



Mike Niemtschk wins Pit Boss Award

HIGHLANDS

CROSBY

Star Courier

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THURSDAY, JUNE 8, 2023

P.O. DRAWER 405, HIGHLANDS, TEXAS 77562

IN THE STARS

EVENTS

Crosby Fair & Rodeo Schedule

MAY 20, Saturday
COWPOKE PAGEANT
10:30 am CFR pavilion

JUNE 2,3 Friday, Saturday
BBQ COOKOFF

JUNE 2, Friday
TWENTY TWOS
BAG OF DONUTS, 7:30pm

JUNE 3, Saturday
PARADE 10am
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

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

It's a Dirty Business

Joe Flanagan of Lonestar Siteworks has available time for Dozer, Backhoe and Tractor work. Call or text him for a Free Quote on your next Dirt(y) project. 832-530-0054. He's well recommended, fast and inexpensive. Call now.

BIRTHDAYS

Jun 8-Nathan Abbott
Jun 9-John David Gross
Beuana Cumbiek
Jun 10-Kimberly Minter
Cassie Scott
Charles Massey
Lisa Worthen
Jun 11-Trent Coots
Mike Woods
Ralph Roper
Jun 12-Bobby Horn, Jr.
Zoie Woosley
Jun 13-Earlene Michalsky
Jun 14-Shelby Russell
Jun 15-Tina Hill
Jun 16-Steffany de la Cruz
Tim Grisham
Evelyn Del Angel
Jun 17-Garret Oviedo
Brandi Rutledge

ANNIVERSARIES
Jun 8-Judy & Allen Dunn
Joe & Elizabeth Price
Jun 10-Christ & Pam Mosley
Jun 18-Cliff & Janise McKee

Crosby rockin' with Rodeo, Music, BBQ!

CROSBY - Week 2 of the big Crosby Fair & Rodeo is underway, and so far a tremendous success with a great BBQ Cookoff with 94 entries, a fun parade Saturday, a huge crowd of 2300 for last Friday's performance by Bag of Donuts, and more.

On Saturday night, Dalton Grice played an acoustic set before the main act of Sunny Saucedo.

This week we have the livestock judging, and the Auction on Thursday at 6pm. The Buyer's dinner starts at 4pm, don't miss this warmup!

The PRCA official Rodeo will be Friday and Saturday nights, starting at 7:30 followed by the Entertainment. See performer information to the right.

The Little Wrangler will be Saturday morning starting at 10am.

What a Week!!



FRIDAY JUNE 9 - CREED FISHER 7:30 PM



SATURDAY JUNE 10 - GIOVANNIE & THE HIRED GUNS 7:30 PM



FRIDAY JUNE 9 - TYLER HALVERSON 7:30 PM



THURSDAY JUNE 10 - AUSTIN MEADE 7:30 PM

Crosby Rodeo BBQ Cookoff Winners

CROSBY - The Annual Crosby Fair and Rodeo's CookOff there were good times and great reunions for many of Crosby Alumni, with 94 entries this year, friends and family came together for one of the Best BBQ competitions in town.

Once all the cooking is done, you can taste the anticipation waiting to see who wins the bragging rights for the year to come.

--Michele Tatum-Eaglin

MORE BBQ COOKOFF PHOTOS ON PAGE 2



COOKOFF RIBS 1ST PLACE - HULA HUT KOOKERS (All photos courtesy Michele Eaglin and CF&R)



ABOVE: 2ND PLACE RIBS - WARPIG BBQ



LEFT: 3RD PLACE RIBS - INLAWS & OUTLAWS

Crosby ISD offers Free Summer Meals!

Crosby, TX - This summer, the Crosby Independent School District will be sponsoring Seamless Summer Food Service, which will provide FREE, Breakfast and Lunch meals to all children between 1 year and 18 years of age. Serving sites and serving times are listed below.

This program is scheduled to run from June 5 until June 29, 2023. Serving hours may vary by site. (See information listed below.) Children do not have to sign up for meals; they simply need to come to the school site during serving hours. Regulations require that meals must be eaten at the feeding site.

Barrett Elementary June 5 to June 29, 2023

Breakfast 7:30 - 8:00 Lunch 10:30 - 11:30 (closed Friday)
815 FM 1942, Crosby 77532 Monday - Thursday

Crosby High School June 5 to June 29, 2023

Breakfast 8:30 - 9:00 Lunch 12:00 - 12:30
333 Red Summit Dr, Crosby 77532 Monday - Thursday (closed Friday)

Crosby Middle School June 5 to June 29, 2023

Breakfast 8:30 - 9:00 Lunch 12:00 - 12:30
14703 FM 2100 Crosby, 77532 Monday - Thursday (closed Friday)

Families who have questions or need more information, can contact the Crosby ISD Student Nutrition Dept. at 281-328-9200 x 1252.

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

Gun BuyBack continues on June 10th at NRG

HOUSTON - Mayor Sylvester Turner joined Harris County Commissioner Rodney Ellis and Houston Police Chief Troy Finner today to announce the date of the next gun buyback.

The gun buyback program is part of the Violence Reduction and Crime Prevention section of the Houston Police Department. The City of Houston has committed \$1 million to a robust gun buyback initiative to reduce violence and prevent crime by removing illegal or unwanted firearms from the street.

