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THURSDAY, AUGUST 3, 2023

P.O. DRAWER 405, HIGHLANDS, TEXAS 77562

## IN THE **STARS**

# Crosby-Huffman Chamber welcomes New Educators to the community

#### **EVENTS Back-2-School**

#### First Day of **Classes: DISTRICT:** DATE: AUG 10 THU

ALDINE AUG 28 MON AUG 7 MON **CROSBY HUFFMAN** AUG 9 WED

GOOSE CREEK AUG 14 MON GALENA PARK AUG 9 WED AUG 9 WED SHELDON **CHANNELVIEW AUG 16 WED** 

AUG 9 WED DAYTON BARBERS HILL AUG 16 WED

#### Crosby B2S BASH Saturday, Aug. 5

Crosby ISD will hold a Back2School Bash at the High School, Saturday Aug. 5 from 9am to 1pm. Free Backpacks, Free Haircuts, Food Trucks, Petting Zoo, Bounce House, Student Performances, Houston Food Bank and more than \$10,000 in Fun

#### **B2S Sales Tax** Holiday Aug 11-13

Giveaways.

Avoid paying the Texas Sales Tax (8.25%) on every purchase for school supplies, on August 11,12, and 13 (Friday, Saturday, Sunday). Savings includes clothing, footwear, school supplies, and backpacks - any item priced below \$100. Complete list of exempt items is at www.TexasTaxHoliday.org

## **MILESTONES**

**BIRTHDAYS** Aug 4-Stacey Glover Brittany Hahn Aug 5--James Bobalik Aug 6-Sara Henning

**Ethel Peters** 

Dolores Griffen Aug 7–Cynthia Finnell Aug 8-Bryan Allen Daniel Finnell Judge Tony Polumbo

Stephen Turner Aug 9-Johnny Delue Jim Hildebrand Annie Mae Smith O.C. Smith Rayford Smith

Sonora K. Boyd Aug 10-Lisa Simmons Thomas Harper

Aug 11-Christi Bobalik Bobby Glenn Smith Kristin Moseley Raymond Oliver Tiffany Cutbirth

### **ANNIVERSARIES**

Aug 5--PeeWee & Patti Farmer

Aug 6-Sue & Steve Norris Jan & Mike Gucker Aug 8-Martha & Alvin Keyes Ronald & Beth Phillips

Aug 9-Cathy & Marvin Harm

Aug 10-Victor & Glorine Harris

Aug 12-Rick & Deborah Nibbe

Aug 14-Joe & Polly

Lowden Aug 15-Rusty & Maria

Williamson Aug 18-Bruce & Debbie

Mercer

By David Taylor Star-Courier

Since 1989, the Crosby-Huffman Chamber of Commerce has hosted the New Educator's Luncheon to welcome new teachers and administrators to the community. On Wednesday, July 26, and 35 years later, the chamber gathered in the gym at Crosby Church with more than 250 in attendance, one of the largest crowds ever with approximately 170 educators. "It's definitely in correlation to the growth we're seeing in the Crosby community," said Kim Harris, president of

the chamber. Ten years ago, it became difficult for the chamber to sponsor all the teachers by paying for their lunch so each year they have solicited a sponsor.

"It takes a load off of us and we appreciate our sponsors," she said. This year's luncheon was underwritten by Harris County Pct. 3 Commissioner Tom Ramsey and the goodie bags provided by JLA Realty.

It not only signals the start of the school year, but it is only the second time in the 35 years that they have held the event in late July.

"With the start of school getting pushed earlier and earlier, we have to hold it in late July to make sure our teachers have supplies and get goodie bags to take



More than 250 people packed the Crosby Church gymnasium for the annual Crosby-Huffman Chamber of Commerce Educator's Luncheon.



Kim Harris, president of the Crosby-Huffman Chamber of Commerce welcomes educators and thanks them for their service

with them," Harris said. Harris was also able to wrangle up 150-plus door prizes to be given away during the drawing.

"We hope the door prizes and the luncheon helps connect newcomers to the business community and shows them they have our



**Huffman ISD superintendent** Benny Soileau, PhD welcomes educators to the luncheon and offers advice for the coming year.

support," she said at the luncheon.

While the chamber endured some tough times during the pandemic losing some members, Harris said they are on the upward climb and hope to keep adding more as the new housing developments



Paula Patterson, Crosby ISD superintendent, thanks educators for their commitment to students and the community.

bring in new business.

Superintendent Dr. Benny Soileau said Huffman ISD is in good shape going into the new year.

"All of our open posions have been filled for day one," Soileau said. Not all of those were new positions, but some will be key

"We have a new chief operations officer which will be critical in regard to the growth we're seeing in Huffman," he said. The new COO will direct auxiliary services as well as bond efforts, and current construction projects currently underway.

Part of those new additions include instructional coaches to enhance teaching and assist teachers.

'We have an incredible level of talent that we brought into the district this year and we're looking for incredible results," the superintendent said.

Like most districts, both Crosby and Huffman are waiting to see what the state will do during the special session in October when legislators return to debate and iron out a possible voucher program.

Soileau said a committee of 100-plus community members have been meeting to iron out details for a potential bond election in November.

The slate of projects presented to the board could be voted on at a special meeting called for Aug. 7.

