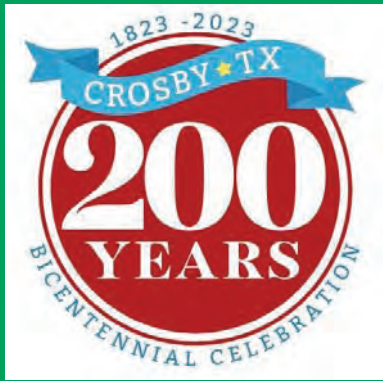


HIGHLANDS

CROSBY

Star Courier

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PARADE PHOTOS
See Pages 1 and 2 for full coverage of
Parade Floats and Participants

VOL. 70, NO. 39 - \$1.00

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THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2023

P.O. DRAWER 405, HIGHLANDS, TEXAS 77562

IN THE STARS

EVENTS

Consular Visit to celebrate 40 years at Mountbatten House in Highlands

Saturday, Oct. 14
from 12pm to 3pm the
public is invited to meet
British Consul General
Richard Hyde and wife
Jackie, to celebrate four
decades of service
helping others.

Mountbatten House
was inaugurated in 1983 by
Prince Charles.

Mountbatten House,
213 Maple St.
Highlands.

Crosby/Huffman Chamber Luncheon & Board Election Thursday October 19

Monthly Luncheon
and Yearly Board
Election, Thursday Oct.
19 starting at 11:30am.
Crosby Church, 5725
Highway 90, Crosby.

Lunch catered by
Teapot Depot, \$20 per
member. RSVP to 281-
328-6984 or email
chamber@crosbyhuffmancc.org.

Annual Fish Fry at Highlands Methodist Saturday Oct. 21

You're invited to the
Highlands Methodist
Church 31st Annual Fish
Fry, Saturday Oct. 21
from 11am to 2pm at
the church, 107 W.
Houston Street,
Highlands.

Catfish Dinners, Silent
Auction, and Bake Sale.

Crosby's 200th: An event to remember

By David Taylor

Two years ago, it was a dream. On September 23, 2023, her dream became a reality, and Donna Davenport could hardly contain her excitement and enthusiasm.

"I was totally blown away," she said. "The parade was Crosby's largest ever and I never imagined that."

For an hour and 15 minutes, the more than 200 entries wound its way down FM 2100 with an estimated 550 participants.

Standing on the side of the road herself, Davenport watched along with several thousand spectators as the stars of the Crosby parade—community organizer and sports photography enthusiast Annie Michalsky, historian Jody Fuchs, and one of the oldest organizations in town the Crosby Rodeo and Fair board—led off the festivities.

Davenport is the first to



Donna Davenport, whose vision inspired the Bicentennial celebration, is ready for the parade and festivities begin. She's holding her notorious clipboard with a dizzying amount of information and directions.



Annie Michalsky was selected by the Crosby Bicentennial Committee to lead the parade as grand marshal. Michalsky is a Crosby icon, loved and adored by many for her service to the community.



No parade would be complete without the band and the Crosby Big Red Machine didn't disappoint. Decked out in their complete uniforms, the ensemble played tunes entertaining the thousands lined up along FM 2100 to watch the largest parade in Crosby history.



A flyover by the Army 1st Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment, 11th Expeditionary Combat Aviation Brigade in their Sikorsky UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters lit up the crowd with cheers. The unit is located in Conroe, Texas and made three flyovers.

say she didn't do it alone, but with the help of more than 60 volunteers who led committees affecting almost every event right down to cleanup after the day was done. The event was led by Davenport and the Crosby Historical Society and Kim Harris and the Crosby-Huffman Chamber of Commerce.

Virtually every organization in town participated in some way, including the school district.

Davenport knew it was going to be special when the band appeared in full uniform cranking out favorites for the crowd followed by the drill team and cheerleaders.

"It was so good to see so much participation from the schools too with their entries and the board of trustees float," she said.

One of the things that tugged at her heartstrings was the participation of 16 different churches.

MORE PHOTOS & FUN: See Crosby's 200th, Page 2

Crosby FD observes National Night Out

Crosby Volunteer Fire Department held their National Night Out as an Open House at Stations 81 Highway 90 and 82 Diamondhead. Families were treated to a tour of the station and fire equipment and trucks.

Firemen also provided snacks and loads of fun, either though the weather wasn't the best. A good time was had for all that participated. Thanks CFD.



Families gathered to view the newest Fire Truck at the Crosby Fire Department National Night Out last Tuesday.



The station tour included a visit with SPARKY the mascot.

82nd annual Czech Fest attracts another large crowd

By David Taylor
Star-Courier Editor

Bez práce nejsou koláče or "without work, there are no kolaches!"

For 82 years, the delectable pastry has been the feature of the annual Czech Fest in Crosby hosted by the Sacred Heart Catholic Church and Sunday was no different. For latecomers to the event, it was a bit of a heartache as the sweet fruit filling surrounded by puffy pastry dough disappeared almost as quickly as they were put out.

