



Outgoing president Andy Scott presents the Gavel of Authority to new president Denise Smith

IN THE STARS

IN MEMORIAM
LEWIS SPEARMAN
JUNE 25, 2021



TWO YEARS AGO WE LOST OUR COLLEAGUE AND FRIEND. HE IS SORELY MISSED AND NOT FORGOTTEN. REST IN PEACE, LEWIS.

Rotary installs new officers; adds new members

HIGHLANDS – The Rotary Club of Highlands entered their 75th year with an installation of new officers, and welcome to 3 new members. An installation banquet was held at Woodall's business facility on Thompson Road, catered by Daniel's Meat Market.

Outgoing president Andy Scott gave a talk to the group about accomplishments in the last year, including a successful Chili Feast and Washer Tournament. The chili feast is the main fund raiser.

Continued. See Rotary Installation, Page 7



New Rotary president Denise Smith, with Connie Russell, Patricia Scott, Andy Scott, Weston Cotten, Sheila McDonald Parker, Diana Weaver, Robert Woodall, Martha Sutton, and Larry White. Not in photo, GayLynn Milliorn, president-elect.

BIRTHDAYS

- Jun 22–Dixie Roffe
Randall Sloan
Robert Guillory
- Jun 23–Gladys Cornelius
Janell Simmons
- Jun 24–Jamie Triche
Jaylee Gomez
- Jun 25–Pam White
Larry Marlin
Andrew Waldrip
- Jun 26–C.L. Morgan
Jim White
- Jun 27–Josh Lisenbe
George Welshimer
George Thurmond
- Jun 28–Jeanne Webb
Ethan Hill
- Jun 29–Sarah Muldrow
Peggy Smith

ANNIVERSARIES

- Jun 23–Ben & Shannon
Coward
Daniel & Jane Pratka
- Jun 25–Joe & Rene Anselmo
- Jun 29–John & Jean Lee
K.D. & Linda Strickland
Don & Anna Mattingly
- Jul 3–Larry & Shirley Marlin

Message from the Crosby Superintendent

Hello East Harris County and Crosby ISD families,

The Crosby Fair and Rodeo just wrapped up, and we loved seeing our communities come together to celebrate the hard work of our Crosby ISD students. Let's give you a rodeo roundup of the big winners:

- Grand Champion Steer – Peyton Turbitt, 11th grade, Crosby High School
- Reserve Champion Steer – Abigail Brady, Crosby High School Class of 2023 graduate
- Junior Showmanship Steer – Peyton Givans, 5th grade, Barrett Elementary School



SUPERINTENDENT PAULA PATTERSON

- Senior Showmanship Steer – Robert Sorenson, 12th grade, Crosby High School
- Grand Champion Lamb – Jaiden Grimes, 12th grade, Crosby High School
- Reserve Champion Lamb – Chloe Hood, 8th grade, Crosby Middle School
- Grand Champion Goat – Jaiden Grimes, 12th grade, Crosby High School
- Reserve Champion Goat – Kenley French, 7th grade, Crosby Middle School
- Grand Champion Ag Mechanics – Austin Eilers, 12th grade, Crosby High School
- Grand Champion Market Swine – Emma Niemtschk, 10th grade, Crosby High School



Grand Champion Steer being sold at auction. The steer was raised by Crosby High School 11th grader Peyton Turbitt.

- Reserve Champion Market Swine – Presley Purvis, 7th grade, Crosby Middle School
- Junior Showmanship

Continued. See Crosby Superintendent, Page 2

More photos on Page 2

County opens Early Childhood "REACH" program

Applications Now Open
1,000 Spaces Available

HARRIS COUNTY - Today, Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo joined non-profits BakerRipley and United Way of Greater Houston to announce that Harris County families can now apply for the Early REACH child care program. The Early REACH (Raising Educational Access for Children in Harris County) program will create up to 1,000 child care spaces for children ages zero to four. Judge Hidalgo has made early childhood programs one of her marquee priorities since taking office, and the Early REACH program is possible thanks to \$26 million in American Rescue Plan funds.

"Our program is a game-changer for the community. Harris County residents must be able to afford to live, work and raise a family here, and we are addressing the urgent need for child care," said Judge Hidalgo. "A thou-



Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo announces new REACH Early Childhood program, with BakerRipley and United Way.

sand more young kids are going to get high quality care which we know leads to lifelong outcomes like higher income, higher likelihood of graduation, and lower risk of justice involvement."

The Early REACH program will be implemented by BakerRipley and United Way of Greater Houston. United Way will recruit child care centers while working with them to improve the quality of care. BakerRipley will be responsible for contracting with child care centers, paying them, and recruiting and enrolling families and children.

"Quality early childhood education begins with empowering teachers and childcare directors to provide the very best education and care to the children they serve," said Amanda McMillian, President and CEO, United Way of Greater Houston. "Investing in child care centers through programs like Early REACH helps build environments where teachers have the support, training, and information to help them develop as professionals, work through challenges, and

CONTINUED. SEE REACH EARLY CHILDHOOD, PAGE 5

Highlands Chamber seeks future direction

HIGHLANDS – An ad hoc group of local citizens met last Friday, June 9 to discuss the current status of the Highlands Chamber of Commerce, and to discuss ways to revitalize it.

Led by Chamber board president Randy Casey, they discussed problems such as a negative financial balance, the executive director's illness, low attendance at lunches and events, and a general indifference in the community.

However, the group also discussed positive indications of the need for a chamber in Highlands. As a business and community asset, it is a potential catalyst for growth and community activities, such as the Jamboree, Santa's holiday appearance, donations for needy families at Holidays, and communal spirit and socializing at lunches, golf tournaments, awards banquets, and more. The chamber has a long history of leading the community in these types of events, and the ad hoc



A small group of local citizens, board members, and past Chamber office holders gathered to discuss future plans for the Highlands Chamber.



