



HIGHLANDS

CROSBY

# Star Courier

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THURSDAY, AUGUST 10, 2023

P.O. DRAWER 405, HIGHLANDS, TEXAS 77562

## IN THE STARS

### EVENTS

#### Back-2-School First Day of Classes:

DISTRICT: ALDINE  
HISD

DATE: AUG 10 THU  
AUG 28 MON

CROSBY HUFFMAN  
GOOSE CREEK

AUG 7 MON  
AUG 9 WED  
AUG 14 MON

GALENA PARK  
SHELDON  
CHANNELVIEW

AUG 9 WED  
AUG 9 WED  
AUG 16 WED

DAYTON  
BARBERS HILL

AUG 9 WED  
AUG 16 WED

#### C/H Chamber Lunch Thursday, August 17

Chamber Monthly Luncheon, at Peso's Mexican Restaurant. Thursday, Aug. 17 starting at 11:30am, 6512 FM2100, Crosby. Guest Speaker is Bella Dion with Sterling White Funeral Home, speaking on Communication across generations. \$20 lunch, 281-328-6984.

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

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](http://www.TexasTaxHoliday.org).

### MILESTONES

#### BIRTHDAYS

- Aug 11—Christi Bobalik  
Bobby Glenn Smith  
Kristin Moseley  
Raymond Oliver  
Tiffany Cutbirth
- Aug 12—Ashley Adams  
Richard Fannels  
Kenneth Ray Neatherlin, Jr.  
Amy Rucka  
Dianne Thompkins  
Roy Cutbirth
- Aug 13—Christeen Cutbirth
- Aug 15—Sherry Kelley  
David Langham  
Beverly Nuckols  
Elizabeth Price  
Becky Williams
- Aug 16—William Don  
Carwile  
B.L. Owens
- Aug 17—Amanda Abbott  
Rhonda Brewer  
Amy Chase  
Amy Murphy  
Thomas Parrish  
Katherine Young

#### ANNIVERSARIES

- Aug 12—Rick & Deborah Nibbe
- Aug 14—Joe & Polly Lowden
- Aug 15—Rusty & Maria Williamson
- Aug 18—Bruce & Debbie Mercer
- Aug 19—Tony & Margaret Boyd
- Aug 20—Carl & Myrtis Richard
- Aug 23—Greg & Angie Basquez
- Kaylin & Caleb Morgan
- Aug 26—Lee Ward & Jo Ann Hammac
- Aug 28—Gilbert & Mei-ing Hoffman

## Crosby holds groundbreaking for 3rd EMS Station

ESD#5 celebrates new station

By David Taylor  
Star-Courier Editor

Despite wilting heat, on Monday, July 31, dozens gathered on Stroker Road in Crosby to celebrate the groundbreaking of the third Crosby EMS station. Shielded only by a small tent, mostly officials and rank and file met for the auspicious occasion that helps address growth in the Crosby area and is intended to reduce response times in the northern part of the district.

"I first want to thank all the people who made this possible—the people who own property here in Crosby and the businesses that provide the services where we get our sales tax from," said Emergency Services District 5 President Sharon Cotton. "This is go-



Rendering of new EMS Station #3. (Courtesy of Slattery Tackett Architects)



CrosbyEMSgroundbreaking 04 - Board members of ESD 5 toss the dirt to signal the groundbreaking of the new EMS station on Stroker Road. From left, Luther Brady, Jr., vice president; James Blaha, treasurer; Brant Burley, assistant secretary; Sharon Cotton, president; Larry Hall, secretary; and Kent Clingerman, Pct. 3 Tom Ramsey's office.

ing to allow us to have a new facility that gets to our taxpayers, or anybody quickly that has a medical emergency," she told the crowd.

Behind the scenes, work on the new station has been ongoing for the last year or so, hitting a snag with a previous architect. A new one was secured in Slattery Tackett Architects and Maco Construction as the contractor for the job.

Site work for the new station began the following day.

The \$4 million price tag for the new station comes in a little higher than normal with reason.

"We started tweaking the designed project about eight months ago to fit it to their needs and their budget," said architect David Slattery.

They secured the permits and are ready for the start of construction.

Slattery explained the

price for the station. "With this particular location, as you look around, you see it's an undeveloped piece of property, which is great. But electricity is the only utility that's available to the site. Everything else we have to do, we have to do on site which includes sanitary, water well and so that provides a lot of extra infrastructure requirements," he said.

In addition, since it's a station where medics will be sleeping to provide round the clock fire protection, they are required to have an underground water storage tank to fight a fire at the station should that ever happen.

"There's a lot that gets packed onto the site. It looks like there's a lot of space but we're using every square inch of it," he said including a required detention pond.

Stripping of the soil and See NEW EMS STATION #3, page 2

## Crosby ISD: Welcome Back to Year of Transition

Hello East Harris County and Crosby ISD families,

Welcome back! It filled my heart to see students return to class on Monday, August 7. We picked up right where we left off, with bell-to-bell instruction and slipping back into the routine of learning and growing.

This will be a year of transition as we move deeper into our hybrid Academic Calendar. Most Fridays will be designated as student holidays, from September 8, 2023 – April 12, 2024. We thought it might be handy to share the list of Fridays when students will be required to attend class: August 11, August 18, August 25, September 1, April 19, April 26, May 3, May 10, May 17, and May 24.

As we unveiled the pro-



SUPERINTENDENT PAULA PATTERSON

posal for a 4-Day Instructional Week, we discussed the reason behind the plan. We wanted to have exceptional teachers in every classroom for our students. We see that it's working. ISD has had a 70% improvement in filling teacher vacancies this year as compared to last year. Having an exceptional and

certified teacher in classrooms is a win for our kids.