"There was a line for them as soon as we opened," smiled Jimmy Janek, church chairman for the annual festival for the last 12 years.

Janek has been assist-



Robert Suttie plays the keyboard while Bob Suttie picks on the guitar in the background. Both are members of the Texas Legacy Czech Band that played at the annual Czech Fest in Crosby on Sunday.

ing with the fundraiser for the church and school for the last 30 years, almost as soon as he moved to Crosby.

"I believe this started in 1940 and has gone on faithfully every year except during the pandemic. That year we hosted an

online raffle," he said.

In the early years, the festival was hosted on the campus of Sacred Heart until they outgrew the venue.

"We had it there for several years but then they

Continued. See Czech Fest, Page 2

Stephens updates Highlands Rotary on GBOGH Foundation

HIGHLANDS - It seems that every day, the newspapers carry stories about an athlete that was diagnosed with a heart defect, and some of them fatal. Scott Stephens spoke to the Highlands Rotary club in August, about the death of his son Cody eleven years ago.

Since that day, Scott has made it his priority to help others know about, and get the necessary screening to detect and repair heart problems.

Since Cody's death in 2012, the Cody Stephens Foundation, or GBOGH (Go Big Or Go Home)

Continued. See HEART SCREENING, Page 5



Highlands Rotary president Denise Smith presents a check for \$1500 to Cody Stephens Foundation president Scott Stephens, for screening high school athletes for heart defects.

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FREE COMMUNITY SHRED DAY AND FOOD DRIVE

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14TH, 2023 | 9:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.

HWY 146, 8010 N. HIGHWAY 146 | BAYTOWN, TX 77523



Crosby's 200th: An event to remember

Continued from Page 1

"They were all under one roof, working together and providing old-fashioned games and fun for children," she said.

Another impressive stat was the more than 3,000 to 4,000 who staffed and visited the 90-plus booths and static displays surrounding the rodeo fairgrounds.

"There was no grass growing under the feet of our volunteers," she said. "Even items such as getting fans under the canopy for vendors and attendees, our sidewalks were washed down and cleaned at the request of Velma Ellison, and the work done on the fairgrounds by volunteers prior to setup was amazing," she said.

She refused to offer a thank you list for fear of leaving out someone but was grateful to all who had any role in the success of the bicentennial celebration.

"There was so much done including the caboose in our park being repaired and prepped for our big day that will last for years to come," she said.

Throughout the day, Budweiser sponsored several bands to play various genres of music including Czech and country.

Across the meadow at the American Legion Hall, inside the air-conditioned facility was a heated cornhole tournament and outside a vintage car show that attracted hundreds of visitors.

Throughout the day, folks from the Alamo in San Antonio, fired off the vintage cannons. A Life Flight helicopter landed

and there were tours for everyone on the multiple apparatus from the Crosby Volunteer Fire Department, Crosby EMS, Harris County Constable's Office, and Harris County Sheriff's Office.

Children enjoyed the live animals from St. Francis and the carnival rides.

Birthday cake was provided by the culinary arts program at Crosby High School.

"I hope we taught a lot of kids and teenagers what community service is all about. It's not always about getting paid for everything but giving back," she said.

Davenport also envisioned the businesses of Crosby setting up booths and selling their wares in a different venue and helping to give back to them.

"They are the backbone of our community," she said, many of them making new contacts and friends in the process.

She believes all the expenses have been covered and there may be a little profit left.

"We will have a debriefing, final meeting and go over anything they want to talk about including what we will do with any leftover money," she said back into the community.

While the big day has come and gone, the celebration continues in the community through the sale of the Crosby Cookbooks, the newly created salsa named 1823 by members of the Crosby Rodeo and Fair, and various other artifacts for sale through the Historical Society.



Young Jackson Harrelson and his mother Krystal look on as they get an autograph from Actor Don Jeanes, famous for his role as the rancher in the Budweiser Super Bowl commercials with the puppy dog and Clydesdales. Jeanes appeared in the parade and signed autographs at the Star-Courier Newspaper booth during bicentennial festivities.



The veterans from the American Legion 1st Sgt. David H. McNerney Post 0658 honored the Medal of Honor recipient and fellow military driving this Marine Corps Humvee M998A1 in the bicentennial parade. The Crosby Post Office was also named after the war hero.



Folks from The Alamo in San Antonio, Texas joined the celebration with real cannons from the historic location. The cannons were fired off to start the parade and all through the day to announce the 200-year celebration of the Crosby community.



It was probably a first for a Crosby parade, but Jewel the donkey wanted to show her community spirit and celebrate the 200th birthday. Jewel is a member of St. Francis Creative Farms Mobile Petting Zoo available to kids of all ages at the bicentennial celebration.



Phillip Chapman drives the refurbished McCormick Farmall 140 tractor from 1964 in the parade. The tractor originally belonged to his wife's grandfather, Lawrence Blanscet, and was a reminder of Americana and early Crosby farming that made the town what it is today.