Randy Casey, Chamber president

group was supportive of continuing the traditions.

Methods of strengthening and revitalizing the chamber were discussed,

including merging with other chambers, but it was generally felt that Highlands identity and needs would be minimized and possibly disappear in such an arrangement.

Casey pointed out that the Chamber owned its own building on San Jacinto Street, and that asset could be leveraged in several positive ways.

It was noted that the Highlands Chamber at one time had about 100 paid

Continued. See Highlands Chamber, Page 7

RACHEL'S DINER

Southern Cooking Buffet -- Coming Soon
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Jeremy Rosenkranz
State Farm Agent
440 S. Main Street, Highlands, TX 77562
281-426-3512
jtr@jeremyrosenkranz.com



WESTON G. COTTEN

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Community Resource
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Apply Today!

Message from the Crosby Superintendent

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Market Swine – Kami Fajkus, 8th grade, Crosby Middle School

- Senior Showmanship Market Swine – Addison Maxey, 11th grade, Crosby High School

- Grand Champion Horticulture – Addison Maxey, 11th grade, Crosby High School

- Reserve Champion Horticulture – Christian Sims, Crosby High School Class of 2023 graduate

- Grand Champion Food – Sadie Manuel, 9th grade, Crosby Middle School

- Grand Champion Photography – Paisley Harlien, 8th grade, Crosby Middle School

- Reserve Champion Photography, Anna Ellisor, 7th grade, Crosby Middle School

- Grand Champion Sewing/Craft – Colby Chapman, 12th grade, Crosby High School

- Reserve Champion Sewing/Craft – Kayson Marek, 8th grade, Crosby Middle School

- Grand Champion Broiler – Kayson Marek, 8th grade, Crosby Middle School

- Reserve Champion Broiler – Colt Glover, 9th grade, Crosby High School

- Grand Champion Turkey – Harper Loggins, 6th grade, Crosby Middle School

- Reserve Champion Turkey – Preslee Harvey, 11th grade, Crosby High School

- Grand Champion Rabbit – Jace George, 5th grade, Barrett Elementary School

- Reserve Champion Rabbit – Brylee Brock, 9th grade, Crosby High School

The projects by these Crosby ISD students took sacrifice and time to create, and they ranged from a deer stand with a television to delicious cakes and cookies. Rodeo week is a special time of year to cap off a wonderful school year. Thank you to the entire Crosby Fair and Rodeo Association board members and the dozens and dozens of volunteers who helped pull it off.

As we move into the middle of June, I wanted to share a quick reminder to families. We would love for your students to be verified and/or registered as soon as possible for the 2023-2024 School Year. You can access our website www.crosbyisd.org/backtoschool to start the process. It only takes about 10 minutes per student. You can also find the 2023-2024 Academic Calendar to download, print, and hang on the family refrigerator. We also have school supply lists for elementary students if you are trying to get back-to-school shopping done early!

In the meantime, I hope everyone is taking time this summer to enjoy making memories with your loved ones. There's never a better time for quality family time.

We are Better Together! Go Coogs!



Crosby Middle School Principal, Mr. Jose Lozano; Crosby Middle School Associate Principal, Ms. Kellie Hall; Crosby High School Principal, Mr. Brad Hadnot; and Assistant Superintendent, Ms. Jewel Whitfield, visit students at Crosby Fair and Rodeo.



Grand Champion and Reserve Champion for Rabbits: Jace George, 5th grade, Barrett



Grand Champion for Horticulture: Addison Maxey, 11th grade, Crosby High School

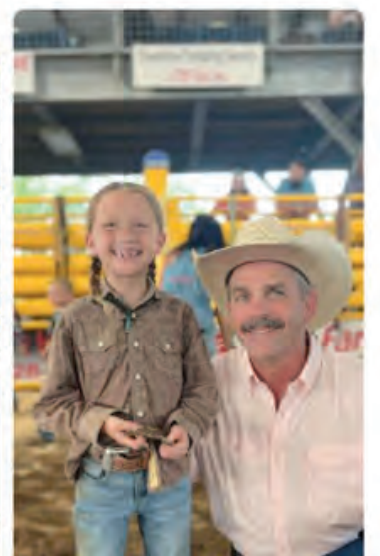


Reserve Champion for Horticulture: Christian Sims, Crosby High School Class of 2023 graduate

Crosby Fair & Rodeo Roundup

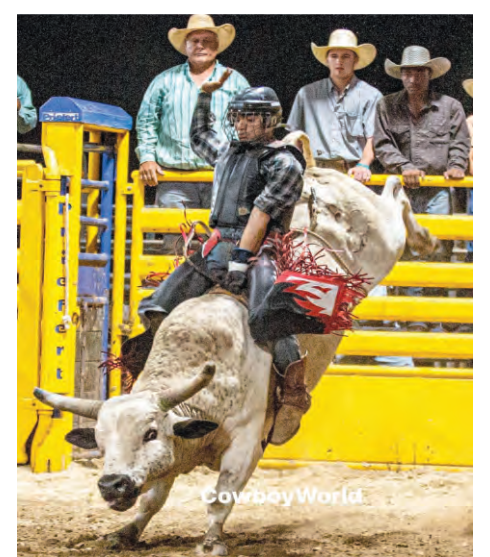


We'd like to finally recognize this year's Mutton Bustin' winners! Friday: Axel Lamb & Adrian Cardenas. Saturday: Raelynn Hall. Great job kids!!!