I wanted to share a personal "Thank You" to Friendly Ford of Crosby. As we worked this summer to finalize childcare plans, we received a huge boost from Austin Salinas and Blake Salinas, the owners of Friendly Ford. The Salinas Family donated \$80,000 for student enrichment during our 4-Day Instructional Weeks. We appreciate the support of the Salinas Family, Friendly Ford, and their commitment to the families of Crosby ISD. The money will be used to directly impact our students and our families on Fridays during the year.

The first weekend of August saw our Crosby and Barrett Station communities come together,



Superintendent Patterson and Friendly Ford owners, Austin Salinas and Blake Salinas. Friendly Ford donated \$80,000 to support student enrichment during 4-Day Instructional Weeks.

stronger than ever. I shared the "State of the District" with business leaders, community members, faith leaders, and construction committee members. We discussed the challenges and opportunities for the 2023-2024 School Year. Crosby and

Barrett Station are unincorporated communities in Harris County. That means we don't have a mayor, city council, or public works departments of our own. Crosby ISD takes

Continued. See Crosby WELCOME BACK, Page 7

## County holds "Listening" Meeting with citizens

Residents hope county meeting in Highlands yields results

By David Taylor  
Star-Courier

Residents had an opportunity to give county officials their thoughts on what they'd like to see tax dollars spent on over the next five years at a public meeting in Highlands last Tuesday, Aug. 1. A dozen or so representatives from various county depart-

ments were on hand at the San Jacinto Community Center to answer questions and ask the community to vote on proposals to improve the Highlands area.

"We are in the beginning of our five-year Consolidated Plan process," said Walter Peacock, assistant director of planning for Harris County Commu-



Jerry Smith of Highlands points to the map created by David Suman, Geographic Information Systems analyst for Harris County, to point out where issues exist in Highlands.

nity Services Department. The plan relates to entitlement funding for the county that comes from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

"HUD requires us to have a consolidated plan that will either be for three or five years to talk about how we will fund different national objectives that has been spelled out by the department, and what projects we're going to do over that time" Peacock

See COUNTY PLANNING MEETING, page 2

**RACHEL'S DINER**  
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# New EMS Station #3,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

existing grass began the next morning, according to Michael Jenkins, project manager for Maco Construction.

"We'll also start digging a pond up front and a long driveway along the east side of the property and the buildings will be in the very back," he said. Jenkins said when it rains, the water can just roll off into the pond.

"We're hoping to get most of the site work done by the end of the year, and we'll begin the standing building by the first of the year," he said.

Underground materials for storm pipe, concrete, rebar will arrive first with construction materials for the building later in the year.

Jenkins said the construction should take approximately one year to complete with the EMS being able to move in during August 2024.

Crosby EMS director Christy Graves said this station was necessary and soon.

"We did a study of our highest call volume area by zones, and we discovered we had a large gap area in the Lake Shadows, Indian Shores area between the Huffman ambulance and us. The response times there were three to six minutes greater than anywhere else in the district based on a one-way access into that neighborhood," she said.

Graves said that could make a big difference in

care. "For us it's not minutes that count, but seconds," she stressed.

For many of the medics who are sleeping in the hallways on cots at Station 1 since there's no room, it will be a welcome sight.

"The station will be a huge relief for the increased staff that we have. We have multiple ambulances at one station," she said. "There is currently a national paramedic shortage and we're also having difficulty getting ambulances manufactured."

Graves said the station is not a Taj Mahal but fits their needs perfectly.

"We don't do fancy we just do what we need, and we make the best of what we have," Cotton added.



Architects and construction executives joined the board for the groundbreaking ceremony. From left, Cecil Fleming, Michael Jenkins, Cee Freeman, and Duane Cannon of Maco Construction; HCESD 5 commissioners Luther Brady, Brent Burley, and James Blaha; Lauren Hutton of Slattery Tackett Architects; Sharon Cotton, HCESD #5 president; Kent Clingerman, Harris County Pct. 3; Larry Hall, HCESD 5 commissioner; David Slattery, AIA, Slattery Tackett Architects; Nicole Pierce, Coveler & Peeler; and Tetiana Sapurko, Slattery Tackett Architects.



Harris County ESD 5 President Sharon Cotton welcomes those who gathered to commemorate the groundbreaking on the new EMS Station 3 on Stroker Road.



Harris County Precinct 3 representative Kent Clingerman presents a proclamation to ESD 5 President Sharon Cotton thanking her and the EMS for their commitment to the community.



EMS staff and board celebrate the groundbreaking of the new Crosby EMS Station 3 on Stroker Road. From left, back row, Gage White, Zach Klemme, Corp. Gerardo Gonzalez, Brant Burley, and Kent Clingerman. Second row, from left, Blake Milnes, Theresa Aldy, Jerry Brogdon, Luther Brady, James Blaha, Sharon Cotton, Larry Hall, JoAnn Kuritz, Lindy Ellender, and Jan Self. Kneelin from left, Capt. Hernando Andrada, Capt. Karen Elkins, and EMS Chief Christy Graves

**Congratulations to ESD#5  
on their new Crosby EMS Station**  
We are pleased to be the General Contractor



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Construction Management**

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**www.MacoConstruction.com**

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**SLATTERY TACKETT ARCHITECTS CONGRATULATES HARRIS COUNTY ESD #5  
ON THE GROUNDBREAKING OF THEIR NEW EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES STATION #3.**

**WE ARE PROUD TO BE A PART OF THE DISTRICT'S CONTINUED COMMITMENT  
TO THE CROSBY COMMUNITY AND TO THE DEDICATED MEN AND WOMEN WHO SERVE IT.**





# Barbers Hill Press

## Dayton

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

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THURSDAY, AUGUST 10, 2023

MONT BELVIEU, TEXAS 77580

### ON THE HILL

#### TUESDAY, AUG. 15 Mont Belvieu Chamber of Commerce: FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Membership luncheon  
Tuesday - 15 August 2023  
12:00pm - Eagle Pointe Pavilion



Join us as we hear important updates from U.S. Congressman, Brian Babin, D.D.S. Seating is limited, so register today at [mbac.net/Babin](http://mbac.net/Babin) or by calling 281-576-5440

#### SATURDAY, AUG. 12 MONT BELVIEU 811 DAY + TOUCH-A-TRUCK

SATURDAY, AUGUST 12, 2023 AT 9 AM - 12 PM  
811 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!

