eighth: Katie Abigail Calderon
- Ninth: Adriana Herrera
- Tenth: Tenth Jazmyn Michele Koenst



AGRAWAL HARSH VALEDICTORIAN



SOOD ARIN SALUTATORIAN

IMPACT Early College HS

- Valedictorian Sydney Joy Cachero
- Salutatorian Xitlatly Ruiz

Stuart Career Tech High School

- Valedictorian Ariana Avalos Medina
- Salutatorian Dahize Fernanda Camacho

Robert E. Lee High School

- Valedictorian Corinna Rose Levy
- Salutatorian Canon Terence Cockrell

Ross S. Sterling High School

- Valedictorian Cassidy Paige Rogers
- Salutatorian Anh Minh Nguyen

Highlands Horizons awards Scholarships



Congratulations to our 2023 Winners:

Front row: (Left to right, Kennedy Tristan, Pricilla Cerino, Delilah Acres, Madison Ridenour, Adrianna Herrera, Alexandria Escamilla, Haylie Ochoa
Back row: (left to right), Hunter Downs, Patrick Amos, Shane Cervenka, Joshua Franco, Ruel Cabading, Cory Gonzalez. (missing Nina James)

Rotary's McPhee Scholar is Crosby Valedictorian



Above: Tristen Flores and Barbara Musick McPhee

Ms. McPhee said "I was honored to present Tristen Flores of Crosby High School with the Pat McPhee Highlands Rotary Scholarship at the Annual Scholarship Banquet last night. Tristen is attending Rice University in the fall for a Degree in Mechanical Engineering. **** Just found out Tristen is the Crosby HS Valedictorian."

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GOOSE CREEK CISD NEWS

GCM Patriots are State Bound

By: Kristyn Hunt Cathey, APR – Director of Communications

Several Goose Creek Memorial students competed in the regional UIL Academic and One-Act Play (OAP) competition last weekend and have advanced to the State level.

UIL State members include Swayam Gupta,

Arin Sood, Laksh Naikele, and Aayush Koor. They placed in Number Sense, Calculator Applications, and Mathematics. These events are coached by GCM UIL Coach Sean Kang.

Brooke Schrull will be competing at UIL State for Computer Application. Her GCM UIL

Coach is Angie Johnson.

Emelia Logan & Juan Huerta made UIL State for Theatrical Design. Their GCM UIL Coach is theater directors, Gina Martin & Peyton Wood.

The students will move forward to compete at the University of Texas at Austin on May 17-18th.



GCM UIL State Academic team members proudly pose with their awards. These students will head to the State competition in May.

GCM Student Named National Merit Scholarship Finalist

Arin Sood, a senior at Goose Creek Memorial High School, has been named as a finalist in the 2023 National Merit Scholarship program. His PSAT score during his junior year, along with his service, leadership, grades, and involvement, place him among the top 7,500 students nationwide to earn a finalist position, with a scholarship award from the University of Texas at Dallas of \$100,000. Arin will major in computer science in the Collegium V Honors Program at UTD. He also secured acceptance into a nine-week research opportunity in the UTD Clark Summer Research Program.

Recently, Arin and his GCM teammates qualified for the Texas UIL State contest in Number Sense and Calculator events. He was a state competitor in the Tech-



Arin Sood poses with GCM Principal Kathy Holland during the district's Decision Week. Sood will attend the University of Texas at Dallas in the fall.

nology Student Association website and graphic design contest, and a national qualifier in the Future Business Leaders of America political science contest.

Emelia Logan
Costume Design

Juan Huerta
Costume Design

Emelia Logan and Juan Huerta advanced to UIL State for Theatrical Design.

GCCISD Hosts Special Olympics Regional Spring Games

By: Kristyn Hunt Cathey, APR – Director of Communications

Goose Creek CISD hosted the Area 4-Greater Houston Special Olympics Spring games on Friday, April 21st at Lee High School. Students from across the Houston area competed in several events, such as cycling, track and field, tennis, and soccer. Thirty-one delegations represented with close to 1,000 athletes who competed in four different sports. Roughly 2,500 medals were handed out.

Goose Creek CISD had 52 cyclists competed. Six soccer teams competed with 72 students on the team. Two district teams placed first in their division, three teams placed second, and one team placed third in their division. Soccer teams competed against teams from Pasadena, Fort Bend, and Katy and cyclists competed against College Station and Humble. Over 1,500 spectators were at the event throughout the day, with over 300 volunteers in attendance.

All photos taken by Carrie Pryor-Newman:



Special Olympics competitors and sponsors prepare for bike competition at regional event.



Special Olympics competitors are ready to ride off into the sunset during the Special Olympics regional event at Lee High School.



Sterling High School PALS support Special Olympics competitor during regional event.

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Barbers Hill Dayton Press

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THURSDAY, MAY 25, 2023

MONT BELVIEU, TEXAS 77580

ON THE HILL

SOFTBALL Barbers Hill falls to Lake Creek in Regional Finals

The matchup between Lake Creek and Barbers Hill was the most anticipated series in the UIL Softball postseason thus far. The Lions came in as the No. 1 team in country and Barbers Hill was the third-ranked team in the nation going into the game.

Suffice it to say, the two H-Town 5A powerhouses did not disappoint.

Over the weekend, fan bases were flocking to the neutral location of Grand Oak High School to witness the spectacle. So much so, that there wasn't enough room in the stands prompting spectators to watch from the rafters of the adjacent baseball field's seating.