Crosby Fair & Rodeo Results			
Bareback Riding			
1.	TUTOR, BILL	85.5	\$1041.10
2.	THAMP, TONY	83.0	\$626.01
3.	LACKEY, PAYTON	79.5	\$477.36
Barrel Race			
1.	CHARLIE SOHRT	15.831	\$971.58
2.	JENNIFER SHARP	16.142	\$728.69
3.	TIFFANI SONNIER	16.147	\$485.79
4.	LISA THORNTON	16.220	\$242.89
Breakaway Roping			
1.	PAYTON JESSEE	3.830	\$942.35
2.	LACEY BUSCH	4.340	\$565.41
3.	HANNAH PHILLIPS	12.440	\$176.94
Bull Riding			
1.	JACOB CARRIGE	85.5	\$1605.11
2.	COLBY JONES	82.5	\$1203.86
3.	SETH PREJEANT	78.0	\$802.57
4.	SCOTT WELLS	75.0	\$401.29
Tie-Down Roping			
1.	TIM ERICKSON	9.720	\$128.38
2.	PEYTON MATHIS	9.940	\$846.28
3.	RICKEY HARRIS	10.110	\$564.18
4.	WILL ALBRECHT	10.570	\$282.09
Saddle Bronc Riding			
1.	COY HERBERT	85.5	\$1168.89
2.	ZACH GREENLAND	76.0	\$701.34
3.	CURTIS GARTON	75.5	\$467.56
Steer Wrestling			
1.	TONY ASKA	4.9	\$1001.57
2.	JAYLYN MINOR	5.4	\$600.94
3.	BEN GOODMAN JR.	5.5	\$400.63
Team Roping			
1.	BILLY REAGAN	8.990	\$1170.58
	BRENT PARKER		\$1170.58
2.	JOE MATTERS	9.330	\$780.39
	TRAVIS HOBBS		\$780.39

Rodeo Action at the Rockn'C Arena



Photos courtesy of Saguaro Rodeo

Barbers Hill Press

Dayton

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

VOL. 28, NO. 24

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THURSDAY, JUNE 22, 2023

MONT BELVIEU, TEXAS 77580

ON THE HILL

Runoff Election Results (Unofficial)

On Saturday, June 17, 2023, the City held the runoff election for City Council Position 2 and Position 5 (unexpired). The unofficial results are:

COUNCIL POSITION 2
Mickey Bertrand Total Voting 295
Laurie Guidry Total Voting 266

COUNCIL POSITION 5 UN-EXPIRED TERM
Don Price Total Voting 344
Danny Campbell Total Voting 219

Tentatively, the election will be canvassed and candidates will be given the oath of office during the regularly scheduled City Council meeting on Monday, June 26, 2023.

Comyn Introduces Senate Resolution Honoring Juneteenth

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senator John Cornyn (R-TX) introduced a Senate resolution in honor of Juneteenth. Text is below, and you can view the full resolution [here](#).

“Commemorating June 19, 2023, as ‘Juneteenth National Independence Day’ in recognition of June 19, 1865, the date on which news of the end of slavery reached the slaves in the Southwestern States.

Whereas news of the end of slavery did not reach the frontier areas of the United States, in particular the State of Texas and the other Southwestern States, until months after the conclusion of the Civil War, more than 2 + years after President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863;

Whereas African Americans who had been slaves in the Southwest celebrated June 19, commonly known as ‘Juneteenth National Independence Day’, as inspiration and encouragement for future generations;

Whereas Juneteenth National Independence Day began as a holiday in the State of Texas and is now a Federal holiday and celebrated by Americans from many walks of life as a special day of observance in recognition of the emancipation of all slaves in the United States;

Whereas Juneteenth National Independence Day celebrations have been held to honor African-American freedom while encouraging self-development and respect for all cultures;

Whereas slavery was not officially abolished until the ratification of the 13th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States in December 1865; and

Whereas, over the course of its history, the United States has grown into a symbol of democracy and freedom around the world: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—(1) designates June 19, 2023, as ‘Juneteenth National Independence Day’;

(2) recognizes the historical significance of Juneteenth National Independence Day to the United States;

(3) supports the continued nationwide celebration of Juneteenth National Independence Day to provide an opportunity for the people of the United States to learn more about the past and to better understand the experiences that have shaped the United States; and

(4) recognizes that the observance of the end of slavery is part of the history and heritage of the United States.”

Chambers County Children’s Museum Opens to Public on June 24th

June 12, 2023 (Mont Belvieu, Texas) - The much-anticipated opening of the Chambers County Children’s Museum is around the corner, organizers say. Featured exhibits on its “Main Street” include a construction site, restaurant, bank, grocery store, dentist office, doctor’s office and city hall. The showcase exhibit, sponsored by Enterprise Products Partners, tells the story of the oil and natural gas industry through hands-on exhibits representing upstream, midstream, and downstream components and processes. With the addition of a library, theatre, art room, light room, “big blue blocks,” an outdoor play area, and a farm, there is something for everyone



at the Museum. Programs will be a highlight, with registrations for crafts and summer camps already open. The Museum will also host field trips, birthday parties, and corporate events.

“We are so excited to open our doors and welcome in the community,” says Executive Director Melody Kraus. “Our Board of Directors, staff,

donors and sponsors have worked diligently to create a space that is sure to captivate children and adults alike.”

Doors will open to the public at 10 am on Saturday, June 24th. Tickets for that event can be purchased through the Museum’s website. A private ribbon cutting ceremony for sponsors and donors will follow on Monday, June 26th at



10:30 am.

The Museum will be open Tuesday – Sunday starting June 24th. Annual memberships are available for purchase online at chamberscountychildrensmuseum.org.

About the Chambers County Children’s Museum: Founded in August 2019, the Chambers County Children’s Museum “seeks to inspire dis-

covery through innovation, hands-on experiences and exploratory play”. The Museum is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization with a Board of Directors comprised of 11 community leaders who are passionate about bringing play-centered learning to Chambers County. The new owners of the building that was once the Thrift-Tee Food Center gifted the organization a 15-year free lease at the end of 2019. The organization successfully raised \$4.2MM from over 60 foundations, donors, and corporate sponsors over the next few years to fund the renovation. Mark W. Todd Architects designed the new space, and construction began in June 2022 led by E & S Construction.