Highlands

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Barbers Hill Dayton Press

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

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THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2023

MONT BELVIEU, TEXAS 77580

ON THE HILL

MB Eagle Pointe to host NERD CON October 21



OK, #MBTX... mark your calendars and find your superhero t-shirts! We are ONE MONTH away from Nerd Con at Eagle Pointe Recreation Complex. There are amazing celebrity guests, a record number of vendors, and a little something for everyone. And, best of all, it's FREE! We can't wait to see everyone Oct. 21 at EPRC from 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

MB Fire Prevention week 2023

The kitchen is the heart of every home. But, it is also the number one place for fires and injuries. That's why the focus of this year's Fire Prevention Week is staying safe in the kitchen. Be sure to keep an eye on the [Mont Belvieu Fire Department Facebook Page](#) for easy tips all week long. Plus, we're giving you some resources below that can help keep you and your family safe when you spend time in the kitchen.

Safety Tip Sheets
You can stay safe in the kitchen just by making a few simple changes when you cook. These tip sheets are full of quick and easy things you can do.
[Cooking Safety Tip Sheet \(PDF\)](#)
Electric Kitchen Appliance Safety Tip Sheet (PDF)
Kids Coloring Sheet
This week is a great time to talk with your kids about staying safe in the kitchen. Have them color this fun cooking safety sheet featuring Sparky the Fire Dog while you talk together about things they can do to help your family stay safe during meal times.

Fire Prevention Week 2023 - Cooking Safety Coloring Sheet (PDF)
You can find all PDF Documents at MontBelvieu.org.

Eagle Pointe Announces Fun Fall Programming

Tumbling with Stacey Svegliato

Next session is Sept. 5th - Nov. 30
Experience the magic of gymnastics with the expertise of local tumbling expert, Stacey Svegliato, who brings over 30 years of coaching mastery to Eagle Pointe. From beginners taking their first steps to elite students aiming for the stars, Stacey's classes cater to a wide range of skill levels. Through her carefully crafted programs, your child will not only develop agility, motor skills, and flexibility but also discover the joy of movement in a supportive and encouraging environment. Join us for an unforgettable summer of growth and achievement!
Thursdays at 10:30 a.m.
Ages 3-6 years old \$85 per tumbler per month

Local STEM students and teacher attend Tapia Camps at Rice University

Barbers Hill ISD and Goose Creek CISD have a few students and a teacher kicking off the school year with new-found skills and confidence in the classroom thanks to a summer of learning and growth at Rice University's prestigious camps hosted by The Tapia Center for Excellence and Equity in Education.

The Tapia Camps, supported in part by Exxon-Mobil, are available to rising 8th-12th graders and feature a five-night, six-day residential experience with a challenging STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) curriculum. Campers experiment with hands-on STEM projects that simulate real world problems. This summer, campers completed a brand-new project developed by the Tapia Center and ExxonMobil that explored safe storage of carbon dioxide underground in order to slow climate change. Another project



Barbers Hill ISD Student

challenged students to design their own computational algorithm for equitable college admissions. During camp, students also enhance their communication and team building skills by learning how to simplify complicated STEM ideas through completion of an end-of-camp oral presentation – all while experiencing life on a college campus.

“The Tapia Camps deliver high quality education and mentorship to

students of all backgrounds. We help them develop their STEM skills, improve their communication abilities, build confidence, and connect with peers and role models who share their backgrounds and interests,” said Dr. Paul Hand, director of the Tapia Camps at Rice University. “Additionally, we provide professional development programs to equip educators with tools and skills to be more successful with student



GooseCreek CISD Student

engagement in the classroom, promoting a more impactful educational experience for all.”

The professional development camp for educators of all subjects and levels provides participants the tools to implement project-based learning—a set of techniques that encourage hands-on, engaging experiences—in their classrooms. Teachers who complete the program earn Continuing Professional Education (CPE)

hours.

This summer, more than 500 students and educators from across Texas and beyond attended the camps. Individuals or school districts looking to register for summer 2024 can reach out to The Tapia Center at tapiacenter@rice.edu or 713-348-5182. Corporations and charitable foundations interested in sponsorship opportunities may also reach out to The Tapia Center for more information.

Abbott, Lawmakers may target “Colony Ridge,” a Liberty County housing development, during Special Session

By Paul Cobler
Houston Landing writer

LIBERTY COUNTY – A massive, controversial development northeast of Houston has become a flashpoint for conservative concerns about immigration and public safety, and soon could share the spotlight during an upcoming special session of the Texas Legislature.

“Serious concerns have been raised about what's going on in this Colony Ridge area,” Gov. Greg Abbott told conservative radio host Dana Loesch last Tuesday. “We're trying to put together as much information as possible so that I can add this to the special session.”

Abbott was responding to [weeks of reports in conservative media](#) alleging Colony Ridge, a development started in 2011 in Liberty County, is a “magnet for illegal immigrants” and potential hotbed for drug cartel activity.

In its early days, the development often was compared to a “colonia,” or an unincorporated community typically found near the border with Mexico that lacks essential services.