"It's fun being able to put on a show, especially for the younger crowd and the fans," said Lake Creek's senior catcher Kalee Rochinski. "The fan-support is insane and that helps our drive and motivation to win and want to do bigger things."

The matchup was as close as it gets, primarily because of the pitching battle between Barbers Hill's Hailey Nutter (So.) and Lake Creek's senior right-hander Ava Brown (Florida-signee). The two aces combined for over 40 strikeouts in the series, which left little room for error on the batting side.

Lions' freshman Madalyn Davis ended up being the difference-maker in Game 1, with a walk-off RBI-single to give Lake Creek the 1-0 series advantage.

Friday's Game 2 face-off provided slightly more action off the bat, with Rochinski initiating the scoring with a two-RBI double in the top of the first.

Subsequently, Barbers Hill would rally to score three runs in the third, making the score 3-2 before Lake Creek would tie the game in inning No. 5, on a bases-loaded HBP.

However, the play that decided the series came off a drag bunt in extra innings, made by none other than Madalyn Davis.

When attempting to throw Davis out at first, the Eagles 3B overthrew the ball into an empty right field allowing both courtesy-runner Abigail Etsay (Fr. UTL) and Davis to run home. That made the score 5-3 and eventually completed the sweep for Lake Creek to advance on to the Regional Finals.

Considering the reigning State Champs have become accustomed to winning games by five runs or more, this gave the Lake Creek stars an opportunity to showcase their resiliency.

"I feel like playing good competition, as a good team, proves how good you really are," Ava Brown said. "Winning games by 10 runs... yeah, you're good, but what competition did you face? Coming into this week we knew we'd have some good competition with Barbers Hill, but I felt like we capitalized great."

Lake Creek will be facing Georgetown, starting Thursday at Mumford High School, to decide who goes to Austin for the UIL State Tournament.

Matthew Ogle (VYPE)

New Hyatt Regency Hotel opens in Baytown at the Footsteps of Fred Hartman Bridge

Baytown, Texas (May 18, 2023) - Contemporary hotel will debut as Baytown's only full-service waterfront hotel, offering 208 modern guestrooms and more than 18,000 square feet of versatile meeting and event space.

Hyatt Regency Baytown-Houston officially open its doors on Thursday, May 18, 2023 and reservations are now bookable online at Hyatt.com. The forthcoming waterfront hotel is located on Tabbs Bay at the footsteps of Fred Hartman Bridge at 100 Convention Center Way. The anticipated arrival of the city's largest and only waterfront hotel positions Hyatt Regency Baytown-Houston as a top business and leisure destination on the Texas Gulf Coast. Baytown is home of the Goose Creek oilfield developed by the Humble Oil company, later known as Exxon-Mobil, and included the first offshore drilling operation in Texas. Humble Oil company built the state's first oil refinery in 1940's and still operates in Baytown today, which has led to the city's prosperity.

Hyatt Regency Baytown-Houston is located along the Houston Ship Channel and 20 minutes away from the energy-rich city of Houston and notable tourism destinations such as NASA's Space



Center Houston, and Kemah Boardwalk. The hotel is an easy drive to Baybrook Mall, Galveston Island beaches, and nearby Baytown Nature Center to explore bird watching, fishing, and easy hikes through the local marshland.

"We are excited to launch as the first full-service hotel in Baytown and welcome guests, locals and our state-of-the-art hotel," said General Manager, Alexander Dantes. "Whether visiting for business or leisure, Hyatt Regency Baytown-Houston will ensure a premium, personalized hotel experience where guests can experience

Texas hospitality in energizing spaces that complement the vitality of the Houston Ship Channel and pristine environment along the Bay."

Guestrooms

The 7-story hotel features 208 well-appointed guestrooms and seven suites, inclusive of a 1,125-square-foot Presidential Suite with waterfront views and modern amenities. Contemporary accommodations include natural wood accents and tall windows with views of the Houston Ship Channel, adjacent marina and iconic Fred Hartman suspension bridge.

Dining

Anchor & Hearth

Woodfired Kitchen the hotel's full service restaurant will feature an exposed kitchen serving classic American dishes and local favorites for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Creative cocktails, bar bites and views of one of the nation's busiest shipping channels are on the menu at Bayland Lounge, the hotel's open-concept lobby bar. The hotel will also feature a 24-hour market with a variety of to-go snacks and drinks.

Meetings & Events

Primed for large-scale events, the new hotel boasts 18,000 square feet of versa-

tile meeting space including a divisible 12,000-square-foot main ballroom perfect for conferences, galas or weddings up to 1,200 attendees. Pre-function areas and outdoor access to a waterfront terrace provide space for breaks or socializing among memorable views.

Recreation

The hotel's 24-hour fitness center features state-of-the-art cardio machines, free weights and modern equipment. Hyatt Regency Baytown-Houston is also home to an impressive lounge pool and is dog-friendly with a 48-hour reservation notice required.

Get up to 15% off stays at Hyatt Regency Baytown-Houston between May 25 and September 10, 2023, when you book between May 25 and September 10, 2023, when you book direct by May 23, 2023. Use special offer code **LOCKITIN** to book your qualifying stay. For full offer details including terms and conditions, please visit hyatt.com/possibilities.

To learn more about Hyatt Regency Baytown-Houston or to book a reservation, please visit www.hyatt.com/baytownhouston [or follow the hotel on social media at @].

Crash on Eagle Drive in Mont Belvieu Claims lives of Liberty County mother, daughter

On Wednesday, May 17, 2023, at 11:01 a.m., a major crash was reported in the 11900 block of Eagle Drive, a two-lane north/south thoroughfare in Mont Belvieu. This location is on Eagle Drive approximately a quarter-mile north of FM 565.