Train/Car Crash in Liberty County kills at least two people, DPS says

LIBERTY COUNTY, Texas - Authorities are piecing together what led up to a deadly train crash in Liberty County.

Two people died after driving past a railroad crossing and colliding with a train in Liberty County on Monday, according to the Texas Department of Public Safety.

The fatal crash happened at about 10:27 a.m. on FM 160 north of U.S. Highway 90 almost an hour northeast of Houston.

The driver, identified as 63-year-old Linda Warren



Durio, ignored the activated railroad crossing arms and was hit by a train, according to DPS officials.

Durio and her passenger, identified as 48-year-old Demetria Louise Semien, were pronounced dead at the scene.

SkyEye flew over the scene Monday afternoon, where the 2019 Toyota Rav 4 could be seen with significant damage.

The train engineer and two passengers were reportedly not injured in the crash.

Officials said the investigation is ongoing.

Houston Methodist Hospital Baytown

The Dangers of Summer Heat

We are only in June, but the excessive heat warnings are already in full swing. Excessive heat can be much more than simply uncomfortable—it can be dangerous. Especially in children, the elderly and people with compromised immune systems.

Exposure to heat can cause heat cramps and rashes, but the most serious heat-related disorders are heat stroke and heat exhaustion. Symptoms include confusion, irrational behavior, headache, fainting, hot, dry skin and abnormally high body temperature. Heat stroke is the most serious heat-related illness. It occurs when the body becomes unable to control its temperature: its temperature rises rapidly, the sweating mechanism fails, and the body cannot cool down. Heat stroke can cause death or permanent disability if emergency treatment is not given.

Dr. Irfan Dadabhoj, a

family medicine physician at Houston Methodist Baytown Hospital, says it’s best to avoid being outside during the hottest part of the day (roughly around 3 p.m.), but if you can’t, drinking cool water, reducing physical exertion, wearing appropriate clothing and taking regular rest periods in a cool recovery area can lessen the effects of excessive exposure. Preventing dehydration is the first defense.

“Most people do not realize how dehydrated their bodies can become in a short time,” Dadabhoj said. “Most people do not drink enough water, so remember to hydrate before you plan to be active and continue to drink fluids during and after the outside activity. By the time you actually start feeling thirsty, you’re usually already dehydrated.”

Dadabhoj recommends drinking at least eight ounces of water at



Dr. Irfan Dadabhoj

least eight times a day as a way to maintain proper hydration throughout the summer. He recommends wearing lighter, breathable clothing while outdoors and avoiding fabrics like cotton that keep sweat close to the body. Using sunscreen is a must and wearing a wide-brimmed hat is also a good idea. He says patients on certain medications that may increase their risk of heat-related complications should consult their primary care physician regarding the risks posed by too much heat exposure.

“I remind those patients that take blood

pressure medications, particularly diuretic therapy, to take extra caution to replace fluids and electrolytes because they are at higher risk of dehydration, muscle cramps and heat stroke because the medication works by excreting extra salts from the body through urine,” Dadabhoj said.

In addition to preventing heat-related illnesses, making sure that children or pets are not left in parked cars—where the temperature can soar to as high as 170 degrees—is essential. If the family pet generally resides outside, owners should ensure the pet has plenty of water and shade.

If you see someone suffering a mild symptom of heat exposure, like fainting, have them lie down in a cooler area and begin slowly drinking water or a sports drink. For more serious conditions, such as heat exhaustion or heat stroke, call 911 immediately. The person

should then be moved to a shaded, cooler area where their outer clothing is removed. If possible, use cold water or an ice bath to cool the body and place cold, wet clothes or ice on the head, neck, armpits and groin. Stay with the person until emergency medical services arrive. Of course, the best advice is to stay in air conditioning as much as possible during this hot summer season.

Dadabhoj and his fellow physicians with the Houston Methodist Primary Care Group provide the full range of primary care services, including routine checkups, and treatment of complex illnesses, such as diabetes, high blood pressure and asthma. To schedule an appointment, visit houstonmethodist.org/baytown-pcp for more information and convenient online scheduling, or call **832-556-6670**.

OPINION PAGE

TEXAS GLO

By Dawn Buckingham, M.D. Commissioner, Texas General Land Office

Hurricane Season 2023 Begins June 1 Don't Ignore Your Risk, Be Prepared and Stay Prepared

AUSTIN – Texas Land Commissioner Dawn Buckingham, M.D., is encouraging all Texans to prepare for the 2023 hurricane season...

"Because of the GLO's disaster recovery programs, Texas is better prepared for natural disasters like hurricanes, floods, and wildfires," Commissioner Buckingham said.

The GLO encourages all Texans to prepare for hurricane season by doing the following:

• Know Your Risk - Sign up for your community's emergency warning system.