The next gun buyback will be held from 8 a.m. to noon Saturday, June 10, at NRG Park, in the Yellow Main Street Lot, 9051 S Main Street. The location



Officers check guns that have been turned in as part of the City-County BuyBack program.

is Gate# 16 off Main Street, the Yellow Main Street Lot main gate.

People can bring their unwanted guns and exchange them for a gift card.

\$50.00: Non-functioning firearm

\$100.00: Shotgun or Rifle (Hunting)

\$150.00: Revolver

\$150.00: Semi-Auto Handgun

Continued. See Gun BuyBack, Page 5

RACHEL'S DINER

Southern Cooking Buffet -- Coming Soon
14280 FM 2100 (Across from Walmart)
281-462-7349

AUTO & HOME INSURANCE



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*APY=Annual Percentage Yield. Minimum \$100 deposit required. Penalty for early withdrawal. Fees may reduce earnings. APYs, terms and conditions are accurate as of 03/15/23 and are subject to change without notice. **You may add on to your certificate at any time during the term not to exceed \$10,000.00. Certificates of Deposit are non-transferable and non-negotiable. The add on does not apply to IRA and HSA Certificates.



Crosby Rodeo BBQ Cookoff Winners

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

PHOTOS COURTESY OF MICHELE EAGLIN AND CROSBY FAIR AND RODEO



SHOWMANSHIP AWARD - LAKE HOUSTON FAMILY



CHICKEN 1ST - BEERKATS COOKERS



FAJITAS 1ST - SARGE'S MESS HALL



CHICKEN 2ND - WARPIG BBQ



CHICKEN 3RD - GRANDPA & GRUNTS



FAJITAS 2ND - HULA HUT KOOKERS



FAJITAS 3RD - GRANDPA & GRUNTS



MARGARITAS 1ST - DANA INDUSTRIAL GROUP



OPEN DISH 1ST - HAMMER DOWN COOKERS



MARGARITAS 2ND - B.O.H.I.C.A.



MARGARITAS 3RD - BLUE LINE BBQ



OPEN DISH 2ND - HULA HUT KOOKERS



OPEN DISH 3RD - HAS BEEN COOKERS

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- 4 Potatoes au Gratin (2.8 oz.)
- 4 Caramel Apple Tartlets (4 oz.)
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Crosby FAIR & RODEO
June 2nd-10th

Rock'n Arena

Friday June 2
22's & Bag of Donuts

Saturday June 3
Sunny Sauced

Friday June 9
Tyler Halverson
Creed Fisher

Saturday June 10
Austin Meade
Giovannie & The Hired Guns

Logos for sponsors: COSKOCOL, THE NEW 930 COUNTRY, TURNER CHEVROLET, SHOPPA'S JOHN DEERE, THE BULL 100.3, DANA, Bottom Line EQUIPMENT LLC, HBS HOUSTON BARBECUE, MURPHY'S, SUNBELT, KUBOTA, ACE Hardware, MURF TURF FARM, SUNBELT, PFS Professional Feeding Services, Bayshore, stellarBANK, FOSTER, SAGUARO BOWL.

Barbers Hill Press

Dayton

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

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THURSDAY, JUNE 8, 2023

MONT BELVIEU, TEXAS 77580

ON THE HILL

Community Heart Screening in Cove

Date: Saturday, June 17TH
Time: 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Location: West Side Community Screening Building - 8138 FM 3246 Cove, TX 77523

Did you know?

- Sudden Cardiac Arrest is the #1 Killer of Student Athletes
- 1 in 300 youth have an undetected heart condition that puts them at risk for Sudden Cardiac Arrest

Register Here for a Free Heart Screening



REGISTER HERE FOR HEART SCREENING & PHYSICAL \$20



Defendant Found Guilty of Driving While Intoxicated in Chambers County Trial

County Attorney, Ashley Cain Land, announces that on Thursday, May 18, 2023, a Chambers County Jury returned a "guilty" verdict in a Driving While Intoxicated- 2nd Offense case against Eric Alberto Flores. Mr. Flores was charged with the Class A Misdemeanor, to which he pled "not guilty". The Honorable Judge Jimmy Sylvia presided.

The facts at trial showed that around 7pm on March 25, 2021, dispatch received a 911 call about a wrecked truck in the curve on Eagle Road in Oak Island. Prior to officers' arrival, Mr. Flores had crashed through a barbwire fence and was driving circles around pasture land, confused on how to get back to the road before wrecking in the ditch.

Trooper Craig Hunter testified about his investigation which included conducting standardized field sobriety tests and piecing together Mr. Flores' actions earlier in the day leading up to the wreck. Mr. Flores admitted to drinking that morning at a casino in Lake Charles, Louisiana and told Trooper Hunter he was headed to Conroe but got lost. Mr. Flores agreed to provide a specimen of his blood after performing poorly on the field sobriety tests. An analysis of his blood returned with a blood alcohol concentration of .132, much higher than the legal limit of .08.

The defense attempted to sway jurors by attacking the credibility of the science behind the blood result, but the jurors were unpersuaded. After considering the arguments, the jury rendered a guilty verdict.