The Mont Belvieu Police Department responded along with Mont Belvieu Fire and EMS units where it was determined that there were two vehicles involved in the crash; a 2010 Dodge Nitro SUV and a 2013 Peterbilt tractor truck towing a large flatbed trailer.

Officers discovered that the 40-year-old female driver, Melba Castro, and a 13-year-old female rear-seat passenger in the



Dodge Nitro were deceased inside the vehicle.

A third-occupant, a two-year-old female child, was discovered alive and alert inside her rear-seat child restraint system. The child

appeared to be uninjured, but was flown via air ambulance to a Houston-area hospital as a precaution. The driver/sole-occupant of the tractor-trailer rig was uninjured.

Initial information indicates that the tractor-trailer rig was northbound on Eagle Drive, attempting a U-turn across both lanes of traffic. The truck became stuck in the right-of-way

area during the U-turn, which left the flatbed trailer extended across both lanes of traffic. The southbound Dodge Nitro then struck the trailer as it extended across both lanes of traffic.

The Mont Belvieu Police Department is the lead investigating agency and were assisted by the Baytown Police Department, the Texas Department of Public Safety Highway Patrol, and the Chambers County Sheriff's Office. The roadway was reopened at 4 p.m.

This investigation is active. Next-of-kin notifications have been completed. The fatalities were identified as Melba Castro, age 40, and her daughter, age 13, both from Liberty, Texas.

Elite Spectrum ABA Ribbon Cutting Ceremony



Front row L to R: Victor Rios, jr., Charlie Rios, Victor Rios, Shanique Robles, Willie Francois, LaKeshia Wells - Clinical Director, Tamara Alexander - Vice President, Demetria Alexander, Kairon Francois, Frankie Francois
Back Row: Mayte Trujillo, Ros Trujillo, Matt Curry, Karla Opryshek, Christina Scott, Charlotte Oldbury, Donna Douglas, Linda Jones-Zbrank, Carmen Parris, Charles Johnson. Not pictured: Edmundo Castillo, Victoria Jaramillo, Madison Jatzlau, Jackland McDowell, Kelli Rollo

BAYTOWN - Elite Spectrum ABA, located at 3711 Garth Road, Suite 160, celebrated their Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony with the Baytown Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors, staff, family members and business liaisons. Guests were welcomed by Vice President, Tamara Alexander and Clinical Director, LaKeshia Wells and were given a tour of the facility followed by refreshments.

Elite Spectrum ABA provides evidence-based

verbal behavior-based ABA Therapy, Pediatric Occupational Therapy and Pediatric Speech Therapy services to persons diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum disorder. They are one of only a few providers in Texas as using this innovative approach within the pediatric therapy field for Autism.

For more information visit their website www.elitespectrumaba.com or follow them on Facebook and Instagram at elitespectrumaba.

OPINION PAGE

OPINION
By Texas Department of Transportation

More people are dying in Motorcycle crashes in Texas

AUSTIN – As motorcycle fatalities continue to rise and the spring weather draws more riders to Texas roadways, TxDOT is urging drivers to look twice and be considerate on the road around motorcycle riders.

Amy Jo Miller was enjoying a ride on the back of her boyfriend's motorcycle in Bell County when an inattentive driver turned left in front of them, hitting the bike and throwing her across the road.

Amy Jo, now 49, is just one of thousands of Texas motorcyclists seriously injured—or worse, killed—in crashes every year. In 2022, 562 motorcycle riders were killed in motor vehicle crashes, an 8% increase over the previous year.

“People on motorcycles are more vulnerable on our roadways,” said TxDOT Executive Director Marc Williams. “It’s important for drivers to pay extra attention and look out for motorcycles — especially at intersections, when turning in front of oncoming traffic and while changing lanes. We all want to get home safe.”

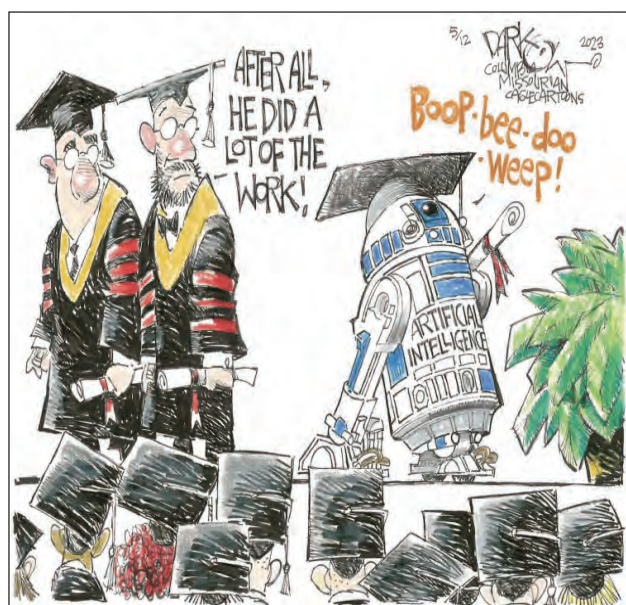
In addition to National Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month, TxDOT's annual safety campaign “Share the Road: Look Twice for Motorcycles” also aims to protect motorcyclists by educating drivers on how to safely share the road. Below are safety precautions all motorists should keep in mind to help prevent motorcycle crashes:

- Stay alert. Give driving your full attention. Even a momentary distraction, such as answering a phone call or changing the radio station, can have deadly consequences.
• Pay special attention at intersections. One-third of all motorcycle fatalities happen at roadway intersections.
• Take extra care when making a left turn. Always assume motorcycles are closer than they appear and avoid turning in front of an oncoming motorcycle.
• Look twice when changing lanes. Check mirrors, check blind spots, and always use turn signals.
• Give motorcyclists room when passing them. Move over to the passing lane and don't crowd the motorcyclist's full lane.
• Stay back. If you're behind a motorcycle, always maintain a safe following distance. When a motorcyclist downshifts, it can catch drivers off guard since there are no brake lights to signal reduced speed.
• Slow down. Obey posted speed limits and drive according to conditions.