Just days ago, each campus took delivery of a portable building to accommodate some of the growth.

"We're working with architects to develop the plan to make sure that the sites

See NEW EDUCATORS WELCOME,

## Texas Sales Tax Holiday is Aug. 11-13

(AUSTIN) — Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar is reminding shoppers they can save money on clothes and school supplies during the state's sales tax holiday on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 11-13.

State law exempts sales tax on qualified items such as clothing, footwear, school supplies and backpacks - priced below \$100, saving shoppers about \$8 on every \$100 they spend. The dates of the sales tax holiday and list of tax-exempt items are set by the Texas Legislature.

"As Texans prepare for the back-to-school bell, this is the perfect time to take advantage of the opportunity to save money on everything from blue jeans to ballpoint pens," Hegar said. "As the father of three, I know how these expenses can add up."

The Comptroller's office estimates that shoppers

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Southern Cooking Buffet -- Coming Soon

14280 FM 2100 (Across from Walmart)

281-462-7349

will save \$136 million in state and local sales tax during this tax holiday.

Apparel and school supplies that may be purchased tax free are listed on the Comptroller's website

TexasTaxHoliday.org. During the annual sales

tax holiday, qualifying items can be purchased tax free online or by telephone, mail, custom order or any other means (including instore purchases) when either:

• the item is both delivered to, and paid for by, the customer during the exemption period; or,

• the customer orders and pays for the item, and the seller accepts the order during the exemption period for immediate shipment, even if delivery is made after the exemption period ends.

Texas' sales tax holiday weekend has been an annual event since 1999.

## Crosby ISD to host third annual Back to School Bash August 5th

Crosby, TX - Crosby ISD is hosting a family fair just days before the start of the 2023-2024 School Year. The third annual "Back to School Bash" will be held Saturday, August 5, from 9am-1pm at Crosby High School.

Students of all grade levels will be eligible to receive free backpacks, free supplies, free haircuts, and more than \$10,000 in other giveaways as Crosby ISD celebrates the start of what we hope will be the best year ever. Families will be able to access key information from our Nutrition, Technology, and Transportation departments as well as visit vendors and small businesses from Crosby ISD communities.

We are expecting the Harris County Public Library's 33-foot-long mo-



bile Curiosity Cruiser, the Dynamo Soccer Street Team, a local petting zoo, bounce houses, and area food trucks to offer snacks and fun for our families. The Back to School Bash will happen at Crosby High School located at 333 Red Summit Drive, Crosby, TX, 77532. Crosby ISD students

begin the 2023-2024 School Year on Monday, August 7, 2023.

### **CROSBY ISD**

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





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## C/H Chamber welcomes New Educators

## July 26, 2023 at Crosby Church

**CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1** 

are accommodating fiber, utilities, restrooms, and it's a secure place," Soileau said.

In Crosby, construction is already underway on the new addition to the high school that will hold another 600 students.

Superintendent Paula Patterson said before the luncheon that the district is ready for the start of the four-day school year. The first month begins with a five-day schedule and switches in September to the four-day schedule.

The district also has new leadership at Crosby Middle and Crosby High schools.

Jose Lozano, who spent the last five years in LaPorte ISD, becomes the new principal at Crosby Middle School. Lozano is also a doctoral student at Lamar University in Beau-

Brad Hadnot begins the school year as the new principal at Crosby High School. Hadnot has 20 years of experience in education, all of them in Day-

n ISD. Patterson urged educators to keep smiling.

"Just like you're smiling now about the feelings you feel today, I want to see the same on May 30," she said.

She told educators that research shows most teachers realize the honey-

moon is over in October.
"Continue no matter

what's going on and no matter what we may be facing. Continue to have that passion that's burning on the inside of you right now for your students. That's what they need and deserve every single day," Patterson said.

### **HUFFMAN ISD**



Huffman Elementary School, Angi LeVier, principal



Huffman Middle School, Dr. Marybel Ruiz, principal



Falcon Ridge Elementary School, Paige McEachern, principal



Huffman Hargrave High School, Angie McDonald, principal

### **CROSBY ISD**



Crosby Kindergarten Center, Herlinda Minor, principal



Barrett Elementary, Ahimé Ornelas, principal



Crosby Elementary, Dana Kratky-Fox, principal



Drew Elementary, Christy Tisdom, principal



Newport Elementary, Ann Price, principal



Crosby Middle School, Jose Lozano, principal



Crosby High School, Brad Hadnot, principal



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THURSDAY, AUGUST 3, 2023

**MONT BELVIEU, TEXAS 77580** 

## **ON THE** HILL

## Open for Business: Lee College Corporate Training Center

## **DIVE-IN MOVIES AT** THE WAVE **POOL**



### WHAT TO BRING

Bathing suit Towel Friends & Family A couple of dollars for the concession stand

**AUGUST 5** Luca Movie Cover LUCA (2021) PG | 95 minutes

On the Italian Riviera, an unlikely but strong friendship grows between a human being and a sea monster disguised as a human.

Movie begins at 7:00 Admission: \$10 each

### MONT **BELVIEU 811** DAY + TOUCH-A-TRUCK

SATURDAY, AUGUST 12, 2023 AT 9 AM - 12 PM811 Day + Touch-A-Truck Mont Belvieu City Park Details

Event by Mont Belvieu Parks & Recreation Mont Belvieu City Park Duration: 3 hr Public · Anyone on or off Facebook FACT: Mont Belvieu has more underground pipeline than any other

town in the United

States!