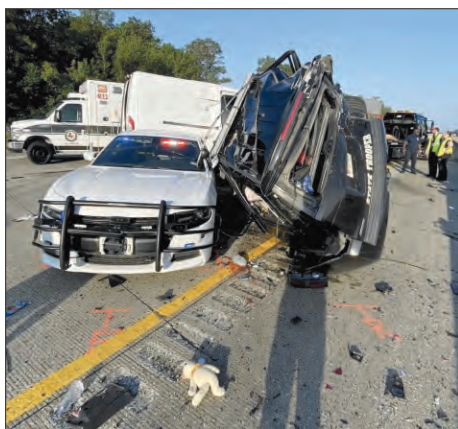
Mr. Flores was sentenced to 20 months' probation, 5 days in County Jail, 20-month ignition interlock device, 20-month driver's license suspension, 48 hours community service, DWI Education Class, Victim Impact Panel, and a \$750 fine plus court costs.

CHAMBERS COUNTY TRAFFIC STOP

Texas DPS trooper Critically Hurt in Major crash involving Speeding Van on I-10 East

Sheriff Brian Hawthorne reports that today at approximately 6:20 a.m. Chambers County Sheriff's Office Deputies assisted Texas DPS with a traffic stop at the 815 eastbound mile marker on I-10.

A traffic stop was conducted in reference to an attempt to locate for a possible intoxicated driver. The driver of the suspect vehicle came to a stop in the center lane of Interstate 10. The Trooper detained the subject and was able to move his vehicle partially to the inside shoulder area. Patrol Deputies and troopers had the inside lane blocked in an attempt to keep oncoming



traffic off of the Trooper conducting the investigation.

During the investigation, a vehicle not involved with the traffic stop, hit a Texas DPS patrol car which was shoved into a Chambers County patrol

car. A DPS Trooper, that was outside of his vehicle at the time of the accident, was struck by one of the vehicles and received serious injuries. The DPS Trooper was life-flighted from the scene for medical treatment. The citizen

that struck the Troopers vehicle was pronounced deceased at the scene.

All other involved officers are in good health as well as the subject from the original traffic stop. This is an ongoing, active investigation being conducted by Texas DPS.

"Our continued thoughts and prayers are with the injured Trooper, our partners at the Department of Public Safety as well as the deceased and their family," said Sheriff Hawthorne.



Chambers County Library Summer Reading 2023

Summer Reading Program is underway at the Chambers County Library System! Camp Read-A-Lot began June 5 and runs through July 15. Lots of fun programs, incentives, and surprises for kids, teens, and adults! Kids pick up a game board and read 20 min a day. For every 5 days you read, bring your game board in for a prize! Teens and adults, for every 2 books you read fill out a bookmark and be entered into a weekly prize drawing. Programs include a visit from the Astros mascot Orbit, John O'Bryant's All Together Now magic show,



local mascots, first responders, and more! Teens and adults also have a great lineup of programs. Our summer fun would not be possible without the generous do-

nations and assistance from our sponsors. Check out our website for more details about our summer program: <https://www.chambers.lib.tx.us/summer-reading>



Houston Methodist Hospital Baytown

4 Nurses recognized as DAISY Award Winners

Houston Methodist Baytown recognized four nurses for their abundant compassion and ability to bond with their patients in their time of need. The nurses were nominated by patients and honored by hospital executives. The winners are Kortnei French and Nancy Rivas who both work on the fifth floor of Unity Tower, Brenda Anderson from ICU, and Claudia Moses from the labor and delivery unit.

Kortnei French's nomination letter read in part: "This nurse is absolutely amazing. She is very friendly and did a great job to make me feel comfortable and content. She effectively explained my care and the notes from the physician in my chart. Even on shifts when she wasn't assigned to me, she came to my room to say "hi" and check on me. She is amazing at what she does."

A patient left this nomination for Nancy Rivas: "This nurse is a testimony that there is a God, and that God lives in her. She has been such a blessing to our family and



Brenda Anderson



Claudia Moses



Kortnei French



Nancy Rivas

loved ones. Her inspiring personality, encouraging words, and dedication to her profession make this nurse truly spectacular. She was the answer to our prayers from up above. If I had a daughter, I'd want her to model Nancy."

One of Brenda Anderson's patients wrote: "This nurse did a phenomenal job of caring for me during my recent stay. She communicated with me as tests were coming in, let me know what the plan was for my care, and quickly responded to anything I needed. She helped me understand what I was going through. We need more nurses like her, I

felt like I was her top priority."

The patient who nominated Claudia Moses wrote this: "We cannot say enough good things about this nurse. She was our first impression of the hospital, and she built our confidence that it was going to be a great experience. She listened to all of our feedback and advocated for us. Since being home she has followed up with us multiple times and answered my questions and concerns. Her role is an excellent value add to the hospital!"

The DAISY (diseases attacking the immune system) Award is part of the DAISY Foundation's program to recognize the

"super-human" tasks nurses perform every day. Community Resource Credit Union is the corporate sponsor of the award at Houston Methodist Baytown.

The not-for-profit DAISY Foundation is based in Glen Ellen, Calif., and was established by family members in memory of J. Patrick Barnes, who died at the age of 33 in late 1999 from complications of Idiopathic Thrombocytopenic Purpura (ITP), a little known but not

uncommon auto-immune disease. The care Barnes and his family received from nurses while he was ill inspired this unique means of thank-

ing nurses for making a profound difference in the lives of their patients and patient families. The honorees are also given a beautiful and meaningful sculpture called "A Healer's Touch," hand-carved by artists of the Shona Tribe of Zimbabwe, Africa.