To help drivers fully understand the importance of driving safely and the dangers motorcycle riders face, TxDOT is taking its “Share the Road: Look Twice for Motorcycles” campaign exhibit on the road during National Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month. The exhibit will feature a virtual reality component that gives participants the opportunity to experience high-risk traffic situations from the perspective of both a driver and a motorcyclist.

TxDOT's “Share the Road: Look Twice for Motorcycles” campaign is a key component of #EndTheStreakTX, a broader social media and word-of-mouth effort that encourages drivers to make safer choices while behind the wheel to help end the streak of daily deaths. Nov. 7, 2000, was the last deathless day on Texas roadways.

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.



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS
By Gary Borders

House Lawmakers Defy Abbott on Vouchers

A key House education committee adjourned last week without voting on a school voucher bill that is Gov. Greg Abbott's top priority this session, the Houston Chronicle reported.

The Senate had approved a bill that would provide Texas families \$8,000 in taxpayer money to fund private or charter school tuition. The House narrowed the scope so that it would only apply to students with disabilities or those attending schools with a failing grade issued by the Texas Education Agency — an estimated 800,000 students.

State Rep. Brad Buckley, R-Killeen, chair of the House Public Education Committee, said he doesn't plan to call a vote on the measure. Abbott has threatened to veto the House version or call a special session if the House does not approve the Senate version.

Opponents of the voucher system say it would take money away from public education.

“These voucher proposals have been brought before — in 1957. A tuition grant bill was passed through the House. It failed ultimately, but it was to allow kids to leave integrated schools and join white-only schools,” state Rep. James Talarico, D-Round Rock, said.

BILLS FAVORING NATURAL GAS POWER PLANTS ADVANCE

A Texas House committee voted Thursday to send to the House floor a Senate bill providing \$10 billion in taxpayer money for low-interest loans to build natural gas-powered electrical generating plants. The plan is still subject to change in the waning days of the legislative session, however.

The Dallas Morning News reported the call for plant expansions stem from the near collapse of the power grid during the devastating winter storm in 2021. Hundreds



of Texans died during that blackout.

State Rep. Todd Hunter, R-Corpus Christi, and chair of the House State Affairs Committee that is considering the bills, said the \$10 billion loan fund and other power generation measures remain “works in progress.” The legislative session ends May 29.

HOUSE, SENATE CLOSER ON TAX RELIEF PLAN

The Texas House and Senate appear to be nearing a deal that would deliver billions of dollars in property tax relief, the Austin American-Statesman reported. The proposal combines House Speaker Dade Phelan's preference for cutting appraisal caps by half with Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick's preference for increasing homestead exemptions.

The Legislature was under a mandate from Abbott and Patrick to return nearly half of the state's \$33 billion budget surplus to taxpayers. The latest measure would lower the appraised value cap from 10% to 5% for all properties. The House version would also raise the state's homestead exemption from \$40,000 to \$100,000, with an added \$10,000 exemption for seniors and disabled homeowners. Patrick's original proposal was to raise the exemption to \$70,000.

DRAFT BUDGET BARS TAX DOLLARS FOR PAXTON SETTLEMENT

House and Senate budget negotiators plan to bar using state funds to pay the \$3.3 million whistleblower settlement negotiated by Attorney

General Ken Paxton and his former aides, the Statesman reported.

The settlement was reached in February after four former employees of the AG's office sued Paxton, accusing him of bribery and abusing his office. Since that time the four aides were fired or have resigned. Paxton denied their allegations, but as part of the settlement apologized for calling them “rogue employees.”

Paxton said when the settlement was reached that it would save taxpayer money in the long run by avoiding an expensive court battle.

“I have chosen this path to save taxpayer dollars and ensure my third term as Attorney General is unburdened by unnecessary distractions,” Paxton said in a statement at the time. “This settlement achieves these goals.”

SUSPECTED FUNGAL INFECTIONS LINKED TO MATAMOROS SURGERIES

The Texas Department of State Health Services is sounding the alarm to the public and doctors about suspected cases of fungal meningitis among Texas residents receiving surgery in Matamoros, Mexico — across the border from Brownsville. So far, the investigation has found at least five affected patients, four of whom are now hospitalized and one who died.

The patients traveled from Texas to Matamoros for surgical procedures that involved an epidural anesthetic, which is injected around the spinal column. One of the possible elective procedures conducted under an epidural is liposuction.

“It is very important that people who have recently had medical procedures in Mexico monitor themselves for symptoms of meningitis,” said DSHS Commissioner Jennifer Shuford. “Meningitis, especially when caused by bacteria or fungus, can be a life-threatening illness unless treated promptly.”

Anyone who had surgery involving an epidural in Matamoros this year is advised to contact a doctor, DSHS said in its news release.

MORE THAN \$9 MILLION IN EMS STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

The state is funding more than \$9 million for 1,500 emergency medical services scholarships. The goal is to expand the state's EMS workforce, especially in underserved and rural areas. The funding comes from legislation passed during the 2021 legislative session.