Join us at the Mont Belvieu City Park on August 12th for a morning of fun & awareness. You'll find representatives from local industry leaders, info on how to start a project at home that involves digging, and lots of hands-on activities.

#### TOUCH-A-TRUCK **EXHIBITS**

Our Touch-A-Truck exhibits will feature local industry leaders, earth movers and heavy equipment used by MB Public Works, training and life saving apparatuses used by MB Fire & EMS, and MBPD plans to bring the noise with their

#### display. **FUN & GAMES**

We'll have interactive games and exhibits for kids & adults! **FOOD** 

We'll bring out a couple of our local food trucks to serve up some snacks & snow cones to keep us cool. 811 - Call before you dig!

BAYTOWN, TX- New Facility at McNair Center Offers Customizable Advanced Programs, for years Lee College has been offering corporate training to industry partners such as ExxonMobil, Lyondell-Basell and Worley for their employees, but there's never been a dedicated training space until now.

On Monday, July 24, industry representatives, elected officials and community members gathered at the Lee College McNair Center to cut the ribbon on its newly renovated, stateof-the-art, 11,000-squarefoot Corporate Training Center.

Operated by the Lee Col-<u>lege Center for Workforce</u> and Community Development, the Corporate Training Center offers hands-on training and leadership development for employees of all levels - from onboarding training for new hires to upskilling and solidifying skills of seasoned employees.

"With this new instructional space, we can deliver advanced technical training like no other college – anytime a company has needs," said Marsha Tuha, executive director, Center for Workforce and Community Development. "The focus is to get employees in and trained for a real-life work setting and with the latest technology. We are not teaching concepts. We are teaching troubleshooting."

Clients who hire Lee College will benefit from working with subject matter experts who have decades of experience in the petrochemical and manufacturing industries. They are retirees who are often Lee College alumni - re-



(L-R) Jacob Powell, Baytown City councilman, District 5; Pete Alfaro, former member of the Lee College Board of Regents; Jason Reynolds, Baytown city manager; Gina Guillory, Lee College Board of Regents; Mark Himsel, secretary, Lee College Board of Regents; Daryl Fontenot, chair, Lee College Board of Regents; Dr. Lynda Villanueva, Lee College president; Dr. Douglas Walcerz, provost and vice president of academic and student affairs, Lee College; Chris Averitt, Lee College HVAC instructor; Judge Lucia Bates, Precinct 3 Place 2 of the Harris County Justices of the Peace; Zoe Barinaga, process manager, ExxonMobil Chemical Plant attend ribbon cutting ceremony for the official opening of the new Corporate Training Center at the Lee College McNair Center in Baytown, TX.





tensive knowledge with the next generation of workers. Students will work with equipment encountered in the field as well as state-ofthe-art trainers such as the Emerson Performance Learning Platform units designed specifically for process control and instrumentation training. Labs are set up in a modular fashion to allow each space

turning to share their ex- to serve multiple purposes force. This facility is – meaning the training labs and lecture areas can be expanded to accommodate any class size.

"This facility is an investment not just in the community but in jobs," said Baytown Mayor Brandon Capetillo. "Anytime a major employer comes to look for site selection in the Baytown area they are looking for a skilled workto meet that need." Another advantage of

the training center is to enhance existing partnerships with employers who hire Lee College graduates.

"How wonderful is it that we can educate our students and then, when they get a job with one of our industry partners, they come right back to Lee College to get trained with their new company," said Dr. Lynda Villanueva, Lee College president. "We are producing employees who are advancing their skills, thinking on their toes and becoming problem solvers."

Zoe Barinaga, process manager for ExxonMobil's Baytown chemical plant says she's seen firsthand how training programs provide life-changing opportunities for students working towards degrees and certifications to become a part of the ExxonMobil family.

"In my five years at ExxonMobil, we have turned over half of our operators at the chemical plant because of retirements and expansions," Barinaga explained. "The only way to keep up with the growth is to have well-trained candidates in the area."

Larry Lester spent nearly four decades as an electrical engineer and maintenance supervisor at ExxonMobil. He is the Workforce Center's technical advisor who customizes training for companies and hires the instructors. Lester says it's one thing to know how to use the equipment, but his trainings delve into the inner workings of the equipment so employees will be well prepared to troubleshoot if a problem arises.

"The biggest thing that I've seen in this program is the 'Aha!' moment when a person understands new technology, new equipment, new ways of looking at stuff and how to use that information to get the job done," Lester said. "These include people who've been doing their jobs for 15-20 years."

Visit the Lee College Corporate Training Center's website to learn more.

## **BELVIEU AREA** CHAMBER OF COMMERCE CONNECT. IMPACT. PROSPER



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#### OPINION PAGE $\bigstar$ $\bigstar$

## **BEAT THE HEAT**

By Lone Star College

## Lone Star College offers tips to 'beat the heat'

HOUSTON (July 17, 2023) - Rising temperatures in Texas and across the country are causing many people to suffer from hyperthermia, an overexertion condition caused by hot and humid conditions, resulting in heat illnesses or death. The Lone Star College Health Sciences department offers helpful suggestions to keep you and your family safe this summer.