Houston Methodist Baytown Hospital is proud to be among the hospitals participating in the DAISY Award program. Nurses are heroes every day, and given the current national nursing shortage, The Daisy Award plays an important role in letting our nurses know their work is highly valued..

OPINION PAGE

OPINION

By Harris County Public Health

Gun Violence is the Leading Cause of Death for Children in the United States

June is Gun Violence Awareness Month - A Call for Action and Prevention

HOUSTON - Gun violence is a public health crisis, and it is urgent to raise awareness and reflect on the importance of gun violence education and prevention.

Males aged ten to 14 years in the United States had an 85.7% increase in firearm-related deaths of males of this age range, the largest percentage increase in firearm-related deaths (from 2016 to 2020).

Texas has one of the highest rates of gun violence in the United States, including homicides, suicides, and unintentional shootings. The effects of firearm violence extend beyond victims and their families to the communities they live in.

"Harris County Public Health (HCPH) recognizes gun violence as a public health crisis that devastates families and communities, and we are proactively working to build safer, healthier, and stronger communities" said HCPH Executive Director Barbie L. Robinson.

The Community Health and Violence Prevention Services (CHVPS) Division under HCPH addresses the reduction of gun violence and works in partnership with local agencies. This allows for a coordinated, holistic response to improve community health and welfare and reduce violence.

Nonetheless, gun violence is a community issue, and we must come together to address the root causes of it. We urge our residents to join hands in the fight against gun violence.

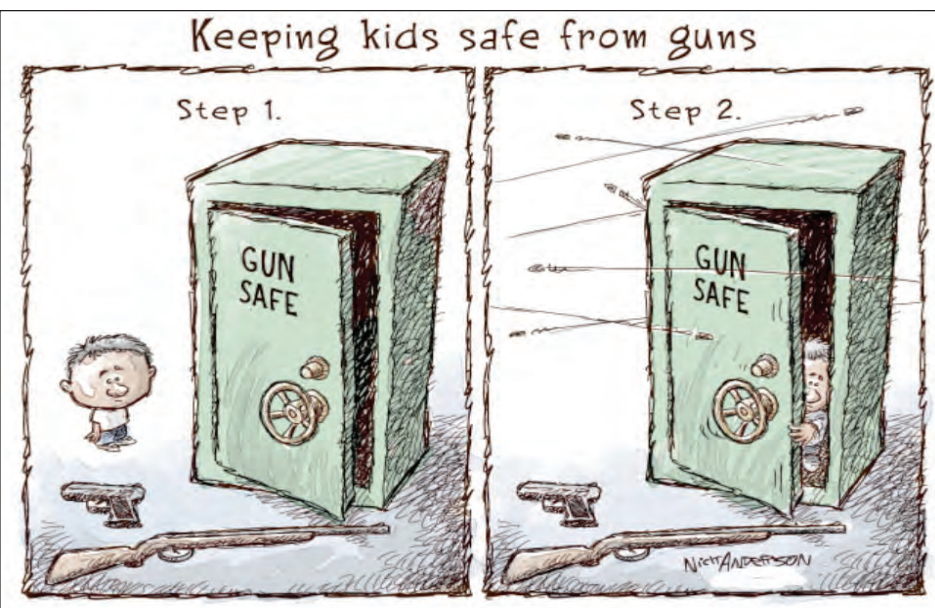
To commemorate violence awareness month, CHVPS will be hosting events throughout June at various locations as follows:

- DateTimeLocation
June 13, 2023 12 - 4 pm Carriage Place Apartments/Casa Paz-505 Wells Fargo Dr. Houston, TX 77
June 19, 2023 10 - 2 pm Yellowstone Park (George T. Nelson Park)3820 Yellowstone Blvd., Houston TX 77021
June 24, 2023 10 to 2 pm Sunnyside MSC4410 Reed Road, Houston TX 77051-2718
June 29, 2023 1 to 6 pm Wesley Square Apartments - 7402 Calhoun Rd #202, Houston, TX 77033

In recognition of National Gun Violence Awareness Month in June, residents are encouraged to support gun violence awareness by pledging to Wear Orange on Friday, June 2nd, to raise awareness about gun violence, and honor the lives of gun violence victims and survivors.

For additional information on the CHVPS program, please visit hcph.org or call (713) 274-4877 or email violenceprevention@phs.hctx.net.

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



THE POSTSCRIPT By Carrie Classon

'Footprints'

They put in a new sidewalk," my neighbor said, "and the first thing that happened was, a cat walked across the cement and left little footprints!"

My neighbor was amused. "I hope they leave them. They're so cute!"

I thought those prints would probably survive. No one was going to take the trouble to cover up a few cat prints on the sidewalk with concrete.

A few years back, they started putting poetry on the sidewalk, laid right into the cement. I stop and read the poetry on my walk. I'll ponder for a moment or two, then move on. I'm not great with poetry. It fills me with questions that have no answers.

I want to ask the poet, "Can you tell me the rest of the story?" But there is no more. I'm sure the poet would be disappointed in me. But I like reading the poetry anyway.

Some pavement was replaced recently, and a leaf landed on it. There remains a perfect leaf print, and I took a picture of it. If I see the cat prints, I'll take a picture of that cat, leaving its mark.