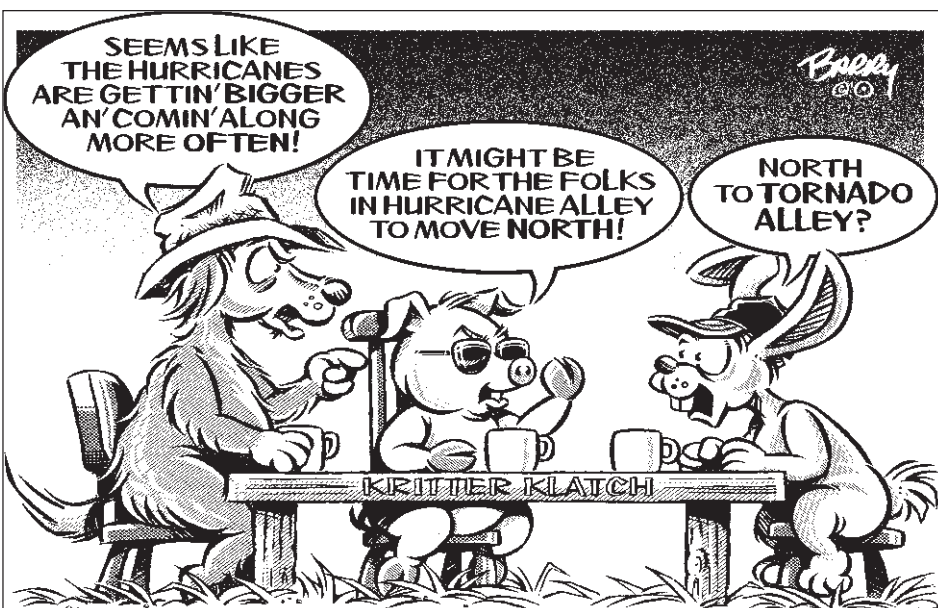
• Make Your Evacuation Plan - Check with local officials about updated evacuation shelters for this year.

• Gather Supplies - Plan for your entire household including children, people with disabilities or access/functional needs, and pets.

• Secure Documents - Remember to secure copies of important personal documents.

• Protect Your Property - Shutter your home as needed, review your flood insurance policy (or sign up for one), and declutter drains and gutters.

The Texas General Land Office continues to promote preparedness through "Don't Ignore Your Risk," a public outreach initiative to encourage Texans to be prepared and stay prepared for hurricane season.



THE POSTSCRIPT By Carrie Classon

"So Much"

I heard him yelling before I saw him.

He was in front of the church. His possessions were loaded into a shopping cart, and it appeared he was trying to navigate the steep hill. And he was yelling.

Was there a fight? Should I be worried?

But when I finally saw him, he was standing alone with his shopping cart. His face was flushed, and his voice was loud. I walked until I stood on the sidewalk in front of him.

"What's the matter?" I asked.

He stopped yelling immediately. He looked surprised—as if his yelling had been happening in a private place, and he hadn't expected anyone to notice.

"He said I was an animal!"

His eyes darted off past the clump of trees that delineates the church property. I could see no one. Maybe there was someone just out of sight. Maybe there was no one. It probably doesn't matter.

I looked back at this man. He was no longer yelling. He looked as if he might cry.

"Well, you're not," I said.

He looked at me in a peculiarly intense way, as if to see if I could be trusted to tell the truth. I've seen this look, from time to time, in homeless people. Some will not make eye contact at all. They will look down or away as if I don't exist, or they will speak over my shoulder, never meeting my eyes.

"You are absolutely not an animal," I told him firmly.

I saw his shoulders drop as if he was setting down a heavy weight. The person or phantom behind the trees seemed to be forgotten. He continued to look at me.

I didn't know what else to say. So I patted my heart, and I told him, "And I want you to know that I care."

I held his eyes for a moment longer and then headed off home. He might have said something after that. It sounded as if he was trying to say something, to explain something, but I knew there was nothing more I could do.

We all carry so much.

All the way home and for much of that night, I thought about that lonely man with the shopping cart and his outrage at being called an animal. He was indignant and afraid and desperate for it not to be true, and—maybe for just a moment—he was reassured it was not true because some random older woman on the sidewalk told him so.

Later that night, lying in bed, I told my husband, Peter, about the man and what I'd said.

"You are kind," Peter told me.

I don't know if that's true or not, but I know for certain that strangers have helped me when I needed help, and kind words have changed my day from terrible to something better—something more hopeful. I think of the many people I can never pay back and I hope I can pay forward some of the undeserved kindness I've been shown over all the years of my life.

But more than anything, when I think about that lonely man, fighting off his demons, I realize I have no idea how it feels to face anything as large or as terrifying as that man faces every day.

And for that, I am terribly—selfishly—grateful.

Till next time. Carrie

STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

By Gary Borders



Abbott vetoes bills; Feud with Patrick grows

Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick claimed last week that Gov. Greg Abbott is sabotaging the Senate's work because of their ongoing feud over which approach to property tax reform is best.

Abbott has threatened a string of vetoes if the House and Senate can't agree on a compromise on property tax relief. In each veto proclamation, Abbott has issued the following statement: "This bill can be reconsidered at a future special session only after property tax relief is passed."

Patrick took issue with that. "The governor's suggested threat today to veto a large number of Senate bills is an affront to the legislative process and the people of Texas," he said.

WILL THE STATE'S ELECTRIC GRID HOLD THIS SUMMER?

Much of Texas is in the throes of a sweltering heat wave, prompting concern that the electric grid will be strained as Texans try to keep cool. However, the Electric Reliability Council of Texas, which operates the grid, predicts it will be able to handle forecast peaks in energy usage, the Austin American-Statesman reported.

The biggest factor is demand for air conditioning of homes and businesses, according to Robert Hebner, director of the University of Texas Center for Electromechanics.

"Any rapid change in temperature causes great difficulty. If you have a gradual change, (companies) usually adjust to it fairly well," Hebner said. "This summer, there's a good chance they've anticipated well enough that we'll be able to get through."

The first official day of



summer is Wednesday, June 21.

NEW LAW BANS PAPER LICENSE PLATES

Temporary paper "dealer tags" will soon be a thing of the past after Abbott signed House Bill 718. The new law phases out the tags and requires dealers to issue \$10 metal plates to buyers purchasing vehicles, the Houston Chronicle reported.

Paper Texas tags have been criticized by law enforcement officials for years, since they are easy to fake and often used on vehicles used to commit crimes. A report by KXAN in 2021 found that selling of fake Texas tags had become a \$200 million illicit business.

The Department of Motor Vehicles has until December of next year to come up with a plan for creating and distributing metal plates to dealerships. The law itself goes into effect on July 1, 2025.