"Current heat waves can contribute to hyperthermia and heat stroke," said Nickie Loftin, RN, LSC-Kingwood Nursing Director." A high internal temperature (greater than 104 F) can cause permanent neurologic, brain damage and even

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports hyperthermia occurs when the body fails to control its temperature through sweating and can't cool down. The body temperature can rise to 106 F in 10 to 15 minutes. Several factors can increase a person's chance of developing heat-related illnesses including age (older adults and younger children), dehydration, heart disease and obesity. Other heat-related concerns include exhaustion, cramps, heat rash and sunburn.

"As the temperature rises, the body will struggle to get rid of the excess heat," said Kim Zapata, M.Ed., LSC-CyFair Emergency Medical Services Department Program Director. "Hyperthermia can cause confusion, nausea and vomiting, increased respiration, fatigue, rapid heart rate and dehydration."

The CDC recommends the following actions if someone shows signs of a heat stroke or other heat-related concerns.

- Seek immediate medical assistance.
- Take the victim to a shady area.
- Try to cool the person down rapidly.
- Monitor their temperature.

"The most important thing you can do is to remain hydrated; consistently replacing fluids will help reduce your overall temperature," said Loftin. "If you must be outside, try to stay out of direct sun or wear a hat."

The Health Sciences program at Lone Star College prepares students to enter the fastchanging and growing health care industry. The department offers associate degrees and certifications in various fields and a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing. Visit LoneStar.edu/Programsof-Study for more information.

View additional CDC guidelines on heatrelated illnesses at CDC.gov/Disasters/Extreme-



with Slim Randles

## The other night it was Hot

The other night it was hot. Hot during the day, hot at night. Heat seems to define this time of year for us, in many ways.

But in spite of that, after a day in the outdoors, we built a fire. A small fire. A "hat" fire, which mountain people define as one you can put in your hat. Why so small? Because it was hot and we didn't need the heat. Why the fire? Because we need the

It is the hearth. It is the touchstone to our past. It is a link with countless generations of ancestors who have sat here looking at the flames licking up on the chunks of firewood and taking us back endless years, countless years, to what was then. Through the flames and later the glow of the coals, we can see things that we can't see at any other time. We can hear music in the crackling. We can be comforted by the fire, which is our best friend as well as a potential destroyer, at the same time.

How many times have we looked into the flames of a small fire, just like this? It's beyond counting. Sometimes the fire has been in a fireplace with all kinds of louvers and vents and controls, and yet even then we shut off the lights and sat quietly, looking into the fire and taking ourselves back to our beginnings. It is important that we do this, so important to our emotional health that we willingly pay extra for a modern city house or apartment that has a fireplace.

It doesn't make any sense at all.

No sense at all until you look into the fire and those same questions come along. Who am I? Am I doing what I'm supposed to be doing? Is my life being spent for the right things? What more can I be doing?

Do we remember other fires in faraway places? Places where the weather is different, the animals are different, the people are different. Remember using wood from other kinds of trees? Remember sitting around the fire with others who are only with us now during these quiet times by the fire and in the sanctuary of memory?

We ask ourselves these questions, but the answers can only be found in the silent glowing of the coals, and we can only hope we stack up right in the long run.

Because when we look into the coals, at the end of a long day, it's our way of going home.

Leather that looks much better than when the cow was using it. Use your imagination. www.artvincentleather.com.





## Patrick Issues Gag Order Ahead of Trial

Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick last week issued a sweeping gag order ahead of the impeachment trial of suspended Attorney General Ken Paxton, the Houston Chronicle reported, saying "out-of-court statements" by both sides threaten to jeopardize the

The trial is set to begin Sept. 5.

The gag order prohibits members of the Senate and House, their staffs, witnesses and attorneys from making statements that could have a "substantial likelihood of materially prejudicing the trial." Violators could be found in contempt of court and face up to six months in jail and up to \$500 in fines.

Patrick is acting as the judge in the impeachment trial. The gag order was required under the impeachment rules established by the Senate in June.

Meanwhile, Paxton has asked that three Democratic state senators be disqualified, saying their public statements prove they cannot be impartial, The Dallas Morning News reported. Paxton is targeting Sen. Nathan Johnson, D-Dallas, and Sens. Roland Gutierrez and José Menéndez, D-San Antonio.

"Senators Menendez, Gutierrez, and Johnson's own public statements convincingly establish bias and prejudice against the Attorney General," the motion states. "That cannot be

In a related matter, conservative activist Dr. Steven Hotze has sued Patrick and the Senate to allow Sen Angela Paxton, R-McKinney, the suspended attorney general's wife, to participate in the trial's deliberations and vote on her husband's fate. The Senate rules for the trial disqualified her from participating.

#### **A&M PRESIDENT RESIGNS FOLLOWING BOTCHED** HIRING

Texas A&M University President M. Katherine Banks resigned last week after the faculty senate moved to investigate the botched hiring of journalist Kathleen McElroy to revive the university's journalism program, The News reported.

"The recent challenges regarding Dr. McElroy have

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made it clear to me that I must retire immediately.' Banks wrote in her resignation letter submitted late Thursday. "The negative press is a distraction from the wonderful work being done here.'