### GUEST ARTICLE FROM WEST CHAMBERS MEDICAL CENTER IN MONT BELVIEU:

## Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention

By Reagan Meuth, FNP-C  
Chambers Health

Sexual assault and violence are a growing problem in our society and occurs when sexual activity takes place without consent. Every 72 seconds an American is sexually assaulted. Over half of women experience some act of sexual violence in their lifetime. Victims typically know the perpetrators of this type of violence and may include people such as family, friends, coworkers, neighbors, and former or current intimate partners.

College students are at higher risk for sexual violence due to their environment. Often a perpetrator

may use drugs such as Rohypnol, Gamma Hydroxybutyric Acid, Gamma-Butyrolactone, and ketamine to compromise the victim's ability to stay awake or consent to sexual activity. The most common drug used in sexual assault is alcohol.

Sexual Assault is a form of sexual violence in the workplace and tends to include unwanted sexual conduct that can happen in person, on the phone, by text or email, or online. In order to reduce sexual harassment and violence in the workplace companies develop policies that protect the victim from retaliation and from the perpetrator.

A common misconception is that only females



Reagan Meuth

are victims of sexual violence, but sexual violence can occur at any time to anyone, male or female. The victims may be the same or opposite gender as the perpetrator.

Sexual Assault and Violence education is vital. Methods of education can include Social and Emotional Learning, teaching healthy safe dating and

intimate relationship skills to adolescents and providing workplace education on boundaries.

Consequences of sexual violence may vary person to person. Consequences may include unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases, and physical injuries. Some may be psychological including post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety, and even suicidal thoughts. Victims of sexual violence may struggle to cope with daily activities including returning to school or working a job.

If you, or someone you know are a victim of sexual assault or violence, Bay Area Turning Point has an office in Anahuac,

and there should be additional resources available nearby. Your primary medical provider's office can provide testing and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases as well as counseling for depression and anxiety.

Chambers Community Health Centers are all-inclusive health centers, offering various services to patients of all ages, such as counseling, disease management, immunizations, labs, x-rays, women's health, sports/work physicals, dental, minor in-office procedures, and more. **Chambers Health is your complete healthcare team** working with you across 5 locations in Chambers and Liberty County.

### THOUGHTS FROM HILLSIDE CHURCH

By Dr. Mark Trice



## More Than Just Heat

Thanks to the record-breaking heat that's affecting the northern hemisphere, the internet is currently full of a wide variety of heat-related memes and more. It takes little searching to find well-created pictures of melting vehicles of all sorts. There are photos of animals and people taking desperate measures in their attempts to find relief. There are even genuine photos of things like plastic mailbox posts that have melted and folded over. Queue the obvious Hell analogy and "You think it's hot here?" jokes.

The pictures and jokes are funny. Those of us in typically hot climates laugh because we can relate. We have experience. For instance, we know that if this keeps up many swimming pools will soon be too warm to swim in. Already, if you leave your

phone in the car too long it'll shut down on you because it's overheated. This is all funny/not funny. Truly, we see the memes and hear the jokes and laugh and cringe at the same time. Why? Because it's ultimately not a laughing matter.

Many are under extreme heat warnings, and for good reason: This heat is literally killing people. People in the danger zones who are wise plan their necessary outdoor activities for early morning when possible, and many are simply choosing

to stay indoors. They avoid the intense heat because they know from experience just how real the risk is.

Back to the obvious Hell analogy. People in today's make-me-comfortable culture don't like to talk or even think about Hell. Unlike the weather, which we can't avoid because we live in it, Hell is something we may choose to ignore for now because there doesn't seem to be any immediate and obvious danger attached to it. This is even true in the church, where too many

pastors not only refuse to talk about Hell, but don't even believe it's a real place.

But here's the truth, unless you want to toss out much of what Jesus said, you can't ignore the reality of Hell. More than once, He made it clear that Hell is a real place, and a place no person in their right mind would ever want to go. We have the choice; we can ignore the salvation Jesus offers us, accepting His sacrificial death on the cross and the promise that came with His resurrection, or

we can choose the heat.

No matter how many TV preachers proclaim that there is no Hell, or that everyone will go to Heaven, the fact remains that, thanks to Adam, every one of us starts out with a ticket to Hell. We choose to either hang on to that ticket or accept that Jesus was born, lived without sin so that He would qualify as a spotless sacrificial lamb, let Himself be crucified to pay for our sins, and rose again - ALL FOR US.

I, as an individual, accepted Jesus as my Savior and choose to let Him be Lord of my life. Because I made that choice, I know that Heaven will be my eternal home. It's not just about avoiding the heat; it's about living for eternity in God's very presence. And that is far more important than watching the weather report.

### Houston Methodist Hospital Baytown

## The Benefits of Breastfeeding

August is Breastfeeding Awareness Month, so it is a perfect time to look at the benefits of breastfeeding for babies and their mothers. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life, then continuing to breastfeed while introducing complementary foods for two years and beyond, as mutually desired by mother and child.