BILL RESTRICTING LOCAL CONTROL SIGNED INTO LAW

Cities and counties will be further restricted from implementing ordinances or regulations on issues normally addressed by the state after Abbott signed House Bill 2127, the Statesman reported. According to the bill's language, it is a means to "provide statewide consistency by returning sovereign regulatory powers to the state where those powers belong."

Previously, regulations put into place by cities

were unenforceable if found to be in violation of a state code. An oft-cited example is an Austin ordinance passed in 2018 aimed at forcing most private employers in that city to provide sick leave. However, that ordinance never took effect since courts ruled it unconstitutional.

Opponents of HB 2127 fear it will further erode local governments' power to handle community issues. "We barge into bedrooms, locker rooms, boardrooms, examining rooms and now city council meetings," Sen. Sarah Eckhardt, D-Austin, said during the debate. "We should be doing our job rather than micromanaging theirs."

Abbott praised the bill's passage, tweeting after the signing that he "signed a law to provide a new hope to Texas businesses struggling under burdensome local regulations."

MURDER RAP NOW POSSIBLE FOR FENTANYL DISTRIBUTION DEATHS

Several bills were signed into law last week to fight fentanyl overdoses by classifying those deaths as poisonings, allowing universities to use opiod reversal drug Narcan, and implementing felony charges for producing and distributing fentanyl.

"This law makes clear that any person who causes a death by unlawfully manufacturing or delivering fentanyl can be prosecuted for murder in the state of Texas," Abbott said. Nearly 2,000 Texans died last year after taking fentanyl, sometimes unknowingly because it was mixed with other drugs.

Despite the passage of these bills, some family members of overdose victims expressed disappointment that a bill that would no longer classify fentanyl test strips as drug paraphernalia did not make it out of the Senate.

DISTRACTED DRIVING DEATHS ON THE RISE

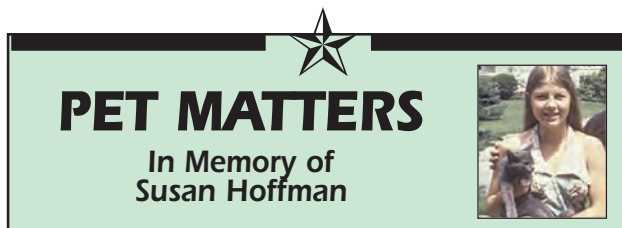
Distracted driving has killed more than 2,000 people in Texas since 2017, and the number of deaths attributed to it increased by 10% in 2022. Approximately one of every six crashes on Texas roadways in 2022 was attributed to distracted driving, according to the Texas Department of Transportation.

"Texting, adjusting audio or navigation systems, or scrolling on a social media site can wait until you're safely parked," said Marc Williams, TxDOT executive director. "We're urging Texans to make the right choice and put the phone away."

It has been illegal since Sept. 1, 2017, to read, write or send a text while driving in Texas. Drivers are urged to put phones away while driving, to pull entirely off the road to use a phone, and to avoid eating or drinking until parked.

top ten Most Favorite U.S. States, according to Americans 1. Hawaii 2. Colorado 3. Virginia 4. Nevada 5. North Carolina 6. Florida 7. Arizona 8. New York 9. Georgia 10. Texas Source: YouGov

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Include Your Furry Friend in Your Emergency Plans

June is National Pet Preparedness Month

If You Are a Pet Owner, Make Sure to Include Your Furry Friend in Your Emergency Plans

HOUSTON – June is National Pet Preparedness Month and a great time to make sure you and your pets are ready for emergencies. Harris County Pets (HCP), resourced by Harris County Public Health (HCPH), reminds everyone that it is crucial to include pets in their disaster plans.

Disasters and other unexpected emergencies require readiness for every member of the family, including pets. Pets depend on their owners to keep them safe. Please do not wait until the last minute to prepare. Also, if you need to evacuate your home during an emergency, never leave your pets behind.

The following is a list of things you should do to prepare your pet(s) for emergencies:

Ensure your pet can be identified with a microchip or collar ID tag, and that your contact information is up to date.

Keep health/vaccination records in a safe place and take copies of these if you are leaving your home.

Prepare a pet emergency supplies kit that is readily accessible when needed. Include toys, treats and bedding.

Bring pets indoors at the first sign or warning of a storm or disaster. Pets can become disoriented and wander away

from home in a crisis.

Learn where your pet likes to hide in your house when frightened. Finding your pet quickly will help you evacuate faster.

If you need to evacuate, take a pet carrier or crate for transport and safe-keeping.

Identify a location to take your pet if you need to leave your immediate area. Keep in mind that disaster shelters for people may not be open to pets. Find hotels and motels with pet-friendly policies and ask relatives or friends if they can house you and your pet.

Carry a picture of your pet in the event of separation. (You can take a selfie of you and your pet together in advance to help others identify you as the owner if you need help finding them.)

For pet preparedness information and other resources, visit www.CountyPets.com or www.hcphctx.org/vph.

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Harris County Pets, resourced by Harris County Public Health, provides veterinary care and adoption services for homeless pets, a pet medical clinic for the public, responsible pet ownership education, as well as animal control services in unincorporated Harris County.

Visit our website, CountyPets.com, and connect with us on Facebook and Instagram.



Revive2Thrive: Infrastructure Project Updates



This week we kicked off the new drainage improvement project in the Pine Trails subdivision! This neighborhood faced various issues like street ponding, pavement distress, sidewalk buckling, and flooding.

The \$19.6 million improvements include:

- *Increase stormwater drainage out of the neighborhood
- *Increase the size of select drainage pipes
- *Replace pavement and sidewalks on streets where storm sewer is upgraded
- *Dead trees and tree stumps will be removed within the right of way
- *Minor water line adjustments when conflicting with storm sewer upgrade
- *Construction of detention pond at the northeast corner of subdivision east of Big Gulch

The construction of the project has been divided into 4 phases. Phases 3 and 4, on the east side of the subdivision, will be constructed first. Construction is scheduled to start in June 2023. Thank you to our dedicated partners at Harris County, Harris County Engineering Department, and Harris County Flood Control.