Several years ago, I was camping in the northeast corner of New Mexico. I took a guided hike that showed prehistoric tracks. The tracks were made by dinosaurs when that piece of land, now desert, had been right at the edge of an ancient sea that stretched all the way to Canada. The land by the shore of this sea was jungle. The interpretive signs said there were a lot of animal tracks right there, because it was easier to walk on the beach than through the dense jungle. Just like today, creatures liked walking along the beach. The sand was dense, there was a lot of clay in it, and many of those prints were filled in and eventually turned to solid rock. The tracks on display in this park were estimated to be 200 million years old.

I tried to imagine leaving footprints that lasted 200 million years. I failed.

But the most interesting part, to me, was one particular dinosaur track where the paleontologists said the dinosaur had slipped. They knew this because dinosaurs held their tails aloft and only touched them to the ground when they needed extra stability—if they were going to fall. And that's what happened. A dinosaur was walking along this beach—I'm going to imagine it was a nice sunny day—the sand (with all that clay in it) was slippery and... Whoops!

She slipped and caught herself in the nick of time with her tail. Then she kept walking. We don't know what happened after that one moment in time—that moment that happened 200 million years ago. Just like the poems in the sidewalk, there is no more. But today, we can still see her tracks.

I love that. The cat prints and the poetry and the leaf print in the cement will not last 200 million years. I've no idea if the planet will be here that long. But they will last longer than the poet who wrote the words or the cat who left the prints or the tree that dropped the leaf. And I think that is, somehow, wonderful.

I'd like to leave a small print somewhere. Nothing big. Nothing ostentatious. Maybe just a book that is in print for a few years before it disappears. That would be nice. Maybe just a record of a time when I slipped and—at the last moment—caught myself.

Till next time. Carrie.

STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

By Gary Borders



Abbott, Patrick Spar Over Tax Relief

Gov. Greg Abbott late last week warned lawmakers to be prepared for several special sessions to pass a tax reform bill that he will accept, as well as a school voucher plan that failed to pass during the regular session.

Abbott and Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick are at odds over how to deliver more than \$17 billion in property tax relief, the Austin American-Statesman reported.

During the first special session, called immediately after the regular session ended May 29, the House of Representatives quickly passed a tax relief bill that Abbott supports, then adjourned. The governor said the measure could result in eventually eliminating property taxes. The Senate has not taken action. Patrick, who presides over the Senate, countered that eliminating all property taxes would result in local sales taxes more than doubling to 19%.

"Whenever sales taxes underperform, property taxes will immediately go back up," Patrick tweeted.

Speaking before the Texas Public Policy Foundation last Friday, Abbott proposed reducing the overall tax burden through population growth and an expanded business market paying taxes.

"Texans want to own their own property, not rent it from government," Abbott said.

SCOTT NAMED INTERIM ATTORNEY GENERAL

John Scott, who most recently served as Texas Secretary of State under Abbott, has been appointed the short-term interim Texas attorney general after Ken Paxton was forced to step aside while awaiting trial in the Senate. Paxton was impeached by the Texas House on May 27.

"John Scott has the background and experience needed to step in as a short-term interim Attorney General during the time the Attorney General has been suspended from duty," Abbott said.

Scott also worked as a deputy attorney general under Abbott, overseeing all civil litigation undertaken by that office, then served as chief operating officer of the Health and Human Services Commission. Paxton's trial in the Sen-

TEXAS PRESS ASSOCIATION



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS By Gary Borders

ate is slated to begin no later than Aug. 28, according to the Texas Tribune.

LEGAL HEAVYWEIGHTS TO PROSECUTE PAXTON

Two well-known Houston attorneys have been hired to prosecute the impeachment case against Paxton. Dick DeGuerin and Rusty Hardin have more than 100 combined years of courtroom experience, the Statesman reported.

"The people of the state of Texas are entitled to know whether their top cop is a crook," DeGuerin said. For his part, Hardin implored the Senate to make the proceedings public. That body plans to adopt rules of engagement for the trial on June 20.

Paxton, a three-term Republican, was impeached by a lopsided margin in the House. Impeachment is the rough equivalent of a grand jury indictment. The Senate will act as a court to determine his guilt or innocence of the 20 articles of impeachment. It requires a two-thirds majority to convict Paxton, whose wife, Angela Paxton, is a state senator.

DeGuerin has defended a number of high-profile clients, including former U.S. Rep. Tom DeLay and singer/songwriter Billy Joe Shaver.

PUC CHAIRMAN RESIGNS FROM PANEL

Peter Lake has resigned as chairman of the Texas Public Utility Commission, effective July 1. Appointed in the aftermath of the widespread outages caused by Winter Storm Uri in February 2021, Lake oversaw the overhaul of the embattled commission, including adopting weatherization standards for power plants and rebuilding the beleaguered Texas

power grid, according to The Dallas Morning News.

"Together we've overcome sometimes seemingly insurmountable challenges and delivered on our promise to Texans that we'd keep the lights on," Lake said in a statement.

Meanwhile, another PUC commissioner appointed last August to the five-member board was unanimously confirmed by the Senate in the closing days of the regular session. Kathleen Jackson of Beaumont previously served on a number of boards and commissions, including the Texas Water Development Board.

FINAL COVID-19 WORKERS' COMP REPORT

The workers' compensation division of the Texas Department of Insurance has issued its final update of COVID-19 worker's comp claims. By April 30, insurance carriers reported nearly 100,000 COVID-19 claims and 472 fatalities. A little more than half of the overall claims and of the fatalities involved first responders and correctional officers.