The reports have caught the eye of Republican politicians from Texas, including Abbott and Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick, who have begun calling attention to Colony Ridge in recent days.



Governor Gregg Abbott has called for a 3rd Special Session of the 88th Legislature to meet this week.

Trey Harris, who operates the development along with his brother, John Harris, said “the vast majority of what you have heard is incorrect or false information.”

The pair are prominent GOP donors, including to Abbott, and say the controversy grew out of a local dispute over the development's rapid growth. Neither has been contacted by Abbott about his concerns, they said Tuesday morning.

It is unclear what action Abbott wants legislators to take on the development during the upcoming special session, but he said during the interview he is concerned Colony Ridge is flouting the state's ban on so-called “sanctuary cities.”

Patrick, president of the Texas Senate, said he is considering holding hearings about Colony Ridge during the special session.

State lawmakers have been expecting to gather

in Austin Oct. 9 for a special session centered around school vouchers, although Abbott has not released an agenda for the session.

In a letter to state lawmakers, John Harris, president of Colony Ridge, Inc., called the reports of thousands of immigrants in the country illegally and cartel activity nothing more than “salacious rumors and lies” and invited them to tour the community later this week to see for themselves.

“We have followed the law fully, including: screening all customers for potential terrorism/narcotics trafficking, following anti-discrimination laws, and adhering to all county ordinances, environmental regulations, and model subdivision rules,” Harris wrote. “Further, allegations of drug cartel connections to Colony Ridge are preposterous and unfounded.”

Liberty County officials say action is needed, but not to combat immigrants or to declare war on a drug cartel compound. Estimates on the community's population vary, but officials agree the population has exploded in recent years and the county is struggling to keep up.

“We're just seeing an influx of people,” said Billy Knox, a deputy chief with the Liberty County Sheriff's Office. “I think some of the people are reporting there's 75,000 people in here. ... We only have three people out here for 75,000 people. The main concern is being able to provide deputies to cover the area.”

Knox said there may be cartel activity in Liberty County, but nothing that is out of the ordinary for any other county in the border state of Texas.

Liberty County Judge Jay Knight said, to his knowledge, the Colony Ridge developer has followed every local and state law.

The comments from Harris and county officials have done little to tamp down on the political fervor surrounding the development, which advertises in Spanish low-cost options to buy property and build a home. Harris is the president Colony Ridge, Inc., but the community advertises under the name Terrenos Houston.

All 25 Republican

members of Texas' U.S. House of Representatives delegation on Saturday sent a [letter to Abbott and Patrick](#) claiming the community holds a “staggering illegal immigrant population,” failing public safety infrastructure and “continuous drug cartel activity.” The letter encourages Abbott and Patrick to investigate the community and take action, if necessary.

Patrick on Thursday published his findings from a [trip to Colony Ridge](#) last week. The lieutenant governor said he drove through and flew over the 50-square-mile property and called it the largest and fastest-growing development he has seen in Texas. Developers estimate 40,000 people live in the community, a number that could surpass 100,000 within a decade, Patrick wrote.

Patrick also noted environmental concerns around the development and said the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality would investigate the community. Some of the reports allege the community lacks proper infrastructure for sewage and water and is a public health risk.


In his letter, Harris also refuted that allegations, writing the subdivisions have fully engineered sewer, water, power and road infrastructure.

Reprinted from Houston Landing with permission.

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OPINION

State Sen. Borris Miles



The Problem with School Vouchers

Once again, the Texas leadership is trying to divert taxpayer dollars for public education to private schools. They are calling it “school choice,” but it is really another voucher program that the Legislature has rejected for nearly two decades. I have always and will continue to oppose school vouchers and advocate for fully funding our public education system, which includes increasing the basic allotment per student for public education and teacher pay raises.

Historically, vouchers and private schools were utilized to sidestep the U.S. Supreme Court’s 1954 order to integrate public education. Many fear that taxpayer-funded vouchers may become the catalyst for the state of Texas to revisit that dark history. Additionally, there are several issues and concerns that families who reside within historically underserved communities face that make vouchers dangerous to neighborhood schools.

Taxpayer-funded vouchers will not be accessible to the majority of poor and middle-class students and families. Private schools have no legal requirement or obligation to enroll any student, including a student with a taxpayer-funded voucher. Admission choices will belong solely to these schools, not the parents. For example, private schools typically do not admit students with special education needs because they are not prepared to provide those essential and vital services.

Private schools will not be affordable to the majority of poor to middle-class students and their families, even with vouchers. Tuition at many private schools in Houston can often be as high as \$30,000 per year. If a taxpayer-funded voucher is valued at \$8,000 to \$10,000, how does that affect the school choice opportunity for a student from a poor or middle-income working-class family?

Taxpayer-funded vouchers will take tax dollars from everyone’s underfunded public school. The reality is that the vast majority of Texas students will remain in public schools, where the per-student funding is already more than \$4,000 below the national average. Within a few years, as much as \$1 billion could likely be diverted from our public schools.