“This funding to support EMS education opportunities and to increase the workforce will ensure a strong EMS system in Texas,” said Joe Schmider of DSHS. “These scholarships are impacting the current and future emergency care throughout all of Texas.”

Potential EMS students can learn more by going here: dshs.texas.gov/emstexas.

THE POSTSCRIPT
By Carrie Classon

“Lukewarm Water”

Yesterday wasn't the best day.

I don't like to complain and, the truth is, I have very little to complain about. Still, yesterday was not the best day.

I woke with a stomachache. I'd gone to bed with a stomachache, and this is not terribly unusual. My mother gets stomachaches, and now my 20-year-old niece is prey to them. Stress and irregular eating set them off, these stomachs of ours, and sometimes they take hours or even days to get sorted out. This one was particularly stubborn and saw me through the night and into the next day. By mid-morning, I realized, unless I was writing about a stomachache, I wasn't likely to get much writing done.

So I thought I'd learn a new program I'd promised myself I'd learn. The young woman on the video assured me that this training was for “absolute beginners,” and I felt reassured. I sat down with my stomachache and started watching.

I had no idea what she was talking about.

It wasn't that she left me behind—I never got on the bus. The bus pulled away and left me standing on the curb. I suddenly felt old. I was an old woman with a stomachache.

Then I heard from my agent. My agent is cheerful and hopeful and loves my book, and she's working hard right now to sell it. She wrote to tell me I got another rejection. She sounded pretty down—for a perpetually upbeat person. She sounded as if we might be running out of people to send my book to. This was depressing news.

That's when I saw the Facebook post.

A friend objected to my recent column where I looked through the stained glass in a church and found color—and reason to be happy. It wasn't realistic, he wrote. Bad things happen, and people like me should acknowledge them. He talked about tornadoes and shootings. He said people like me would go looking for a pony in a pile of horse poop. He wasn't very nice. And I still had a stomachache.

Nothing makes me feel better when I am down than a nice hot bath by candlelight, and it was certainly time for one of those. But the bathtub faucet was not working, and so the hot water filled the tub very slowly—so slowly that, by the time there was enough for a bath, it was lukewarm.

“Oh well!” I said as I hopped in. “A lukewarm bath by candlelight is better than no bath at all.”

That's when the candle fizzled out.

I sat in the lukewarm water in the dark. I still had a stomachache as I mulled over the rejection of my manuscript. I remembered my friend's accusation that I was not realistic. I realized he was right.

But, as I considered the options, I honestly couldn't think of another way to live. Life is short, no matter how long we live. Knowing that my time is short, and my abilities limited, encourages me to do whatever I can with this precious time I have—right now—sitting in lukewarm water. I get a choice about how I wish to feel about all of it, even the stomachache. And I believe (realistic or not) that it is a precious gift to live in this continually amazing, astonishingly beautiful world.

I feel better today. The sky is still gray. The faucet is still broken. There is still no word on my book. But my stomachache is marginally better. And I am enormously grateful to experience all of it.

Till next time, Carrie

Advertisement for Star Courier newspaper, including contact information for Gilbert Hoffman, Mei-Ing Liu Hoffman, Julieta Paita, Kristan Hoffman, Willie Glasgow, and Gerardo Hernandez.

CONSTABLE SHERMAN EAGLETON
HARRIS COUNTY PRECINCT 3

 SUBJECT: CARTER, LISA KAYE OFFENSE: POSSESSION OF A CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE TRAFFIC NIGHT SHIFT 17300 EAST FWY., HOUSTON	 SUBJECT: MIRONES, CHRISTOPHER OFFENSE: ASSAULT-FAMILY MEMBER - HCSO WARRANT FAILURE TO MAINTAIN FIN. RESP. - PCT. 3 WARRANT TRAFFIC NIGHT SHIFT 1700 MORNING STAR, CROSBY
 SUBJECT: AYALA, IVAN OFFENSE: UNLAWFUL CARRY OF A WEAPON POSSESSION WITH INTENT TO DELIVER DRIVE BY DAY SHIFT 13000 WATERVILLE WAY, CHANNELVIEW	 SUBJECT: PEREZ, JOE OFFENSE: POSSESSION OF A CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENT NIGHT SHIFT WALLISVILLE RR / MAXEY, HOUSTON
 SUBJECT: ARGUETA, MILTON OFFENSE: ASSAULT ON A FAMILY MEMBER ASSAULT ON A PREGNANT INDIVIDUAL FAMILY ASSAULT NIGHT SHIFT 11000 DRIFTING WINDS, HOUSTON	 SUBJECT: RICHARD, TYREK OFFENSE: ASSAULT FAMILY VIOLENCE - HCSO WARRANT TRAFFIC NIGHT SHIFT 17300 CROSBY FWY., HOUSTON
 SUBJECT: TURRIBIARTES, MANUEL OFFENSE: EVADING IN A MOTOR VEHICLE TRAFFIC NIGHT SHIFT 12800 EAST FWY., HOUSTON	 SUBJECT: JOHNSON, JONATHAN OFFENSE: POSSESSION OF A CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE TRAFFIC NIGHT SHIFT 1100 EVANSTON ST., HOUSTON

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Harris County increases Homestead exemption

New exemption for Seniors and Disabled raised to \$275K; 3rd time Garcia has saved homeowners' money

Harris County — During the May 16 Commissioners Court, Commissioner Adrian Garcia led an effort to increase the homestead exemption for seniors and disabled homeowners. The measure, which passed unanimously, means seniors and homeowners with disabilities who qualify for the exemption may take an additional \$25,000 (\$275,000 total) off the appraised value of their homes. The move would provide an average savings

of about \$130 per year.