Because of the low number of new claims, no further updates are anticipated.

HISTORIC INVESTMENTS MADE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Texas higher education leaders appear pleased with funding allocated by the Legislature during the regular session, with a record \$5 billion allocated for the next two years. "The 88th Legislature showed Texas' commitment to expanding opportunity through higher education and our determination to be at the forefront of higher education research, development, and innovation," said Commissioner Harrison Keller of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Several bills overhauled and increased state funding for community colleges and established the Texas University Fund to increase the state's investment in research at the state's public universities. Several other programs should expand access to higher education, including the Texas Leadership Scholars Program, as well as increased funding for student financial aid.

TEXANS, BEWARE OF POISON HEMLOCK

Students of philosophy and history may recall the Greek philosopher Socrates was forced to drink a concoction made of hemlock, resulting in his death. The beautiful but deadly plant has been spotted in Texas, according to a story in the Houston Chronicle. A Dallas-area woman has taken to social media to warn about some weeds she pulled up and the severe adverse reaction that quickly occurred. Only a quick shower and a trip to the emergency room saved her life.

Poison hemlock has a smooth, green stem and an umbrella-shaped cluster of white flowers. All parts of the plant are extremely toxic to both humans and livestock, according to Texas A&M Agrilife. It can grow up to 10 feet tall. It is reportedly especially common in the Edwards Plateau region of the state west of San Antonio and Austin along creeks and bottomlands.

Advertisement for Star Courier newspaper, including contact information, subscription rates, and staff details.

★ OBITUARIES

SUSAN LYNN HOFFMAN

Susan Lynn Hoffman died on Tuesday, May 23rd in Phoenix, Arizona at the age of 64, from Cardiac Arrest suffered during a scheduled heart procedure.

Susan was a graduate of New Castle, Pennsylvania High School, class of 1976, and Arizona State University, class of 1980, with a bachelor's degree in Political Science. Susan's career was as a Legal Assistant, and for most of her life she was employed by Attorney Scott Palumbo of the law firm Palumbo Wolfe & Palumbo. She was a valuable member of the firm who will be greatly missed.

Susan's interests included extensive travel, and care for every conceivable stray animal she encountered. With her sister Trisha, Susan had travelled to Mexico, Australia, Canada, and Florida and Washington States. She cared for many stray animals, including cats,



dogs, and birds. She kept some, but found foster homes when possible. She supported animal shelters and encouraged others to do the same. She was also an avid sports fan, following NASCAR and the NFL. She had been to several Super Bowls, and a Rose Bowl game.

Susan was born on September 24, 1957 in New Castle, Pennsylvania to Gilbert E. B. Hoffman and Carol Louise Lutz Hoffman. Her mother Carol preceded her in death in 2017. Susan is survived by her husband Terry Blanchard, her sister Trisha (Patricia) Alison Hoffman, her nephew Derek Geffs, stepsons

Kevin and Billy Blanchard, and several step-grandchildren. She is also survived by her half-sister Kristan Liu Hoffman and family of Cincinnati, Ohio. She also leaves extended Cramer family in Florida.

Susan had planned to retire in a few short years, and had a second home in the woods of Show Low, Arizona where she was able to retreat and enjoy the quiet of the country. She will be greatly missed by her family and friends. Funeral arrangements are private, and donations can be made in her name to animal rescue organizations.



BARC ANIMAL SHELTER & ADOPTIONS ADOPTING A PET

As the City of Houston's municipal Animal Shelter, BARC receives more than 15,000 animals each year. Many of these pets are adoptable and made available to the public, and thousands have found forever homes through BARC's adoption program. Looking to adopt a new BFF? You've come to the right place!

Adoptions are done on a first come, first served basis. We recommend visiting the shelter as soon as possible as animals are often adopted quickly! Please note that we are not able to place adoption holds for pets.

How do I adopt a pet?
All adoptions must be done in person. Start the process by planning your visit to the shelter. Appointments are not needed to adopt a pet!

To adopt you must be 18 years of age or older and have a valid, government issued photo ID. If the address on your ID does not match your current address, please provide an alternate proof of address such as a recent utility bill, lease agreement, or car insurance. Digital or hard copies will be accepted.

Our staff will review the pet's details with you to ensure that you are prepared to be as successful as possible with your new pet! Please allow at least one hour to interact with our available animals, speak to our medical team if necessary, and complete the adoption process. Depending on the number of guests we're serving, the pet adoption process can take anywhere from 60-90 minutes - our last adoption is processed at 5:00PM.

Please come prepared to take your new pet home with you. If the pet you've fallen in love with is already spayed or neutered, they will go home the same day. Otherwise, they will stay at the shelter and will be scheduled for surgery on the next available day. BARC provides a cardboard carrier for cats or a leash for dogs, but you may prefer to bring a travel crate or kennel for safe transport.

How much are adoption fees?
BARC's normal adoption fees are outlined below. We often have adoption promotions at reduced fees! Check out BARC's social media channels for the latest promotions. You can find us on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and Nextdoor!