Next Wednesday, we will also break ground on Cedar Bayou East and West subdivision. This project includes a new detention pond for drainage and storage and approximately 25,300 linear feet of reinforced concrete storm sewers of various sizes.

And this Friday, we will mark the completion of Phase 2 of the Eastex Freeway Forest drainage improvements. This project upsized storm sewers, added storm drains, and lowered portions of neighborhood streets to reduce flooding within Eastex Freeway Forest Subdivision Sections 3 and 4.

This month in Commissioners Court, the following Precinct 2 infrastructure projects were approved:

High Meadows Drainage Improvements: Construction on our High Meadows and Fairgreen Subdivision Drainage Improvements is anticipated to start this August.

The project includes:

- *Modifying the outfalls along the flood control drainage channel
- *Upsizing the storm sewer system along John F. Kennedy Boulevard between Connorvale & Charriton and along Fern Meadow from Debeney to the flood control drainage channel
- *4,790 linear feet of concrete piping for stormwater

This project will benefit 374 structures when completed in the 1st quarter of 2024.

Western Homes Drainage Improvement Project: This investment in the Aldine Area is expected to provide direct relief to nearly 600 individuals in the surrounding area.

The project includes:

- *A new storm sewer system underneath all roadway ditches in the neighborhood
- *Restoring ditch and pipe culverts along 7,400 linear feet
- *A detention facility on the southern end of the subdivision of 50K cubic yards



This month, Commissioner Garcia led or voted in favor of the following items:

Savings for Senior and Disabled Homeowners: Commissioner Garcia made a motion, and Commissioners Court unanimously approved, to increase the homestead exemption equal to 20% of the appraised value of a home plus up to an additional \$275,000 exemption for eligible 65 and older or disabled homeowners. The exemption was previously \$250,000. This will produce average savings for qualified homeowners of about \$130 per year.

Substance Use Disorder Outreach Program: This agreement enables Precinct 2 to provide space at our community centers for the Harris Center substance use outreach team to conduct community engagement and connect residents to treatment options.

Water Agreement for Affordable Housing Project in East Aldine: Commissioners Court unanimously approved an Interlocal Agreement between Harris County and the East Aldine Management District providing wastewater capacity for the upcoming affordable housing subdivision in the East Aldine area. The Connorvale Project is an affordable single-family home development that will provide 47 newly built homes, and more than half will be affordable homes.

Veterans Suicide Prevention: Commissioner Garcia was proud to approve the Veterans Services Department's request for a new Peer Support Specialist position to focus on suicide prevention. With one veteran suicide every six days on average in Harris County, this position aims to reduce this as much as possible.



Commissioner Garcia presented a resolution recognizing May as Mental Health Awareness Month to highlight the critical role of the county in providing crucial behavioral health services and resources to its residents. Harris County continues its commitment to partner with our community members to ensure that mental health services are accessible, valuable, and culturally appropriate for all residents. Ms. Carrie Rys, Chief of Administration, The Harris Center for Mental Health and IDD, appeared in court to accept the resolution. Ms. Donna Mohlman of Baytown spoke about the value of this program, and how it helped her son.

SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

When It's Time for a New Cellphone

Like it or not, sometimes we just have to buy a new cellphone. When the old one won't hold a charge anymore or it won't take the newest security updates, we have to cave in and begin a hunt for a new one.

Sometimes it's easy. You take the old phone to the same store where you bought it and tell them you want an upgraded version of that phone. You look it over, press all the buttons, like it, and there you go ... a new phone.

Most of the time, however, it's not that easy. Technology moves along so quickly, and so do the ca-

pabilities of new phones. If it's been more than three years since your last phone purchase, talk to friends and family. Play with their phones and see how they feel in your hand. Look up cellphones on the internet and compare the features — all before you even head to a phone store.

Your choice of phones depends in part on what you want it to do. If you want to keep things simple, check out RAZ phones and the Jitterbug lineup. The RAZ phones, for example, only do regular voice and video calls.

For fancier options, do

you want to cruise the internet, send email, watch videos, make calls, take photos, send text messages or play games? Most of the phones out there now do all of this.

Decide in advance how you want to handle the purchase of the phone. Do you want it to be part of a monthly plan or pay for it completely? Do you want to be on a monthly plan at all, which may involve signing a contract?

Additionally, ask at the store whether they'll give you anything for trading in your old phone and whether they'll transfer your in-

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20-4T

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22-2T

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE of property to satisfy landlord's lien. Sale to be held at STEVE'S STORAGE, LLC at 5625 Hwy 90, Crosby, TX 77532 on July 8th at 8:30 a.m. Items sold as-is to highest CASH bidder. Property is contents of tenant spaces of Kristy M Baskin and Mostafa Zaman: Household items, appliances, furniture, tools, etc.

24-2T

HELP WANTED

NEWSPAPER MANAGING EDITOR

Position available for journalist or manager with local newspaper. Experienced in writing, interviewing, sourcing, computer layout, ad sales, record keeping, promotions. Salary plus benefits. Send letter of interest to grafikstar@aol.com or call 713-252-8000.

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REACH Early Childhood,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

implement best practices that contribute to strong outcomes for kids.”

“I commend Harris County for continuing to recognize that high-quality child care is a vital component for the growth of the economy, workforce development, and socioeconomic mobility. For many low-income families that work hard but still struggle with rapidly rising costs of living, Early REACH will be a big positive step toward financial stability and self-sufficiency,” said Claudia Aguirre, BakerRipley President and CEO.