A longtime champion for taxpayer relief, Commissioner Garcia has repeatedly looked for ways to reduce the burden of property taxes for families. Back in 2020, Garcia proposed the first increase in the homestead exemption since 2008.

“Once again, we deliver real savings to people desperate for help. This latest increase of the exemption should help negate the im-

fact of rising appraisal values on families across Harris County,” said Commissioner Adrian Garcia, “I’m proud to have helped put money back into the pockets of hard-working families.”

Should the Texas Legislature raise the maximum amount available for homestead exemptions, Commissioner Garcia plans to bring an item to Commissioners Court to increase it in Harris County as well.

BARRETT STATION
ANNUAL HOMECOMING WEEK
July 10th-16th, 2023

"We Are BETTER Together"

Event Schedule

- Monday-BSMA Praise & Worship @5PM
- Tuesday- HC MUD #50 Town Hall Meeting @6-8PM; Movie In The Park 7-9PM
- Wednesday- Spades & Dominoes Tournament @6-9PM
- Thursday- Community Corn Hole Tournament @6PM
- Friday- BST Casanova Cookoff & Campout
- Saturday- BST Homecoming Parade @10AM; Community Flag Football Game @5PM

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Desserts of The Week: Pineapple 4 Layer, Bread Pudding, Banana Pudding, \$5.95 each
Cake Balls \$1.95 each
Large Family Meal Feeds 6+ \$60* Small Family Meal Feeds 4+ \$50* Single Meal \$12.50

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Tuesday: Chicken Pot Pie, Fresh Garden Salad, Mini Muffins & 1 Gallon of Sweet or Unsweet Tea. (only one size family meal available for \$50.00)

Wednesday: Lasagna loaded with Ricotta, Seasoned Meat & Marinara Sauce.. Plus its topped with Cheese! Served with Green Beans, Garlic Bread & Chocolate Chip Cookies!

Thursday: Baked Crack Chicken! Baked Seasoned Chicken Breast topped with Cream Cheese, Bacon & Grated Cheese! Served with Creamy White Potatoes, Corn, Rolls & Cheesecake Bites!

Friday: King Ranch Chicken, Green Beans, Garlic Bread & Sweet Bread!

Saturday: Closed for Private Event! To go orders & Shopping Available

We Deliver Lunch & Dinner!
\$40.00 Minimum or as close as possible!
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In the Log Cabins Next to the Rusty Bucket!
Like our New FB Page! (The Teapot Depot)
We also have a booth at Time & Again! (open Tuesday-Sunday)
2514 Krenek Rd. Crosby, TX 77532!

Houston Parks and Recreation Department's Brock Park to Reopen as Adventure Park

Park to become a multi-use facility focused on adventure sports

The Houston Parks and Recreation Department (HPARD) will host the grand reopening of Brock Park on Saturday, May 6, 2023, from noon to 3 p.m. Brock Park is located at 8201 John Ralston, Houston, TX 77078 in northeast Houston. The new Brock Park has been reimagined as an adventure park, featuring amenities like a ropes course, Ninja Warrior course, a kayak/canoe launch, nature-based programming, and enhanced site security. The park is the first of its kind in the City of Houston. “The transformation of Brock Park into an adventure park destination is an exciting development for the City of Houston parks landscape,” said Mayor Sylvester Turner. “The amenities that will be available at the park, along with the addition of upgraded event space, will undoubtedly make Brock Park a destination stop for generations of Houstonians looking for unique entertainment options. Thank you to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, and our dedicated Parks team for making this dream a reality.” Funding for the project was made possible by a \$1 million grant from Texas Parks and Wildlife, and funding from the Houston Parks and Recreation Department’s Capital Improvement



without the generous support of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. Thank you all.” Brock Park was acquired by the City of Houston in 1957. It later became an 18-hole golf course, that has since closed. The park is located in Houston City Council District B, which is represented by City Councilmember Tarsha Jackson. For a closer look at Brock Adventure Park, click: <https://youtu.be/MK4tTkHnhNI>. For more information about the Houston Parks and Recreation Department, please visit www.houstonparks.org.



Fund. Brock Parks sits on 354 acres and features 2,500 square feet of interior space. It is situated about 20 minutes from downtown Houston. “I believe the Brock Park project is a game-changer for the City of Houston,” said Kenneth Allen, Director, Houston Parks and Recreation Department. “With its focus on adventure sports, nature-based programming, and all of its other attributes,

Brock Park is like no other park in Houston. I am just so proud of the Houston Parks and Recreation Department team that helped guide this makeover, and of course, it could not have been done

without the generous support of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. Thank you all.” Brock Park was acquired by the City of Houston in 1957. It later became an 18-hole golf course, that has since closed. The park is located in Houston City Council District B, which is represented by City Councilmember Tarsha Jackson. For a closer look at Brock Adventure Park, click: <https://youtu.be/MK4tTkHnhNI>. For more information about the Houston Parks and Recreation Department, please visit www.houstonparks.org.

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of property to satisfy landlord's lien. Sale to be held at STEVE'S STORAGE LLC, 5625 Hwy 90, Crosby, TX 77532 on June 10th 2023 at 8:30 a.m. Items sold as-is to the highest CASH bidder. Property is contents of tenant spaces of Chris Millikan Items include: power equipment, furniture, etc.