At Houston Methodist Baytown Hospital, new mothers are visited by a lactation consultant, a nurse specializing in helping mothers and babies with breastfeeding. "Our role is to educate mothers," said registered nurse and lactation consultant Mary Anne Marshall. "Our job is to support that mother's decision whether to breastfeed, use formula, or a combination of the two."

Jennifer Hall is also a registered nurse and lactation consultant at Houston Methodist Baytown Hospital. "We do talk about the benefits of breastfeeding with our mothers; there are things breast milk pro-

vides that formula doesn't," said Hall.

**Some of those benefits include:**

**1. Breast milk is the best source of nutrition for most babies.** As the baby grows, the mother's breast milk will change to meet the baby's nutritional needs.

**2. Breastfeeding can help protect babies against short- and long-term illnesses and diseases.** Breastfed babies have a lower risk of developing obesity, type 1 diabetes, and certain cancers in childhood. Breastfed babies are also less likely to have ear infections, respiratory illnesses, and stomach bugs. Breastfed babies are also less likely to have sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

**3. Breast milk shares antibodies from the mother with her baby.** "Babies are born with immature immune systems; therefore, breastfed babies receive anti-body protection through their mother's breast milk," said Marshall.

**4. Mothers can breast-**

**feed anytime and anywhere.** Mothers can feed their babies on the go without worrying about safely mixing formula or preparing bottles. When traveling, breastfeeding can also comfort babies whose routine is disrupted.

There are benefits to the mother as well. "It can help new mothers get their bodies back to a pre-pregnancy state. It can also help decrease the risk of certain types of cancers and even osteoporosis later in life," said Hall.

Breastfeeding can also provide crucial bonding time between baby and mother. "We encourage all our moms to use skin-to-skin contact by placing baby on mom's bare chest. This can be done with dads and siblings as well. Even if a mother chooses not to breastfeed, that skin-to-skin contact is still important," said Hall. Skin-to-skin contact can help calm newborns, regulate their temperature and blood pressure, help to stabilize infant blood sugar levels, and further stimulate hormone production to

increase milk supply.

But breastfeeding may not come easy to every mother and baby. "I tell new mothers to be patient. They often expect instinct to kick in, and that baby will immediately latch on, and everything will be great, but that isn't always the case. It can take some time for both mother and baby to get the process down," said Marshall.

Both Marshall and Hall recognize that breastfeeding can be challenging for some mothers. Through gentle guidance and support throughout their patients' hospital stay, they assist mothers with problems ranging from latch difficulties and concerns about inadequate milk supply to the challenges of returning to work and pumping to maintain their supply. "Our goal is to empower mothers to feel confident in their feeding choice and ability," said Marshall.

Houston Methodist Baytown Hospital offers prenatal classes and tours to help expecting mothers become familiar with their

facility and the labor and delivery process before the baby arrives. The Prepared Childbirth Class focuses on what to expect emotionally and physically during labor and delivery. They also offer free, in-person breastfeeding classes, infant CPR classes and Childbirth Center tours. To sign up for a class or tour, visit [houstonmethodist.org/patient-classes](http://houstonmethodist.org/patient-classes) and search for "Baytown" in the keyword field. For more information, please call the OB nurse navigator at **346.292.2166**.

Houston Methodist Baytown is also designated as a donor milk depot supporting the Mother's Milk Bank at Austin, a North America's Human Milk Banking Association member. Premature babies or those with certain medical conditions are often prescribed donor human milk. For mothers interested in donating breastmilk to Mother's Milk Bank at Austin, we serve as a drop-off site. For additional donation information, please visit [milkbank.org](http://milkbank.org).



OPINION PAGE

OPINION

By Mayor Sylvester Turner City of Houston

Houston files suit against "Death Star" law

City of Houston Files Suit Against the State of Texas' "Death Star" Super Preemption Law

HOUSTON - Today, the City of Houston filed a lawsuit in Travis County against the State of Texas to have declared unconstitutional, void, and unenforceable House Bill 2127, the so-called "Death Star" or "Super" preemption bill.

Preemption under established law is a constitutional doctrine by which our judiciary carefully considers and determines in rare instances that state law displaces conflicting local law, finding there is no possibility that State and local law can coexist.

Constitutional local control gives Texas cities the power of self-government, permitting them to tailor their laws specifically to address local residents' and businesses' needs and desires.

HB 2127 creates a one-size-fits-all statewide regulation scheme with no attempt to address areas of concern that prompted cities to pass laws in response to constituent requests.

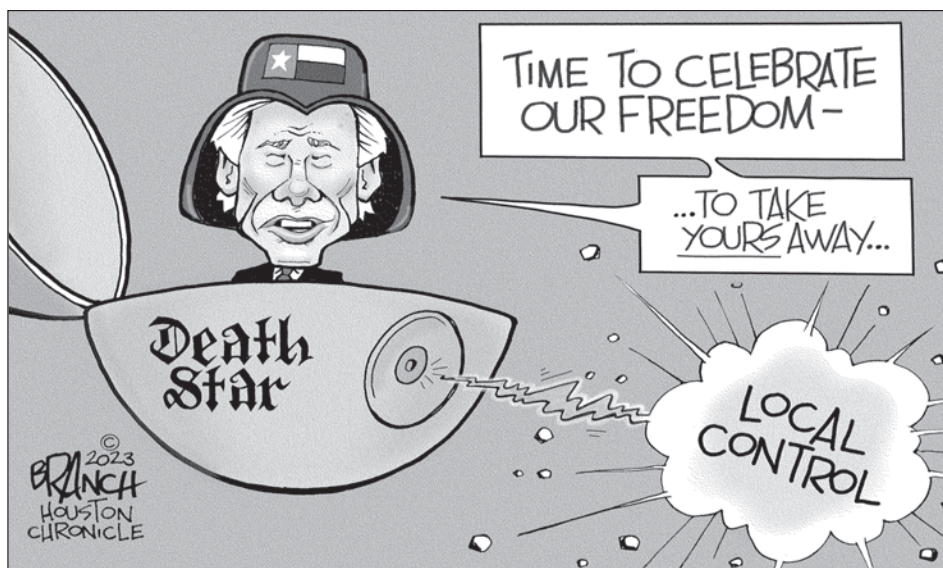
The bill permits the State of Texas simply to decree that whole "fields" of current and future local regulation are off limits to city government.