McElroy, a 1981 A&M graduate, elected to remain a tenured professor of journalism at the University of Texas in Austin after the original offer for a tenuretrack position at A&M was reduced to a one-year contract. The university received criticism from some people concerning McElroy's work on diversity and equity issues while working in multiple roles at The New York Times.

Mark A. Welsh III, dean of A&M's Bush School of Government and Public Service, is now acting president of the university.

#### FEDS SUING STATE OVER **RAZOR WIRE, BUOYS** ALONG THE RIO GRANDE

The U.S. Justice Department has notified the state that it will file suit over the floating buoy barricade in the middle of the Rio Grande, which is meant to deter migrants from crossing illegally, as well as the razor wire now strung across the U.S. side, the Texas Standard reported.

"The State of Texas' actions violate federal law, raise humanitarian concerns, present serious risks to public safety and the environment, and may interfere with the federal government's ability to carry out its official duties," the letter sent to Gov. Greg Abbott stated.

In response, Abbott said the state has the "sovereign authority to defend our border, under the U.S. Constitution and the Texas

CROSBY

Gilbert Hoffman

.....Julieta Paita .Kristan Hoffman

.Willie Glasgow

Constitution," adding, "We will see you in court, Mr. President."

#### **SPEED TOP CONTRIBUTING FACTOR IN TEXAS CRASHES**

Speed-related crashes killed 1,469 people on Texas roadways, according to the Texas Department of Transportation — the top contributing factor in traffic fatalities.

"Getting to your destination two or three minutes faster just isn't worth the risk of a crash and causing harm to yourself or others,' said TxDOT Executive Director Marc Williams.

For the latter half of July, Texas law enforcement agencies are participating in Operation Slowdown, a statewide, high-visibility speed enforcement program. TxDOT is also running a number of commercials, billboards and social media posts urging drivers to slow down.

#### **REPORT ON STATE EMPLOYEE WORKFORCE ISSUED**

A report from the state comptroller's office on the workforce of state agencies indicates Texas faces staff shortages and high turnover, with compensation being the primary factor.

Average salaries for state employees are 11.7% lower than the overall market, according to the State Auditor's Office. Moreover, 35% of state employees live in the Austin-Round Rock-Georgetown and the Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington metropolitan statistical areas, which have cost-of-living expenses higher than the state aver-

State workers in health and human services and the prison system in particular have high turnover, which the report blames on low pay and high stress. The turnover rate for all

state employees in fiscal 2022 was 22.7% — the highest turnover rate in more than 10 years.

The five agencies with the most employees are:

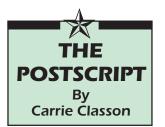
- Health and Human Services Commission — 32,345
- Texas Department of Criminal Justice — 30,277
- Texas Department of Transportation — 12,375
- Department of Family and Protective Services Texas Department of

#### **NEARLY 64,000 TEXANS TO HAVE STUDENT LOANS FORGIVEN**

Public Safety — 10,210

The Texas Tribune reported that nearly 64,000 Texans will have their federal student loans forgiven because they qualified for an existing forgiveness program that was poorly administered. A total of \$3.1 billion will be forgiven for Texas borrowers, an average of \$48,500 per borrower.

The move is unrelated to President Joe Biden's nowdefunct student debt forgiveness program that was blocked by the U.S. Supreme Court last month. The latest steps are being called a "correction" by the U.S. Department of Education and affect borrowers whose debts should have been canceled but weren't due to "past administrative failures."



## "A Boring Life"

I'm writing this on my birthday and feeling more than usually grateful.

"What do you want to do?" my husband, Peter, asks, as he always does on my birth-

Peter refuses to celebrate his own birthday, but he only applies the no-birthday rule to himself. I am free to celebrate any way I want—so long as I don't expect any kind of surprise from him. I

And so I tried to think of what would make my day special, and it was hard. Because, these days, all my days are pretty darned special.

We just landed in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, the day before yesterday, and there are a lot of wonderful restaurants we could go to. There is a hot spring not far away. I could get a massage. But none of those things sounded like anything I wanted to do. When I was totally honest, what I wanted to do was to stay right where

When we are in Mexico, we stay in a little one-bedroom apartment. The countertops and furnishings are very 1980s. The sheets are dried on the line on the roof, so they are nice and crisp. The dishes don't match. The bathroom is not luxurious. We love it.

When I thought about what a perfect day would look like, it would involve a little writing and a lot of vegetables-and cake. So that's what I did.

I sat at my little green Formica desk in the apartment, and I wrote a few words. I'm working on a new novel, and it delights me. It's different from anything I've written before, and it has a little girl named Lizzie in it. So I wrote a scene with Lizzie.

Then I went to the market. There is a giant open-air food market just a couple of blocks away from our apartment. My favorite fruit and vegetable seller, Veronica, was there. It's the slow time of year in town, and she was happy to see me.

"What do you need?" she

"I need everything!" I told

When I got home, I counted, and I had purchased exactly 12 different fruits and vegetables from Veronica. She always helps me pick out the nicest produce. Honestly, I might have bought more, but that was all that would fit in my three shopping bags.

Then, before I got back to the apartment, I stopped at the cake shop. All they sell are cakes. I went in and bought myself one. It was a small cake with fresh strawberries on top.