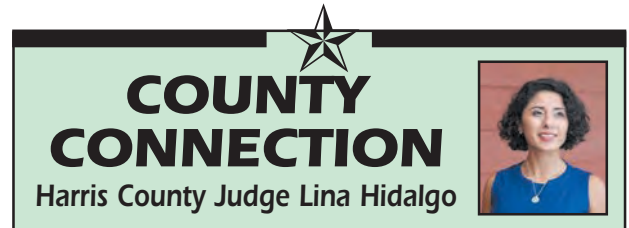
Adult dogs are 5 months & older, puppies are 4 months and under
Adult cats are 5 months & older, kittens are 4 months and under

	Normal	Senior 4 Senior
Adoption Fee (60Y+ Adopter)		
Dogs	\$50	\$2*
Cats	\$20	\$2*
Puppies	\$75	\$75
Kittens	\$20	\$20
PURRFURRED Pet**		REDUCED FEE

Adoption fees for all pets are waived every day for Veterans and active Military members thanks to our Veteran Companion program! Proof of service or military ID must be presented at the time of adoption.

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Open Tuesday - Sunday 12pm-5pm
Phone: 832-395-9084 Email: BARCadoptions@houstontx.gov

You can read the Star-Courier current and back issues on our website: www.starcouriernews.com



County Offers 10% Discount for EZ Tag Drivers of Two-Axle Vehicles

Here in Harris County, we know that transportation is not a luxury. That's why Commissioners Court has approved to cut the toll road rates by 10% for two-axle vehicles. This will put more money in the pockets of our residents and taxpayers to spend on gas, groceries, and other essentials. The updated policy will allow those without bank accounts to pay for EZ tag fees using cash.

County Approves Climate Action Plan, Taking Significant Step in Our Commitment to Sustainability and Fighting Climate Change

Harris County takes the threat of climate change to our region and its residents seriously. That's why Judge Hidalgo and Commissioners Court approved a bold Harris County Climate Action Plan (CAP). The CAP's goal is to guide the County toward reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 40% by 2030 through emission reduction in our buildings, fleet and commuting, procurement, and waste management. The CAP was designed using nationwide best practices and crafted alongside community partners to transition our entire region and its residents towards a more climate prepared, environmentally just, and economically vibrant future.

County Domestic Violence Coordinating Council to Receive \$4.7 Million in ARPA Funding

Domestic Violence is connected to a third of the homicides in Harris County. To help families suffering the trauma of domestic violence and put a stop to related crime, Judge Lina Hidalgo and Harris County Commissioners in March made a historic commitment to the Harris County Domestic Violence Coordinating Council with the award of \$4.7 million. With this award, the Harris County Domestic Violence Coordinating Council (HCDVCC) created a process to grant 20 community organizations this much-needed critical capital. These flexible funds will serve more than 3,000 families with over 6,600 individuals by providing direct financial assistance to support their immediate needs such as rental and utility assistance, safe hotel stays, moving assistance, car repairs, basic needs, childcare, mental health services, and legal services.

Harris County Emergency Rental Assistance Program to Inform National Conversation on Eviction Crisis

Our historic Houston-Harris County Emergency Rental Assistance Program has provided more than \$315 million in rental assistance to more than 76,000 households impacted by COVID-19 and has been recognized by the White House for its efficiency in delivering relief. Judge Hidalgo previously spoke at a White House round-table about how the program has cut red tape and sped up payments to landlords, keeping families from being evicted. So we are not surprised that Princeton University's Eviction Lab has proposed an exciting research initiative to work with Harris County's Rental Assistance Program to inform academic research and conversations to advance public understanding of the eviction crisis.

Gun BuyBack June 10th,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

\$200.00: Rifle Semi-Auto

The Gun Buyback program is completely anonymous for the public in keeping with our objective of retrieving as many firearms as possible from Greater Houston residents.

"I know someone will criticize the program - but the truth is gun buybacks work as one tool in a comprehensive initiative to fight gun violence. Homicides, gun violence, and overall violent crime is down across our City, and we want to keep that momentum going," said Mayor

or Sylvester Turner. "The gun buyback along with the use of shot spotter, doing more to reduce domestic violence and mental health calls and robust technology and police overtime are pieces of the puzzle that may prevent someone from pulling the trigger in the future or at least think twice before resorting to violence."

The City has held two previous successful gun buybacks. The first gun buyback collected 793 guns, and the second event collected 1252 guns. Harris County Precinct One, the Harris County Sheriff's

Office, and the City of Houston collaborated on a third gun buyback at Deussen Park earlier this year. Officials collected 793 firearms.

"As Mayor Turner alluded to, there have been questions about gun buybacks and whether or not they're effective at improving public safety," said Commissioner Rodney Ellis. "After three wildly successful buyback events, one thing is not up for debate: that this community is ready to be a part of the solution to end gun violence."

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LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE TO CREDITORS


Notice is hereby given that Original Letters Testamentary for Docket No. 515103; Estate of MARY SUE (STANFORD) REIDLAND Deceased; In Probate Court No. 4 of Harris County, Texas, were issued on MAY 25, 2023.

EMALEE SUE OLIVER

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 JUNE 5, 2023



by WESTON COTTEN
 Attorney for the Estate

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COMMUNITY WATCH

Man drowns after driving ATV into river in Crosby



CROSBY – The body of a man has been found after officials say he drove into a lake at an off-road park in Crosby and did not resurface on Monday.

According to Harris County Sheriff Ed Gonzalez, the incident occurred at the Xtreme Off-Road Park in the 1930 block of Gulf Pump Road.