Providing a high-quality public education should always be a priority in a state as large and diverse as Texas. At times, that task may be challenging. But as leaders, we must stay committed to providing quality, affordable and sustainable public education options for all Texans, especially those with modest means who may not have any other options.

Thank you again for allowing me to serve as your Texas State Senator for District 13. If you need assistance navigating the local, state, or federal agencies of government, do not hesitate to contact one of my offices. We are here to serve you!

Keep the Faith, Keep the Fight!
Borris L. Miles
Texas State Senator
District 13

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



Home Country
with Slim Randles

State Fair Season

The calendar, and the quality of the air we breathe, insist it’s state fair season. The competition is great to watch, no matter what it is. You know, like trying to knock down a pile of cinder blocks with a ping pong ball at 50 feet.

But there is also love and devotion and great pride and tremendous work on display there. With the kids and their prize animals.

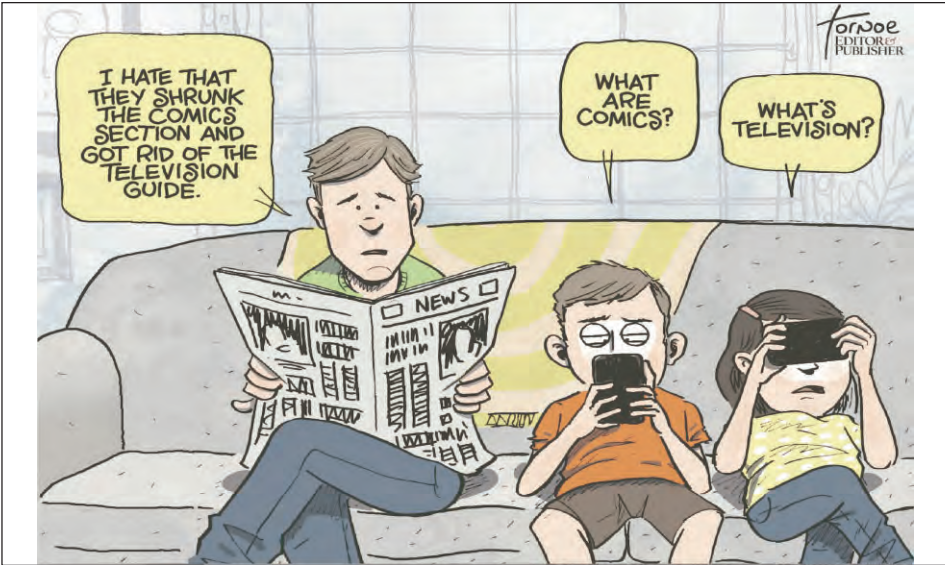
Over the years I’ve interviewed a ton of these kids for whichever newspaper I was working for, and it’s never ceased to amaze me. You give a kid a calf, or help him or her work to earn one, and then the work begins. There’s the brushing and polishing, and feeding scientifically to bring out the best in the animal’s conformation. And a kid must halter break the calf, which isn’t easy at all, so that 700 pounds of beef follows you around on a leash.

And the kid gives hugs and snuggles from the growing calf, and gets them back in spades. That’s the part I don’t understand. You see, if the calf and the kid have worked together well enough over the past season, the calf will bring big bucks to the owner at the big sale. Restaurant chains pay premium dollars to say their Flamo Burgers are made from prize-winning cattle.

So the kid and the calf are separated for good, one going on to college more affordably now, and the other to the Flamo Burger factory.

And there are tears, of course, and deep questions to be asked, but the bottom line is that a beef in great condition can pay for a lot of tuition.

Here’s a little something we can do to help:
<https://www.ktvu.com/news/online-ways-you-can-help-those-affected-by-the-lahaina-fire>



★

STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

By Gary Borders



Texas employment at historic high, but joblessness rate is up

TEXAS EMPLOYMENT AT HISTORIC HIGH, BUT JOBLESS RATE IS UP

For the 30th consecutive month Texas showed job growth, reaching just under 14 million jobs and outpacing the nation in its annual rate of employment growth, according to the Texas Workforce Commission.

“Our world-class Texas workforce has grown by more than 400,000 jobs over the last year, thanks largely to the energizing job creation by our private-sector employers,” said TWC commissioner Aaron Demerson. “This continued growth highlights TWC’s unwavering commitment to fostering collaboration and building partnerships with Texas employers across the state.”

At the same time, the state’s unemployment rate is tied for fifth-worst in the country at 4.1%, which is below the national average of 3.8%, the Texas Tribune reported. The jobless rate still has not returned to pre-pandemic levels, according to data from the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas.

The higher jobless rate reflects a growing labor force due to increased population growth and fewer workers leaving the state, according to economic experts.

“Very tight labor markets, like what we’ve seen at the national level, are actually detrimental to matching workers to jobs because it’s so hard for employers to hire,” said Pia Orrenius, with the Dallas Federal Reserve office.

HEGAR: TEXAS ECONOMY CHUGGING ALONG

Comptroller Glenn Hegar says lawmakers are likely to have billions of dollars more than anticipated to spend as they go into another special session, The Dallas Morning News reported. However, though he has increased his revenue projection for the state by nearly \$5 billion over earlier projections, he warns that there are “dangers to the economic outlook.”