Children and families are eligible to participate if they meet these requirements:

— Residency: Live in

Harris County AND
 — Age: Children are age zero to four AND
 — Demonstrate financial need via one of the following:

— Live in a family that makes 85% less of State Median Income (SMI) (approx. \$75,468 annually for a family of four.) OR

— Live in an area of high need according to the Social Vulnerability Index (high need considered to be .75 or above) OR

— Are experiencing homelessness OR

— Are in foster care OR

— Receive WIC, SNAP, TANF, free or reduced lunch, or SSI income.

To learn more about Early REACH, and apply, visit www.earlyreach.org.

Rotary installs new Officers; adds new members,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

er for the club, resulting this year in 21 scholarships totaling \$37,500.

Andy went on to detail other club project from the last year. These include Partners in Education, donation of 8 bicycles to students with perfect attendance, and cookies for 800 kids on their birthdays.

The club participated in National Night Out at the Community Center, Share Your Christmas (gifts for needy families), hot chocolate served at Santa’s arrival in December, and served hot lunch to senior citizens.

The club built a ramp for a limited mobility senior, along with the Masonic Lodge.

The club participated in international projects, hosting an exchange student, Edouardo, from Belgium, and a water project for Haiti in partnership with the North Shore Rotary club.

A benefit for veterans was held at Connie’s bar in Channelview, with \$7500 raised in veteran Tony Irwin’s name, and for a number of other scholarships.

The club supported community projects with donations, including the Navigation Center for the homeless, the Crosby Rodeo, the Crosby 200th Anniversary celebration, Bras for the Cause, the Harris County Seniors program, and the Bay Area Family Homeless Shelter.

Finally, Andy was able to report that the club added 4 new members in the year, with several more prospects.

After she was sworn in as the new president, Denise Smith gave a summary of her goals for the club



Rotarian of the Year Award went to outgoing president Andy Scott.



New member Wayne Bethard was sworn into the club.



Perfect attendance awards went to Patricia Scott, Weston Cotten, Andy Scott, and Denise Smith.

their projects such as the Chili Feast. Another project they have in mind is participating in this year’s Relay for Life, honoring Cancer survivors.

In closing, Denise said that she want everyone to have some fun, and remember the Commitment to Community that drives the projects of the club. She wants to “Create Some Hope” for those that need it. She invites anyone else in the community that would like to participate, to contact her about joining the club. She can be reached at niecey1616@gmail.com.

At the dinner, the following officers were installed:

- President, Denise Smith
- Vice-President, GayLynn Milliom
- Treasurer, Sheila McDonald Parker
- Secretary, Diana Weaver
- Sgt. At Arms, Robert Woodall
- Foundation Chair, Tricia Scott
- Membership Chair, Weston Cotten
- Service Project Chair, Martha Sutton
- Partners in Education Chair, Andy Scott
- Veterans Committee Chair, Connie Russell
- Scholarship Chair, Dr. Larry White.

Highlands Chamber,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

membership, and it was felt by the group that they should be contacted for a renewal of their support. A previous chamber secretary, Reba Rachall, agreed to work on this on a temporary basis, to help re-establish a positive position for the Chamber. If this solicitation is successful, the board could then move ahead with solving the financial problems and hiring a new executive director to manage the day-to-day activities of the organization.

Gretchen Knowles, representing Harris County Pct. 2, said she will investigate ways that her precinct and Pct. 3 might be able to help restart the chamber.

Randy Casey indicated that the Chamber will require a renewed commitment from the community

to succeed. He urged everyone to contribute ideas, time, and dues to help keep the chamber functioning. If you have any suggestions or ways to help, you can contact him at 281-421-2244. Other board members willing to hear your suggestions are Betty Michalsky, Sarah Davis, and Rev. Phillip Morris.

Also, if you have any ideas Pro or Con on this subject, you are urged to write a letter or an email to the Star-Courier, to keep the discussion going, and hopefully turn up some new ideas and new persons interested in the quality of life and business in Highlands.

The Star-Courier will publish some of these letters, and also invites community leaders to submit an OP-ED article on the subject.

in the next year.

These include increasing membership, and making the club more visible to the community for its service projects.

She plans on continuing current projects, including and expanding lunches for senior citizens, with 4 planned for the year.

She and Diana Weaver will arrange a blood drive for the community, as we have held in the past.

Mountbatten House will get the attention of the club, with refresh work projects for the landscaping and the outdoor pavilion on the grounds.

Along with Connie Russell, Denise will schedule a project to honor and help

veterans.

In conjunction with the Highlands Elementary School, the club will continue the Buddy Bench project, and in addition look into creating an outdoor education space, perhaps with grant money from the Rotary International.

Highlands Rotary sponsors a club for high school students known as Interact, at Goose Creek Memorial high school. The club will be working with a new liaison this year, Eric Harris, a teacher who himself was an Interact and Rotaract member. The club conducts community projects similar to the main Rotary club, and helps with



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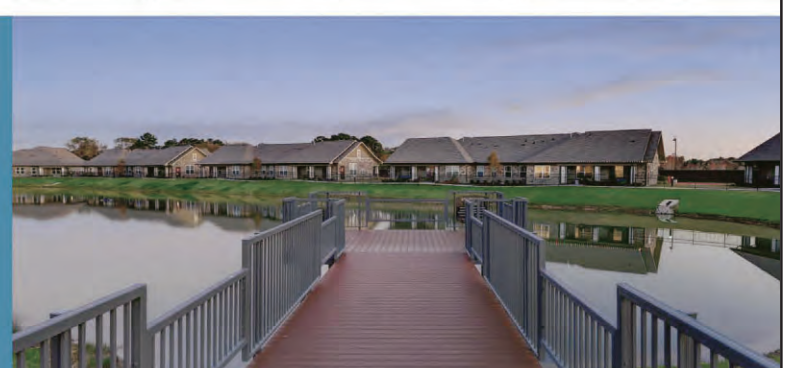
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