Investigators say the man who was driving the ATV was being chased by a family member before he went head-on into the lake, causing the ATV to flip.

Initially, the man could not be found however, hours later, officials say his body was recovered.

Authorities have not yet identified the man.

Junk Yard fire closes FM1942

BARRETT STATION – FM 1942 was shutdown as crews responded to multiple vehicles on fire near a junk yard in east Harris County. The Harris County Sheriff's Office said FM 1942 was shutdown in both directions as crews work to extinguish multiple vehicles on fire.

This happened in the 3600 block of FM 1942, near Barbers Hill Road and Highway 90 in the Crosby area.

According to the sheriff's office, the preliminary information is that a vehicle was on fire and caught approximately 13-14 other vehicles on fire near a makeshift building (junk yard).

Multiple fire departments responded to the scene.

The Harris County Fire Marshal's Office was on scene investigating. They said approximately 10 vehicles and one carport were impacted by the fire. No injuries have been reported and the cause is under investigation.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING TO DISCUSS BUDGET AND PROPOSED TAX RATE

The Barbers Hill Independent School District will hold a public meeting at 6:30 pm, June 26, 2023 in J. Justin Jenson Conference Center, 9600 Eagle Drive, Mont Belvieu, TX. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the school district's budget that will determine the tax rate that will be adopted. Public participation in the discussion is invited.

The tax rate that is ultimately adopted at this meeting or at a separate meeting at a later date may not exceed the proposed rate shown below unless the district publishes a revised notice containing the same information and comparisons set out below and holds another public meeting to discuss the revised notice.

Maintenance Tax	\$0.84760/\$100 (proposed rate for maintenance and operations)				
School Debt Service Tax Approved by Local Voters	\$0.30690/\$100 (proposed rate to pay bonded indebtedness)				
Comparison of Proposed Budget with Last Year's Budget					
The applicable percentage increase or decrease (or difference) in the amount budgeted in the preceding fiscal year and the amount budgeted for the fiscal year that begins during the current tax year is indicated for each of the following expenditure categories.					
Maintenance and operations	5.9 % increase				
Debt Service	27.3 % increase				
Total expenditures	11.8 % increase				
Total Appraised Value and Total Taxable Value (as calculated under Section 26.04, Tax Code)					
	<u>Preceding Tax Year</u>	<u>Current Tax Year</u>			
Total appraised value* of all property	\$17,837,667,308	\$19,474,121,387			
Total appraised value* of new property**	\$ 765,792,514	\$ 367,794,910			
Total taxable value*** of all property	\$ 9,184,355,473	\$ 9,617,128,370			
Total taxable value*** of new property**	\$ 733,423,884	\$ 361,374,050			
*Appraised value is the amount shown on the appraisal roll and defined by Section 1.04(8), Tax Code. ** "New property" is defined by Section 26.012(17), Tax Code. *** "Taxable value" is defined by Section 1.04(10), Tax Code.					
Bonded Indebtedness					
Total amount of outstanding and unpaid bonded indebtedness* \$430,090,000					
*Outstanding principal.					
Comparison of Proposed Rates with Last Year's Rates					
	<u>Maintenance & Operations</u>	<u>Interest & Sinking Fund*</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Local Revenue Per Student</u>	<u>State Revenue Per Student</u>
Last Year's Rate	\$0.86460	\$0.28990*	\$1.15450	18,385	593
Rate to Maintain Same Level of Maintenance & Operations Revenue & Pay Debt Service	\$0.85123	\$0.24720	\$1.09844	13,756	299
Proposed Rate	\$0.84760	\$0.30690	\$1.15450	14,877	441
*The Interest & Sinking Fund tax revenue is used to pay for bonded indebtedness on construction, equipment, or both. The bonds, and the tax rate necessary to pay those bonds, were approved by the voters of this district.					
Comparison of Proposed Levy with Last Year's Levy on Average Residence					
	<u>Last Year</u>	<u>This Year</u>			
Average Market Value of Residences	\$291,551	\$349,663			
Average Taxable Value of Residences	\$185,390	\$199,325			
Last Year's Rate Versus Proposed Rate per \$100 Value	\$1.15450	\$1.15450			
Taxes Due on Average Residence	\$2,140.33	\$2,301.21			
Increase (Decrease) in Taxes		+\$160.88			
Under state law, the dollar amount of school taxes imposed on the residence homestead of a person 65 years of age or older or of the surviving spouse of such a person, if the surviving spouse was 55 years of age or older when the person died, may not be increased above the amount paid in the first year after the person turned 65, regardless of changes in tax rate or property value.					
Notice of Voter-Approval Rate: The highest tax rate the district can adopt before requiring voter approval at an election is \$1.1545. This election will be automatically held if the district adopts a rate in excess of the voter-approval rate of \$1.1545.					
Fund Balances					
The following estimated balances will remain at the end of the current fiscal year and are not encumbered with or by a corresponding debt obligation, less estimated funds necessary for operating the district before receipt of the first state aid payment.					
Maintenance and Operations Fund Balance(s)	\$42,990,000				
Interest & Sinking Fund Balance(s)	\$20,573,000				
A school district may not increase the district's maintenance and operations tax rate to create a surplus in maintenance and operations tax revenue for the purpose of paying the district's debt service.					



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