Hegar said his economic outlook does not assume a recession is imminent, but that possibility is “very real.” His current forecast indicates the



state will finish the two-year budget cycle with \$18.5 billion in unspent discretionary funds.

Lawmakers entered their third special session on Monday to consider Gov. Greg Abbott’s proposal for school choice, widely known as vouchers, and increased border security. Other topics may be added later.

ERCOT SEEKING TO REGULATE NEW INDUSTRIAL CONSUMERS

The Electric Reliability Council of Texas is seeking to require large electric consumers to get its approval before connecting to its grid, The News reported. Opponents of the proposal say it is unprecedented and could damage the state’s ability to attract large new businesses to the state.

Under ERCOT’s proposal, any new facility that consumes an average peak of 75 megawatts would need its OK before getting power from the grid. That is enough electricity to power 15,000 homes, according to The News.

The proposed regulation, which is months away from final approval, comes due to the influx of large data centers, including cryptocurrency mining facilities that gobble up electricity from a grid that has become increasingly strained during both winter storms such as Uri in 2021 and last summer’s intense heat wave.

Cryptominers and data centers differ from traditional power users in that they can turn power on and off almost immediately to take advantage of fluctuations in power prices. Some crypto

centers made millions of dollars over the summer by voluntarily cutting usage when the grid is approaching peak levels.

“Many large loads that have connected to the system within the past two years are capable of going from full consumption to no consumption (or the reverse) in five minutes or less,” ERCOT spokeswoman Trudi Webster said in an email to The News.

HISTORIC FUNDING FOR TEXAS SEAPORTS

The Texas Transportation Commission has approved \$200 million for Texas seaports, the first funding of its kind in the state. The funding comes from a bill passed in the last full legislative session and is intended for port development and infrastructure projects.

The funding goes toward 31 projects recommended by the Port Authority Advisory Committee, a nine-member body that represents the Texas port industry.

“Texas ports are a crucial link in the supply chain,” said Texas Transportation Commissioner Steven Alvis. “With the expansion of the Panama Canal, and under the governor’s direction, improving these port facilities along the Texas Gulf Coast helps support this key economic driver for our state and the nation.”

The state has two of the three largest ports in the country based on tonnage and drive \$450 billion in economic activity annually, according to TxDOT.

DSHS RECOMMENDS GETTING FLU VACCINES

All eligible Texans are urged by the Texas Department of State Health Services to get a flu shot as soon as possible. It takes about two weeks for the vaccination to be effective, experts say.

“Seasonal influenza presents a real public health threat to Texans, and immunization remains our best defense against serious flu illness,” said DSHS Commissioner Jennifer Shuford.

It is also both possible and safe to get a flu vaccine and an updated COVID-19 vaccine at the same time if one is due for both.

Approximately 36,000 Americans die each year from flu-related illness, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

TWO SOLAR ECLIPSES ON THE HORIZON FOR TEXANS

There are two solar eclipses coming up over Texas skies in the next six months, the Texas Standard reported, the first in less than a week. The “ring of fire” solar eclipse arrives on Oct. 14 when a halo of light will be visible around the moon but should be viewed through solar eclipse glasses.

Depending on cloud conditions, the annular — Latin for ring — eclipse will be visible in Texas about noon, primarily in the Hill Country and around San Antonio. The total eclipse will occur on April 8 of next year starting at 1:30 p.m., along a line in Texas from Del Rio to Texarkana.

★

THE POSTSCRIPT

By Carrie Classon

My Story

I’ve been thinking about forgiveness.

A lot has been said on the subject by people a lot smarter than I, so I don’t have anything valuable to add to the discussion at large, but I’ve been thinking of how it affects me, and what a powerful thing it is.

I’ve had very little to forgive compared to most people. People have always been kind to me. I am always astonished by how kind people have been—for no reason. As a young person, I received help and advice from strangers at every turn.

As I got older, I lived in different places and continued to meet a wide variety of people from different cultures, with different experiences, and time after time, people were kind to me when they had no reason to be. They were kind because it was who they were.

But very occasionally, I’ve been treated poorly. It usually takes me a long time to even realize it. I always assume I have made some dreadful mistake and, as soon as that is cleared up, their behavior will change.

When it turns out I am wrong—that no change on my part will change them in the slightest way—then I tend to get very hurt. Probably because I am so spoiled by the kindness of others, this less-than-charitable behavior strikes me to the core.

A few months back, I wrote a column about a friend who hurt my feelings. He had written a long essay and quoted my column about finding beauty in unexpected places. He accused me of being an idealist, someone who would rationalize mass shootings and natural disasters. He said I’d go “looking for a pony in a pile of horse poop.” He urged his readers not to be like me. It made me feel awful.

I wondered what I had done to cause him to write such a mean-spirited thing about me, and (as usual) I got very hurt.