20-27

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LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Notice is hereby given that Original Letters Testamentary for Docket No. 514549; Estate of KELLY (LOUNSBERRY) LYNCH, Deceased; In Probate Court No. 4 of Harris County, Texas, were issued on MAY 5, 2023.

BRIAN FIKES

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

c/o Weston Cotten
1500 E. Wallisville Road
Highlands, TX 77562

All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.
Dated this MAY 16, 2023

Weston Cotten

by WESTON COTTEN
Attorney for the Estate

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Notice is hereby given that Original Letters Testamentary for Docket No. 514190; Estate of MARISAA. FORDE Deceased; In Probate Court No. 2 of Harris County, Texas, were issued on MAY 10, 2023.

DON A. FORDE

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

c/o Weston Cotten
1500 E. Wallisville Road
Highlands, TX 77562

All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.
Dated this MAY 18, 2023

Weston Cotten

by WESTON COTTEN
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Monica Barbaro, left, and Arnold Schwarzenegger star as father-daughter CIA agents in the action series "FUBAR."

"FUBAR"

"FUBAR" (TV-MA) — Action movie star Arnold Schwarzenegger has a new spy-adventure series premiering May 25, which is the longtime actor's first leading role in a scripted live-action series. Schwarzenegger plays Luke, a recently retired CIA operative who gets sucked into one last, relatively simple mission. The catch? Well, once Luke arrives on site, he realizes his daughter, Emma (Monica Barbaro), also works for the CIA and that the two have been lying to each other for years. Now, as they take on the mission together in a much different way than they expected, their bond as father and daughter truly starts to form. (Netflix)

"THE SECRETS OF HILLSONG" (NR) — This four-part documentary series releasing May 20 dives into the scandals surrounding the Christian megachurch Hillsong. The Hillsong Church campus established in New York City aimed to draw in millennials and Gen Zers, mostly due to former lead pastor Carl Lentz's efforts. Lentz then went on to become a spiritual advisor to many celebrities, including Justin Bieber, Kendall Jenner and Selena Gomez, before he was dismissed amid an infidelity scandal. This documentary explores the dark-sided atmosphere attached to Hillsong, with serious allegations of sexual abuse and abuses of power from pastors like Lentz. (Hulu)

*** "PLATONIC" (TV-MA) — The duo who led "Neighbors," Rose Byrne and Seth Rogen, are teaming up again — this time for a comedy series. Byrne and Rogen respectively play Sylvia and Will, a pair of best friends who reconnect after years apart. Sylvia's a family woman now, but Will, who just went through a recent divorce, is in an entirely different stage of his life. So, as their friendship takes off again, the two must find the right balance between Will's shenanigans and Sylvia's family to prove that a man and a woman can maintain a platonic relationship. The first three episodes premiere on May 24, with the rest following on a weekly basis. (AppleTV+)

*** "THREE THOUSAND YEARS OF LONGING" (R) — During a trip to Istanbul, British scholar Alithea Binnie picks out a random memento at an antique store. Unbeknownst to Alithea, the antique bottle she purchased contains the Djinn, a genie, inside. As the tale often goes, the Djinn offers Alithea three wishes, but first, he tells her the stories of how he ended up in the bottle and the many wishes he's granted before. Because of these stories, Alithea's lonely heart starts to beat again, and she finds immense purpose with the Djinn's sudden appearance in her life. Idris Elba and Tilda Swinton make an odd yet intriguing match in this fantasy-romance film premiering May 23. (Prime Video)

HOLLYWOOD by Tony Rizzo

HOLLYWOOD — Pedro Pascal, who's been called "an overnight sensation" (it only took 27 years) has two streaming series ("The Mandalorian" and "The Last of Us") and two upcoming films. "Drive-Away Dolls" is due in September, and "Strange Way of Life," with Ethan Hawke, will premiere at the 2023 Cannes Film Festival. In addition, Pascal has hit the stratosphere as the lead in the sequel to director Ridley Scott's 2000 megahit, "Gladiator" (which grossed \$460 million and received 12 Oscar nominations, winning five).

However, I'm not sure that Pascal made the right choice wearing Valentino's long, red jacket with a black tie and black shorts at the Met Gala. Google it.



Pedro Pascal

Even before the writer's strike, NBC was making cuts to "Law & Order." The upcoming shows will mostly feature their major leads, and their supporting players will no longer be in every episode.

Over at CBS, 84% of the cast of "Bob Hearts Abishola" are faced with their solution to remove 11 of the 13 leads in the main cast, leaving only Billy Gardell and Polake Olowofoyeku, the two title stars. Among those cut are Christine Ebersole, Matt Jones and Maribeth Monroe. They'll now be recurring in five of the 13 episodes in season five of the series. The good news for them, they were told, is that they've been released from their exclusivity clauses and can now pursue other work. Is that really good news now that the industry has been shut down by the writer's strike?

Billy Gardell, at 53, has lost 160 pounds over three years, by way of gastric bypass surgery. He went from 370 pounds to 210 pounds. The good news is that it ended his diabetes scare.

Since she made her Broadway debut 50 years ago, legend Patti LuPone has

received three Tony Awards for "Evita," "Gypsy" and, most recently, "Company" (in which she stopped the show every night with "The Ladies Who Lunch"), as well as various award nominations for "Sweeney Todd," "Anything Goes" and "War Paint," to name some.