When I got back to the apartment, Peter had already cooked garbanzo beans for my salad. He set to work cooking beets and carrots because, at this altitude, we pressure cook them, and Peter is the king of pressurecooking. (Peter has many other specialized skills. Pressure cooking is just one of them.) Then I went for a walk. The clouds moved in, and the temperature dropped. I took pictures.

I suspect that there are more than a few people who would say I have a boring life, and I would not give them an argument. But I've had a few birthdays by now, and I feel very fortunate to know what I like. I like fresh fruit and vegetables. I like spending time with Peter. I like to write and to walk. And I like

And I am very grateful because I know I am doubly lucky. I'm lucky to have a wonderful life, and I'm luckier yet to know what a wonderful life it is.

Till next time, Carrie

FAX Line....713-977-1188 email: grafikstar@aol.com **Member Texas Press Association** 

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# United Way is topic of Rotary luncheon



Highlands Rotary president Denise Smith welcomes Melissa Reabold and Kaci Pena from United Way of Greater Baytown, speakers at the club luncheon recently. She thanked them for the work they did in the community, and pledged support from the Highlands Rotary club.



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

License Plate Reader and Gun Sound Detection System Contract: Commissioner Garcia introduced Flock, a new pilot project in the Cloverleaf area to install 30 License Plate Reader Cameras and a Gun Sound Detection Dual system. This significant public safety investment will provide valuable data and surveillance for the Sheriff's Office to combat major violent crimes. This pilot project will also be used as a technology study to compare the flock system with the ShotSpotter pilot project in East Aldine by comparing the two systems in their effectiveness in reducing violent crimes.

**\$6** Million for Chronic Disease Prevention: Commissioner Garcia led the effort to expand access to chronic disease programming to reduce the prevalence and impact of chronic disease Harris County. It will also reduce future healthcare costs associated with chronic diseases to generate positive financial impacts for Harris County.

**Discussion of \$2.5 Billion expansion for Harris Health System:** Commissioner Garcia introduced this item to begin discussions about the proposed bond to fund Harris Health System's strategic facilities plan before formal authorization of a ballot measure. This bond project includes building a replacement hospital for the LBJ Campus that will increase patient capacity, renovation of Ben Taub Hospital, and creating three new ambulatory clinics.

Common Market Texas Agreements: Commissioner Garcia introduced a proposal that creates collaboration with Precinct 2 and the Common Market Texas. Precinct 2 community centers will serve as distribution sites and provide fresh fruit and vegetable boxes to families throughout the precinct. This program supports Commissioner Garcia's Revive2Thrive initiative by addressing the economic and health needs of our communities.

Positions for ACCESS Health: Latino Chronic Disease Cohort: Precinct 2 has the highest number of zip codes with residents who have chronic diseases. Additionally, these zip codes are in predominantly Hispanic neighborhoods. The Latino Chronic Disease Cohort will support Precinct 2 residents affected by diabetes, or who are at risk for diabetes, through Community Health Coordinators (CHCs). The CHCs will conduct home visits for residents with Type II diabetes who have not visited a doctor in the last 6 to 12 months. They will also assist participants with services including navigation, appointments, and monitoring.



### Resolutions Pride Mont

**Pride Month:** In a continuing show of support, Commissioner Garcia presented a resolution in celebration of LGBTQIA Pride Month, June 2023. Ms. Anandrea Molina, spoke and received the resolution. Anandrea is the founder of the Organization of Latina Trans in Texas (OLTT), dedicated to ensuring, protecting, and defending the human rights of all trans, gender-nonconforming, and LGBTQ+ people in Texas.

**Pet Preparedness Awareness Month:** Commissioner Garcia presented a resolution to highlight the importance of preparing pets and their families for major weather events. Corey Steele, Associate Director of the Veterinary Public Health Division, Harris County Public Health, and a four-legged friend accepted the resolution.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions Opportunities Resolution: Commissioner Garcia introduced a resolution for Harris County to participate in a collaborative effort with statewide partners to leverage the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund opportunities to benefit Harris County citizens. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will begin accepting requests for proposals in the summer of 2023 from eligible entities to compete for funds from the "Clean Communities Investment Accelerator" and "Solar for All" grant competitions. Mr. Stephen Brown of the Clean Energy Fund of Texas spoke and received the resolution.

Homeownership Month: Commissioner Garcia presented a resolution recognizing June as Homeownership Month. Through the combined efforts of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs, the Texas General Land Office, the Harris County Community Services Department, the Harris County Housing Authority, the Harris County Housing Finance Corporation Board, and our non-profit partners, Commissioner Garcia strives to make housing more affordable and accessible for first-time homebuyers to qualify for mortgage financing. Ms. Mary Lawler, CEO, and Ms. Diana Martinez, both of AVENUE CDC, spoke in support. The Court approved unanimously.

**Park and Recreation Month:** Commissioner Garcia welcomed Mr. Joe Turner to share a few words about the Park and Recreation Month Resolution, recognizing the value of our public parks.