HB 2127 would also improperly shift the heavy burden of disproving preemption to cities—clearly violating the Texas Constitution and decades of the Texas Supreme Court's preemption rulings.

HB 2127 achieves these unconstitutional ends by using vague language so indefinite and opaque that Texas cities cannot know which of their laws they may enforce, and Texas businesses and residents cannot know which local laws they must obey.

"The Texas Constitution expressly champions the local control and innovation that has been key to the tremendous economic dynamism in cities like Houston. HB 2127 reverses over 100 years of Texas constitutional law without amending the Constitution.

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.



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

By Gary Borders



Wildfire Chances Increasing Across State

The risk for wildfires across the state has risen along with the hot and dry conditions, according to the Texas A&M Forest Service.

"With the recent uptick in wildfire activity, Texas A&M Forest Service has mobilized additional personnel and equipment to assist with response," said Wes Moorehead, Texas A&M Forest Service fire chief.

Nine out of 10 wildfires cross the state are both human-caused and preventable. The most common causes of wildfires during summer are debris burning and equipment use.

The forest service reported seven active wildfires as of Friday, most of which were 90% contained. However, the Blum Fire covering an estimated 300 acres was only 40% contained.

ABBOTT SIGNS TAX RELIEF BILL; NOW GOES TO VOTERS

With Gov. Gregg Abbott's signature on an \$18 billion property tax relief package, now it's up to the voters in November to approve a proposed constitutional amendment that would put it into effect.

The Austin American-Statesman reported that, if passed in November, homeowners would be eligible for a \$100,000 homestead exemption, with those 65 and older getting an additional \$40,000 exemption.



Voters also will decide the fate of 13 other proposed constitutional amendments on the November ballot. Besides the property tax measure, the propositions include creating a broadband infrastructure fund; creation of a Texas energy fund to build new electric generating plants; and creation of a water fund to finance water projects in Texas.

BOOKSTORES SUE OVER LAW RATING BOOKS IN SCHOOLS

Texas bookstores have joined with national organizations to sue in federal court over a new Texas law that requires a rating system for books in schools and seeks to ban sexually explicit books from public school libraries.

The American Booksellers Association and other national groups were joined by BookPeople in Austin, Blue Willow Bookshop in Houston and others in filing the suit, saying the law, due to take effect on Sept. 1, "is unrealistic, limits students' reading options and narrows libraries' book selections," according to the Statesman.

Named as defendants in the suit are several state agencies, including the Texas Education Agency, the Texas State Library and Archives Commission and the State Board of Education, all of which will be responsible for implementing the law.

"This law is bad for small businesses, like independent bookstores," Charley Rejsek, CEO of

BookPeople, said. "The workload, and the monetary aspect that goes along with the workload, is just impossible to meet."

In a tweet responding to the lawsuit, Rep. Jared Patterson, R-Frisco, who authored HB 900, said "bring it."

ONE IN FIVE TEXANS LIVE IN FLOOD PLAIN

About 20% of the state's population — nearly 6 million Texans — live in an area susceptible to flooding, according to new data gathered by the Texas Water Development Board and reported by the Texas Tribune.

The analysis by TWDB is part of its first statewide flood plan, required by a law passed in 2019 in response to Hurricane Harvey. Flood risks in Texas are increasing as the result of heavier precipitation due to climate change, stronger hurricanes and a rise in sea levels — even as the state's population continues to increase.

In a presentation in mid-July, TWDB staff said one-fifth of the state's land — about 56,000 square miles — falls within an area classified as being in a 100-year floodplain.

The state is likely to spend tens of billions of dollars in flood protection. One of the first projects is the "Ike Dike," a massive gate system planned for the mouth of Galveston Bay, the Tribune reported.

"Getting this program up and running is a really big deal," TWDB Chair Brooke Paup said before the board approved the 15 regional plans, a major step in creating the statewide flood plan. Each region is built around one of the state's major watersheds.

"I know it'll truly go so far to save lives and people's homes," Paup said.

BORDER CONCERTINA RAZOR WIRE MADE BY INMATES

The miles of concertina razor wire strewn along the banks of the Rio Grande by Texas authorities — and the subject of a suit by the Department of Justice — is manufactured by inmates in an East Texas minimum-security prison unit, the Corpus Christi Caller Times reported.

The Texas Department of Criminal Justice was authorized to purchase nearly \$1.1 million worth of equipment to make the wire, according to the Legislative Budget Board's contract database, the Caller Times reported. While the prison system has been making such wire for the state's 100-plus prison units for some time, the new machines are allowing expanded production for use on the Texas border.

The new unit was shipped to the Powledge Unit near Palestine in East Texas. That prison also has a metal manufacturing unit.

THE POSTSCRIPT By Carrie Classon

The Painter

I see him painting every afternoon.

Every day I take a walk and, when I am in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, my walk usually takes me through an old fabric mill that has been converted into gallery space. Most of the galleries sell the work of artists from Mexico City and beyond.