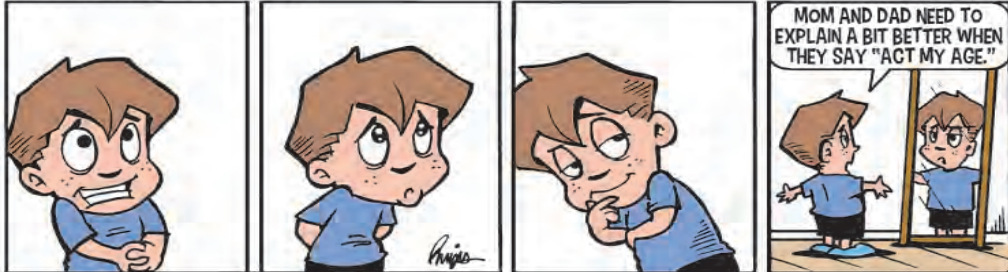
In October 2022, she officially resigned from Actors' Equity (the Broadway stage union), admitting, "When the run of 'Company' ended this past July, I knew I wouldn't be on stage for a very long time." She mentioned telling a producer who offered her a role that she didn't want to do the show on Broadway, opting instead for East Fourth Street. When explaining why she doesn't want to do Broadway anymore, LuPone stated, "Broadway's not turning into a combination of Disney, Las Vegas and the circus. Plays are closing. The education of an audience is in grave danger."

Like it or not ... Vegas is already making book on when she'll be back on Broadway!

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ENTERTAINMENT

Amber Waves



Weekly SUDOKU by Linda Thistle. Grid with numbers 4, 7, 5, 3, 6, 1, 9, 2, 8, 7, 5, 8, 1, 4, 3, 7, 6, 8, 9, 1, 2.

HOCUS-FOCUS BY HENRY BOLTINOFF. Two panels of a boy looking at a sailboat in a pond. Find at least six differences in details between panels.

King Crossword May 22, 2023 Posting Date

King Crossword grid with clues. ACROSS: 1 Beer ingredient, 5 Adj. modifier, 8 Taverns, 12 "The Middle" actress, 14 Denny's rival, 15 Susan of "Dead Man Walking", 16 Donated, 17 Business mag, 18 Rose and fell on the sea, 20 Chicago cagers, 23 Seethe, 24 God of war, 25 Adirondack lake, 28 Martini ingredient, 29 "Star Wars" baddie, 30 Pirate's chart, 32 Arabian nomad, 34 Minus, 35 Melodies, 36 Blitz's boss, 37 Two-piece suit, 40 Jazzy style, 41 Greek vowels, 42 Revolutionary War battle, 47 Hamlet, e.g., 48 Stumble on, 49 Winter coaster, 50 Thanksgiving veggie, 51 Section, 9 Melville captain, 10 Peregrinate, 11 Raced, 13 Hostels, 19 Sharif of "Funny Girl", 20 Purse, 21 "Topaz" author, 22 Sultry Horne, 23 Loses color, 25 Clerics' robing room, 26 "So be it" president, 27 Group of actors, 29 Futile, 31 Unpaid TV ad, 33 Elevated, 34 Portable PC, 36 Daytime drama, 37 Hotel furniture, 38 Slanted type (Abbr.), 39 Welles role, 40 Edge, 43 Coach, 44 Eggs, 45 Berlin's country (Abbr.), 46 Museum display.

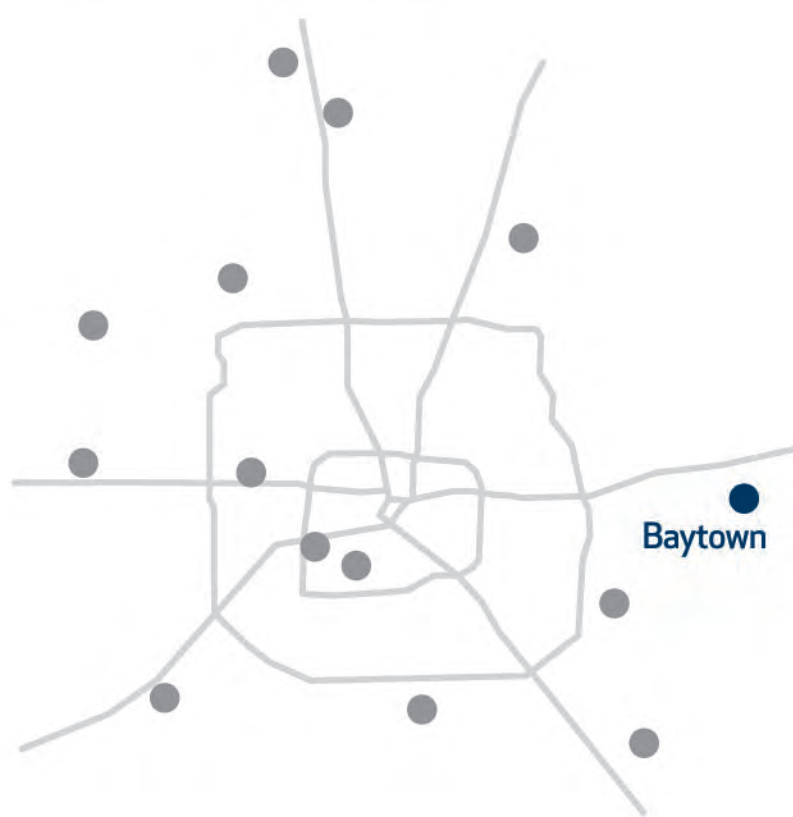
Trivia Test Answers: 1. Sunnydale High; 2. Tom Hanks; 3. Margaret Thatcher; 4. Skittles; 5. Wasabi; 6. Melamin; 7. Egypt; 8. Margaret Thatcher; 9. Xylem; 10. New Hampshire.



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