## Protecting Texas' Dogs in Record-Breaking Summer Heat

AUSTIN, TX – As temperatures continue to soar across the state, the Texas Humane Legislation Network (THLN) is offering tips on how Texans can best protect their pets

"In triple-digit heat across our state, it's not just us humans who feel the impact of the scorching sun," said Shelby Bobosky, THLN Executive Director. "We have been inundated with calls, emails, and texts from concerned Texans about the laws in these brutally hot conditions and what they can do to help. Our four-legged companions are more susceptible to the dangers of extreme heat, and just like we take precautions to stay safe and comfortable, we must remember that our pets rely on us to protect them.'

The Safe Outdoor Dogs Act passed in 2021 protects dogs tethered outdoors by

- Defining adequate shelter to shield dogs from extreme temperatures and standing water, and ensures the dog can stand, turn around, and lie down.

- Requiring access to drinkable water.

- Striking the 24-hour waiting period so action can be taken immediately.

If there are heat advisory warnings and you encounter a dog outside without shelter or water, you can ask your local animal control to do a welfare check. Confining an animal in a crate in direct sunlight without shade during extreme heat can be charged as animal cruelty.

It's vital to know the signs of heat exhaustion and heat stroke in dogs:

- Signs include excessive panting or drooling; rapid heart rate; lethargy or weakness; loss of coordination; bright red gums or tongue; vomiting or diarrhea; and glazed eyes.

- Dogs experiencing heat stroke may collapse, experience seizures, loss of consciousness, or a coma.

If you see a dog in a hot car, here's what you can do:

**HOW HOT IS TOO HOT?** DON'T LEAVE YOUR PETS IN HOT CARS 70° 89° 104° 75° 94° 109° 80° 99° 114° 85° 104° 119° 90° 109° 124° 95° 114° 129° IF YOU SEE A DOG IN A HOT CAR - CALL 911 AND DOCUMENT THE SITUATION LEARN MORE AT TEXASHUMANENETWORK.ORG

- Act quickly. On a warm day, the temperature inside a vehicle can increase by 20 F (11 C) within 10 minutes.

- Assess the situation. Where is the car parked? In direct sunlight? What is the current temperature outside? Is the dog showing any signs of stress, symptoms of heat exhaustion, or heat stroke? Is the owner nearby?

- Notify authorities. Contact local law enforcement or animal control to report the situation. Ensure you have the exact location, description of the car, and license plate number, if possible. Photos or videos can be helpful to authorities.

- Spread awareness. Notify nearby businesses or individuals about the situation to raise awareness and potentially locate the car's owner.

- Continue to monitor the dog. If you can, stay near the car to keep an eye on the dog until help arrives. Note any changes in its condition and update the authorities when they come.

Rendering aid to an animal in heat-related distress will NOT result in a civil action against you.

In 2011, THLN passed a law (HB 2471 by Rep. Larry Phillips and Sen. Robert Deuell) that limits the civil liability of a person, an animal control

agency, or an animal control agency employee who renders aid to an injured or distressed animal from a civil action brought because of seeking or providing such care.

Dogs' paw pads can quickly burn on hot pavement. Here's how you can prevent painful burns:

- Test the pavement. If you can't comfortably hold your palm on the pavement surface for 10 seconds, your dog's paws risk getting burnt.

- Walk during cooler times.

Schedule walks during the early morning or late evening when the pavement is cooler. Avoid walking during the hottest parts of the day.

- Use protective gear. Use

booties or paw wax to provide a barrier between their paws and the hot surface.

- Walk on grass or shaded areas. To minimize the risk of burns, choose grassy or shaded routes instead of hot pavement.

"By adopting preventive measures and incorporating simple but effective practices during hot temperature months, we can create a safer environment for our furry friends and provide them the care they deserve during these extreme weather conditions," said Erin Van Landingham, Executive Director of the Texas Humane Network.





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CISD Special Education department provides screenings for children with suspected disabilities in an effort to identify every student with a disability who lives within the district's boundaries. Crosby ISD is committed to providing excellence in education to all students, and the screenings are designed to help identify children who may qualify for the district's special education programs. Eligible students with disabilities between the ages of 3 and 21 can be provided with services to ensure their successful participation in school. These services and supports may be provided through Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act or through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act.

If you know a child who may be challenged with a disability, please contact the Crosby ISD Special Education office at 281-328-9200, Extension 1108. If the child is already a student in Crosby ISD, please contact the counselor at the child's school. The counselor will be happy to assist you.

Special education services are also available starting at birth for eligible

children who have a visual and/or auditory impairment.

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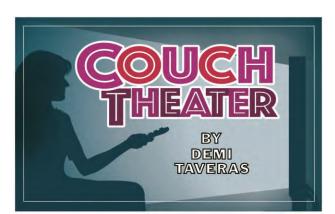
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From left, Luke Grimes and Ellie Kemper in "Happiness for Beginners."