Usually, I don't see the artists. They seem to be somewhat elusive. Perhaps they don't like being pestered by looky-loos coming by to see what they are doing and how they create their magic on canvas.

But one artist is always working. For a long time, I would wave as I walked by.

Then one day, I stopped to tell him how inspiring it was to see him working every day. I told him I was a writer and that sometimes it felt as if there was no one else writing.

"But I see you painting here, every day, and I feel less alone," I told him.

He said he was honored. He spoke English with an accent, but it was not a Spanish accent. He is Italian, as it turns out. His girlfriend is Mexican, from San Miguel.

His work is imposing. He does portrait art, and within the realistic paintings of his subjects, he has abstract art bursting out from inside them, as if their thoughts and emotions had turned into vivid colors and shapes.

"Do you have days when it is easier?" I asked. "Are there days when the painting flows more freely than others?"

I felt a little bad because, in order to answer the question, he paused his painting. He was working on the background of a male figure. The background was flesh-toned, so the person almost melted into it. He was mixing colors of brown and white, painting, covering, mixing again. It was mesmerizing.

"No," he said. "I think the work flows on every day I am painting. If it is not flowing at all, I go home."

But I know he is always there—because I see him.

And then he told me he had not always been a painter. He was trained as an actor and worked in films in Italy. He hated it. He said he was only valued for how he looked.

Then he met his wonderful girlfriend, and he moved to Mexico to be with her. But he had no job. So he and a business partner set up a small export company. He spent eight months working on it and then—without warning—his partner quit. His business dream was over.

That was when he started to paint.

Now he has more commissions and offers to show in galleries than he can accept. People love his work, and so does he.

"It freed me, my partner leaving," he said. "If he hadn't done that, I would never have gotten to paint!" "But how did you learn?" I asked.

"On YouTube!" he said. "I just practiced and practiced."

And I know this is true because he is the one painter who is there every day, working on a new canvas, carefully mixing the colors on his brush, contemplating what he sees growing before him.

I saw him there yesterday. He was concentrating intently, and I didn't want to take up his time. But it was a great comfort to know—even without seeing him—he is there right now, painting.

Till next time, Carrie

Advertisement for Star Courier newspaper, including contact information for Gilbert Hoffman, Barbers Hill Press, and North Channel Star.



Barbers Hill ISD (BHISD) is considering accessing an additional 11 cents available for Maintenance & Operations (M&O) authorized by Education Code 45.032(b)(2). A Voter-Approval Tax Rate Election (VATRE) is required to do this. BHISD is publishing two notices for the August 21, 2023 public hearing. If the voter-approval tax rate is not approved by the voters of the District in November, the school district will have a larger part of its budget limited to just paying for school bonds with a total rate of \$1.1024, comprised of an M&O rate of \$0.7226 and an I&S rate of \$0.3798.

### 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, August 21, 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.

Table with 2 columns: Item, Amount. Includes sections for Comparison of Proposed Budget with Last Year's Budget, Total Appraised Value and Total Taxable Value, Bonded Indebtedness, Comparison of Proposed Rates with Last Year's Rates, Comparison of Proposed Levies with Last Year's Levies on Average Residence, and Fund Balances.

Barbers Hill ISD (BHISD) is considering accessing an additional 11 cents available for Maintenance & Operations (M&O) authorized by Education Code 45.032(b)(2). A Voter-Approval Tax Rate Election (VATRE) is required to do this. BHISD is publishing two notices for the August 21, 2023 public hearing. If voters approve the proposed tax rate, the total rate will be \$1.1024, comprised of an M&O rate of \$0.8326 and an I&S rate of \$0.2698.

### 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, August 21, 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.

Table with 2 columns: Item, Amount. Includes sections for Comparison of Proposed Budget with Last Year's Budget, Total Appraised Value and Total Taxable Value, Bonded Indebtedness, Comparison of Proposed Rates with Last Year's Rates, Comparison of Proposed Levies with Last Year's Levies on Average Residence, and Fund Balances.

## Notice of Public Hearing on Tax Increase

A tax rate of \$0.03 per \$100 valuation has been proposed by the governing body of Harris County Emergency Services District No. 5.

Table with 2 columns: PROPOSED TAX RATE, NO-NEW-REVENUE TAX RATE, VOTER-APPROVAL TAX RATE, DE MINIMIS RATE and their respective values.

The no-new-revenue tax rate is the tax rate for the 2023 tax year that will raise the same amount of property tax revenue for Harris County Emergency Services District No. 5 from the same properties in both the 2022 tax year and the 2023 tax year.

The voter-approval rate is the highest tax rate that Harris County Emergency Services District No. 5 may adopt without holding an election to seek voter approval of the rate, unless the de minimis rate for Harris County Emergency Services District No. 5 exceeds the voter-approval rate for Harris County Emergency Services District No. 5.

The de minimis rate is the rate equal to the sum of the no-new-revenue maintenance and operations rate for Harris County Emergency Services District No. 5, the rate that will raise \$500,000, and the current debt rate for Harris County Emergency Services District No. 5.

The proposed tax rate is greater than the no-new-revenue tax rate. This means that Harris County Emergency Services District No. 5 is proposing to increase property taxes for the 2023 tax year.

A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED TAX RATE WILL BE HELD ON August 24, 2023 at 1:00 p.m., at EMS Station, 5915 FM 2100, Crosby, TX 77532.

Harris County Emergency Services District No. 5 shall take action on the proposed tax rate on August 24, 2023 at 1:00 p.m., following the hearing to be held.