But then I did something new. I gathered those feelings, and I did something with them. I took his point of view, and I wrote a story about a man who believed as my friend did. I tried to imagine what might happen to that man that could cause him to change his mind.

Writing that story put me inside this friend’s head in a way I had never been before. He annoyed me, but he also touched me, and I came to appreciate him in a new way—even if he was only a fictional character.

And this is my new idea about forgiveness.

Sometimes—most of the time—I can never know what causes people to say hurtful things. I don’t know why friends betray me or strangers curse at me on the street. These things have happened and will probably happen again.

My new idea is to make up a story.

My story will give that person a reason to be so hurt or angry that they would do these things. My story will help me to empathize with them, even though I know my story is fiction. Because even without a made-up story, I will make assumptions about why that person was unkind, and those assumptions will almost certainly be fiction—I will just imagine they are true. So I might as well make up a better story, a more compassionate story.

Yesterday, I wrote a note to this friend who had been unkind. I thanked him for the inspiration. He had no recollection of what he had written.

And that might just be the best part of the story.

Till next time, Carrie

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Water District

Notice of Public Hearing on Tax Rate

The NEWPORT MUNICIPAL UTILITY DISTRICT will hold a public hearing on a proposed tax rate for the tax year 2023 on Thursday, October 19, 2023, at 4:30 p.m. at 16401 Country Club Drive, Community Room (next to Fitness Room), Crosby, Texas 77532. Your individual taxes may increase at a greater or lesser rate, or even decrease, depending on the tax rate that is adopted and on the change in the taxable value of your property in relation to the change in taxable value of all other property. The change in the taxable value of your property in relation to the change in the taxable value of all other property determines the distribution of the tax burden among all property owners.

Visit [Texas.gov/PropertyTaxes](https://www.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.

FOR the proposal: DeLonne L Johnson, Deborah Florus, R. Gary Hasse, Margarette Chasteen
AGAINST the proposal: None
PRESENT and not voting: None
ABSENT: Earl B Boykin

The following table compares taxes on an average residence homestead in this taxing unit last year to taxes proposed on the average residence homestead this year.

	Last Year	This Year
	Adopted	Proposed
Total tax rate (per \$100 of value)	\$0.60230 /\$100	\$0.60230 /\$100
Difference in rates per \$100 of value		\$0.00000 /\$100
Percentage increase/decrease in rates(+/-)		0.00%
Average appraised residence homestead value	\$223,775.00	\$247,273.00
General homestead exemptions available (excluding 65 years of age or older or disabled person's exemptions)	\$0.00	\$0.00
Average residence homestead taxable value	\$223,775.00	\$247,273.00
Tax on average residence homestead	\$1,347.80	\$1,489.33
Annual increase/decrease in taxes if proposed tax rate is adopted (+/-) and percentage of increase (+/-)		\$141.53 10.50%

NOTICE OF TAXPAYERS' RIGHT TO ELECTION TO REDUCE TAX RATE

If the district adopts a combined debt service, operation and maintenance, and contract tax rate that would result in the taxes on the average residence homestead increasing by more than 8 percent, the qualified voters of the district by petition may require that an election be held to determine whether to reduce the operation and maintenance tax rate to the voter-approval tax rate under Section 49.23603, Water Code.

Newport MUD proposes to use the tax increase for the purpose of debt service payments and operations and maintenance of the utility system.

The 86th Texas 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.

Should you have any questions concerning this notice, please contact the tax office at 281-482-0216.

The Property Tax Assistance Division at the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts provides property tax information and resources for taxpayers, local taxing entities, appraisal districts and appraisal review boards.

For more information, visit our website:
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Heart Screening,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Foundation, has raised over \$1,000,000 to pay for screenings for high school athletes. Scott is a Rotarian at North Shore in Channelview, and he often gets support for his cause from Rotary clubs.

The EKG test is simple and inexpensive, Scott said, and looks for hidden heart defects that might require further treatment. If not detected, an athlete might suffer from SCA, or Sudden Cardiac Arrest, and die.

In his crusade, Scott has been able to get the Texas Legislature to pass HB76, the Cody Stephens bill, which provides parents an opportunity to opt for screening for their child athlete.

Scott told the Rotarians that in addition to paying for screenings, the Foundation has been able to buy 91 ECG machines for districts that want a permanent capability. These machines test for both structural and electrical problems with the heart.

If an athlete suffers a SCA, he can be revived with an AED machine. In Texas, all sporting events are required to have this machine present. TV viewers watched a Cincinnati football game last year, when Lamar Hamlin was revived with such a machine, saving his life. The son of LeBron James, Bronnie, also suffered a SCA attack and was revived.

Scott estimated that since its inception, the Cody Stephens Foundation has saved 196 student lives. Even in the last month before his talk, the Foundation screened 1312 students. A total of 172,000 have been screened with the help of the Foundation, Scott said.

In support of this work, the Highlands Rotary Club donated \$1500 for future screenings, and thanks Scott for his work to save lives.