## "Happiness for Beginners"

"Happiness for Beginners" (TV-14) — Ellie Kemper ("The Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt") stars as divorcee Helen, who feels bogged down by the weight of her breakup. To get out of this slump, she decides to book an adult camping trip on the Appalachian Trail, where she coincidentally reconnects with Jake, a friend of her brother's. Helen and Jake, along with a team of people from all walks of life, start their 51-mile hike with the intent of finding adventure, but end up discovering so much more: new ways to approach life, keys to ensuring their own happiness, a community to belong in, and even love. Luke Grimes and Nico Santos co-star in this feel-good romantic comedy based on Katherine Center's novel, out now. (Netflix)

"The Super Mario

you're looking for the perfect movie to watch with friends or family this weekend, look no further than the origin story of this beloved duo of brothers! Chris Pratt and Charlie Day voice plumbers Mario and Luigi, respectively, as they accidentally warp to an alternate world. While Mario lands in the Mushroom Kingdom ruled by Princess Peach, Luigi ends up in the Dark Lands that are ruled by Bowser, so it's up to Mario and Peach, with the help of a few other friends, to save Luigi before Bowser destroys the Mushroom Kingdom. This movie is a treasure for generations of people who grew up loving Nintendo's video games. After bringing home a whopping \$1.349 billion from the box office, "Super Mario Bros." finds a home on Peacock on Aug. 3. (Pea-

"Guardians of the Gal**axy Vol. 3"** (PG-13) — Following a successful theatrical release in May that catapulted this film to the No. 2 spot (the No. 1 spot getting nabbed by the film above) on the highest-grossing films of 2023, the final installment of the "Guardians" franchise hits streaming on Aug. 2. All our favorite tried-and-true Guardians, including the pre-Peter-Quill version of Gamora, are back for another mission — this time to heal Rocket after he is critically wounded in battle with a Sovereign warrior. "Vol. 3" gives viewers glimpses into Rocket's back story, as it bounces back and forth from flashbacks of his past to the present time; this characterbuilding that gives Rocket his well-earned moment, paired with the action scenes that Marvel Studios is unrivaled at, tie a beautiful bow on the trilogy. (Dis-

"My Happy Ending" (R)—Based on the play "Sof Tov" by Anat Gov, the events of this comedy-drama unfold during a single day. After getting diagnosed with stage four colon cancer, fictional famous actress Julia Roth (played by Andie MacDowell) travels to a British health clinic to receive chemotherapy as covertly as possible, with the hopes that no one — not even her manager or family - will find out about her diagnosis. When there aren't any private rooms for her to tuck away in, the actress is forced to undergo treatment with three other women: Mikey, Judy and Imaan. However, over the course of the treatment, Julia reaches profound and necessary realizations about the new direction in her life, thanks to these women and the stories they share. "My Happy Ending" is out now. (Hulu)

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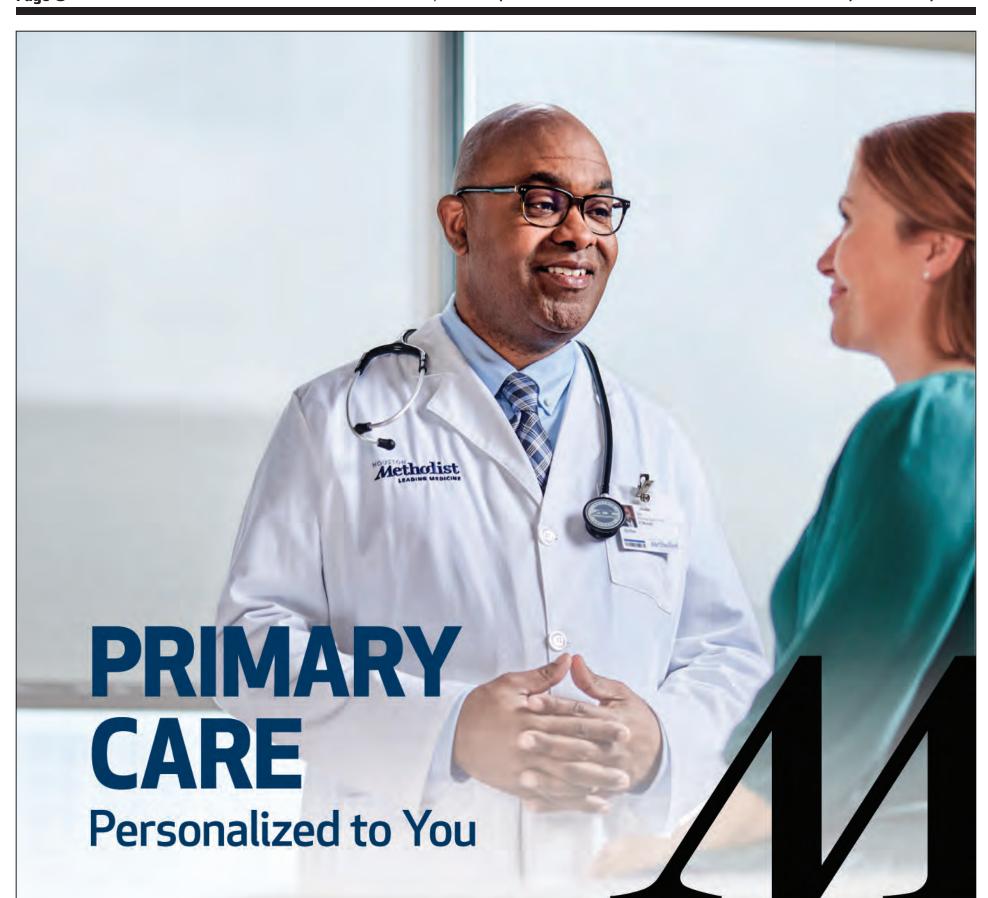




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