The proposed tax rate is greater than the voter-approval tax rate but not greater than the de minimis rate. However, the proposed tax rate exceeds the rate that allows voters to petition for an election under Section 26.075, Tax Code. If Harris County Emergency Services District No. 5 adopts the proposed tax rate, the qualified voters of the Harris County Emergency Services District No. 5 may petition the Harris County Emergency Services District No. 5 to require an election to be held to determine whether to reduce the proposed tax rate. If a majority of the voters reject the proposed tax rate, the tax rate of the Harris County Emergency Services District No. 5 will be the voter-approval tax rate of the Harris County Emergency Services District No. 5.

YOUR TAXES OWED UNDER ANY OF THE TAX RATES MENTIONED ABOVE CAN BE CALCULATED AS FOLLOWS:

Property tax amount = (tax rate) x (taxable value of your property)/100

The members of the governing body voted on the proposal to consider the tax increase as follows:

FOR: Sharon Cotton, Luther Brady, Larry Hall, James Blaha & Brent Burley
AGAINST: None
PRESENT AND NOT VOTING: None
ABSENT: None

Visit Texas.gov/PropertyTaxes to find a link to your local property tax database on which you can easily access information regarding your property taxes, including information about proposed tax rates and scheduled public hearings of each entity that taxes your property.

The 86th Legislature modified the manner in which the voter-approval tax rate is calculated to limit the rate of growth of property taxes in the state.

The following table compares the taxes imposed on the average residence homestead by Harris County Emergency Services District No. 5 last year to the taxes proposed to be imposed on the average residence homestead by Harris County Emergency Services District No. 5 this year.

Table with 4 columns: Item, 2022, 2023, Change. Rows include Total tax rate (per \$100 of value), Average homestead taxable value, Tax on average homestead, and Total tax levy on all properties.

For assistance with tax calculations, please contact the District Counsel for Harris County Emergency Services District No. 5 at (713) 984-8222 or pierce@coveler.com or visit www.hcesd5.org for more information.

## Notice of Public Hearing on Tax Increase

A tax rate of \$0.05 per \$100 valuation has been proposed by the governing body of Harris County Emergency Services District No. 80.

Table with 2 columns: PROPOSED TAX RATE, NO-NEW-REVENUE TAX RATE, VOTER-APPROVAL TAX RATE, DE MINIMIS RATE and their respective values.

The no-new-revenue tax rate is the tax rate for the 2023 tax year that will raise the same amount of property tax revenue for Harris County Emergency Services District No. 80 from the same properties in both the 2022 tax year and the 2023 tax year.

The voter-approval rate is the highest tax rate that Harris County Emergency Services District No. 80 may adopt without holding an election to seek voter approval of the rate, unless the de minimis rate for Harris County Emergency Services District No. 80 exceeds the voter-approval rate for Harris County Emergency Services District No. 80.

The de minimis rate is the rate equal to the sum of the no-new-revenue maintenance and operations rate for Harris County Emergency Services District No. 80, the rate that will raise \$500,000, and the current debt rate for Harris County Emergency Services District No. 80.

The proposed tax rate is greater than the no-new-revenue tax rate. This means that Harris County Emergency Services District No. 80 is proposing to increase property taxes for the 2023 tax year.

A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED TAX RATE WILL BE HELD ON August 28, 2023 at 6:30 p.m., at Crosby Fire Station No. 2, 123 S. Diamondhead Blvd., Crosby, TX 77532.

Harris County Emergency Services District No. 80 shall take action on the proposed tax rate on August 28, 2023 at 6:30 p.m., following the hearing to be held.

The proposed tax rate is greater than the voter-approval tax rate but not greater than the de minimis rate. However, the proposed tax rate exceeds the rate that allows voters to petition for an election under Section 26.075, Tax Code. If Harris County Emergency Services District No. 80 adopts the proposed tax rate, the qualified voters of the Harris County Emergency Services District No. 80 may petition the Harris County Emergency Services District No. 80 to require an election to be held to determine whether to reduce the proposed tax rate. If a majority of the voters reject the proposed tax rate, the tax rate of the Harris County Emergency Services District No. 80 will be the voter-approval tax rate of the Harris County Emergency Services District No. 80.

YOUR TAXES OWED UNDER ANY OF THE TAX RATES MENTIONED ABOVE CAN BE CALCULATED AS FOLLOWS:

Property tax amount = (tax rate) x (taxable value of your property)/100

The members of the governing body voted on the proposal to consider the tax increase as follows:

FOR: Raymond St. Julian, Sr., Randy Foster, Derek Elkins, Chuck Murray and Buddy Brewer
AGAINST: None
PRESENT AND NOT VOTING: None
ABSENT: None

Visit Texas.gov/PropertyTaxes to find a link to your local property tax database on which you can easily access information regarding your property taxes, including information about proposed tax rates and scheduled public hearings of each entity that taxes your property.

The 86th Legislature modified the manner in which the voter-approval tax rate is calculated to limit the rate of growth of property taxes in the state.

The following table compares the taxes imposed on the average residence homestead by Harris County Emergency Services District No. 80 last year to the taxes proposed to be imposed on the average residence homestead by Harris County Emergency Services District No. 80 this year.

Table with 4 columns: Item, 2022, 2023, Change. Rows include Total tax rate (per \$100 of value), Average homestead taxable value, Tax on average homestead, and Total tax levy on all properties.

For assistance with tax calculations, please contact the District Counsel for Harris County Emergency Services District No. 80 at (713) 984-8222 or pierce@coveler.com or visit www.hcesd80.org for more information.



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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. Special education services are also available starting at birth for eligible children who have a visual and/or auditory impairment.

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.

The special education personnel will coordinate efforts to evaluate the student and, if eligible, ensure that the student is provided with supports and services needed to benefit from instruction.

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# County Planning Meeting,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

explained.

He said over the next few weeks, they will gather information from county residents who will tell them what is most important to them as it relates to infrastructure, public facilities, safety, veteran services, homelessness and many more objectives.

"We will do one of these meetings in each one of the precincts and that will tell us what the community wants the most and allocate funds based on those comments," he said.

From that, Peacock said they will be able to make goals and visions for public housing, water lines, infrastructure, and other projects asked for by residents including veteran services and housing.

Jerry Smith, a Highlands resident, walked through the exhibits and stopped at each to vote and give some suggestions that weren't listed on the opinion boards.

Smith, who lives on the eastside of the canal, was seeking a remedy to flooding.

"Nobody wants to flood. We were close to it during Harvey, but this ditch by my house has a lot of silt and dirt in it and needs to be cleaned out before the next storm," he urged officials.

He fears he won't be so lucky the next time around.

"I wonder where our tax dollars are being spent. We pay them, but we don't see them being used. If you thought Cedar Bayou was bad in Harvey, wait for the next one," he said.

While the meeting was primarily based on HUD requirements, Peacock said they still wanted to hear from the public about anything they wanted for their community.

"While we might not be able to help, what we could possibly do is leverage our resources with another department, another non-governmental organization, to help them meet that demand," he said. "We don't want to stifle anything that a community member would want to say or want to bring up related to any of the needs here."

Entitlement fundings increase and decreases based upon a formula, which is related to how many low to moderate income people you have in your population and the total population at home. Peacock estimated their last entitlement was over \$21 million but divided between the four precincts of Harris County.

The Annual Action Plan shows how the



Highlands resident Jerry Smith flips through photos on his phone to show the flooding in Highlands to Harris County Geographic Information Systems analyst David Suman at the meeting in Highlands last Tuesday. Suman has only lived in Texas for two years.

projects are divided out amongst the precincts through a request for proposal process.

David Suman, Geographic Information Systems analyst for Harris County, does a considerable amount of mapping for the county.

"We have a demographics dashboard here so if you scan the QR code, you can pull it up, and you can kind of look over what we call special geography like precincts or target areas for Harris County with general demographic information," he said.

Funds won't be expended until the plan has been formulated and approved by HUD.

Miss the meeting? There are several more planned over the month of August. Residents can also go online to take the survey at [bit.ly/HCCSDConsolidatePlanSurvey](http://bit.ly/HCCSDConsolidatePlanSurvey). For comments via email, send them to [hccconsolidatedplan@csd.hctx.net](mailto:hccconsolidatedplan@csd.hctx.net).

**NEXT MEETINGS:**

**TUESDAY, AUG. 8, 4:30 – 7:30 p.m.**  
Pct. 4 Steve Radack Community Center  
18650 Clay Road, Houston

**THURSDAY, AUG. 17, 4:30 – 7:30 p.m.**  
Pct. 2 Martin Flukinger Community Center  
16003 Lorenzo St., Channelview

**THURSDAY, AUG. 24, 4:30 – 7:30 p.m.**  
Pct. 1 Tom Bass Community Center  
15108 Cullen Blvd., Houston

# Crosby: Welcome Back,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

seriously our role as community advocates, as we are the largest employer in our communities and hold the largest footprint.

As far as district growth, I shared with our community members that there are currently 15 new subdivisions under construction right now within the borders of Crosby ISD. The Board of Trustees and our community construction committee have designated three projects as highest priorities: First, the expansion of Crosby High School; Second, the construction of a second middle school campus, starting with 6th grade capacity and the ability to add 7th and 8th grade; Third, a new elementary school. We are excited about the opportunities and challenges growth will bring, and we are ready to tackle them as we welcome new neighbors.

We had a fantastic time throwing a big party for our families on Saturday, August 5. We celebrated our third annual Back-to-School Bash at Crosby High School, and every year, we see more and more students and families. This year, more than 340 families received free backpacks and free supplies. More than 200 students visited the Harris County Public Library's bookmobile known as the Curiosity Cruiser, and each child walked away with a free book. We enjoyed community vendors showing their services and selling Cougar Gear! It warmed the heart to see students walk away with free supplies, free backpacks, and everything they need to start the year off on the right foot. We are already thinking of how to throw an even bigger party next year!



First Day photo at Newport Elementary School. Crosby ISD staff all wore matching "Moving Forward" shirts on the first day of school on August 7.



Superintendent Patterson gives a pep talk to band students during a sizzling summer afternoon practice session.

I don't have to tell you that it's been a hot summer! I must give kudos to our Crosby High School football players and band members. I visited their outdoor practices earlier this month. Let's all applaud their dedication and commitment to be the best they can be, even during days that reach 100 degrees or more.

This year's Crosby ISD theme is "Moving Forward." During the Beginning of the Year Convocation for staff, I shared the message from motivational speaker, Damon West. He grew up in Port Arthur, became a college football star, struggled with addiction, and then almost ended up serving life in a Texas prison. He's changed his life for the better. West is on a quest to outline a vision of success in life, no matter your circumstanc-

es. He shares the story of a boiling pot of water. A person can choose to be one of three things: a carrot, an egg, or a coffee bean. When it's tossed in the boiling water, the carrot will turn soft, mushy, and weak. The egg will congeal and harden. The egg can no longer change or soften. The last item, the coffee bean, literally changes the atmosphere. The coffee bean's influence is so strong, it transforms the water into coffee. I love West's message. I have been encouraging Crosby ISD staff to embrace being a coffee bean. We can all change our atmosphere for the better. We can all make a difference in the lives of others. We hope you join Crosby ISD's mission to change our future, one step forward at a time.

We are Moving Forward! Go Coogs!

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