★

HIGHLANDS ROTARY CLUB NEWS



New members welcomed



New members inducted into Highlands Rotary Club this year. L to R Andy Scott, past president; new member Ricky Garcia; Rotary 5890 Asst. Governor Bryan Clements; and new member Connie Russell. Welcome.

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Water District

Notice of Public Hearing on Tax Rate

The NEWPORT MUNICIPAL UTILITY DISTRICT DEFINED AREA NO. 1 will hold a public hearing on a proposed tax rate for the tax year 2023 on Thursday, October 19, 2023, at 4:30 p.m. at 16401 Country Club Drive, Community Room (next to Fitness Room), Crosby, Texas 77532. Your individual taxes may increase at a greater or lesser rate, or even decrease, depending on the tax rate that is adopted and on the change in the taxable value of your property in relation to the change in taxable value of all other property. The change in the taxable value of your property in relation to the change in the taxable value of all other property determines the distribution of the tax burden among all property owners.

Visit [Texas.gov/PropertyTaxes](https://www.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.

FOR the proposal: Margarette Chasteen, DeLonne L Johnson, Deborah Florus, R. Gary Hasse
AGAINST the proposal: None
PRESENT and not voting: None
ABSENT: Earl B Boykin

The following table compares taxes on an average residence homestead in this taxing unit last year to taxes proposed on the average residence homestead this year.

	Last Year	This Year
	Adopted	Proposed
Total tax rate (per \$100 of value)	\$1.40000 /\$100	\$1.40000 /\$100
Difference in rates per \$100 of value		\$0.00000 /\$100
Percentage increase/decrease in rates(+/-)		0.00%
Average appraised residence homestead value	\$0.00	\$0.00
General homestead exemptions available (excluding 65 years of age or older or disabled person's exemptions)	\$0.00	\$0.00
Average residence homestead taxable value	\$0.00	\$0.00
Tax on average residence homestead	\$0.00	\$0.00
Annual increase/decrease in taxes if proposed tax rate is adopted (+/-) and percentage of increase (+/-)		\$0.00 0.00%

NOTICE OF TAXPAYERS' RIGHT TO ELECTION TO REDUCE TAX RATE

If the district adopts a combined debt service, operation and maintenance, and contract tax rate that would result in the taxes on the average residence homestead increasing by more than 8 percent, the qualified voters of the district by petition may require that an election be held to determine whether to reduce the operation and maintenance tax rate to the voter-approval tax rate under Section 49.23603, Water Code.

There were no residential homesteads on either January 1, 2022, or January 1, 2023, therefore the tax that would have been imposed on a residential homestead is \$0.00. Due to this the tax election rate is not applicable for 2023 tax year.

The Defined Area No. 1 tax rate above includes the Newport tax rate of \$0.60230.

The 86th Texas 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.

Should you have any questions concerning this notice, please contact the tax office at 281-482-0216.

The Property Tax Assistance Division at the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts provides property tax information and resources for taxpayers, local taxing entities, appraisal districts and appraisal review boards.

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Water District

Notice of Public Hearing on Tax Rate

The NEWPORT MUNICIPAL UTILITY DISTRICT DEFINED AREA NO. 2 will hold a public hearing on a proposed tax rate for the tax year 2023 on Thursday, October 19, 2023, at 4:30 p.m. at 16401 Country Club Drive, Community Room (next to Fitness Room), Crosby, Texas 77532. Your individual taxes may increase at a greater or lesser rate, or even decrease, depending on the tax rate that is adopted and on the change in the taxable value of your property in relation to the change in taxable value of all other property. The change in the taxable value of your property in relation to the change in the taxable value of all other property determines the distribution of the tax burden among all property owners.

Visit [Texas.gov/PropertyTaxes](https://www.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.

FOR the proposal: Margarette Chasteen, DeLonne L Johnson, Deborah Florus, R. Gary Hasse
AGAINST the proposal: None
PRESENT and not voting: None
ABSENT: Earl B Boykin

The following table compares taxes on an average residence homestead in this taxing unit last year to taxes proposed on the average residence homestead this year.

	Last Year	This Year
	Adopted	Proposed
Total tax rate (per \$100 of value)	\$0.00000 /\$100	\$1.40000 /\$100
Difference in rates per \$100 of value		\$1.40000 /\$100
Percentage increase/decrease in rates(+/-)		0.00%
Average appraised residence homestead value	\$0.00	\$0.00
General homestead exemptions available (excluding 65 years of age or older or disabled person's exemptions)	\$0.00	\$0.00
Average residence homestead taxable value	\$0.00	\$0.00
Tax on average residence homestead	\$0.00	\$0.00
Annual increase/decrease in taxes if proposed tax rate is adopted (+/-) and percentage of increase (+/-)		\$0.00 0.00%

NOTICE OF TAXPAYERS' RIGHT TO ELECTION TO REDUCE TAX RATE

If the district adopts a combined debt service, operation and maintenance, and contract tax rate that would result in the taxes on the average residence homestead increasing by more than 8 percent, the qualified voters of the district by petition may require that an election be held to determine whether to reduce the operation and maintenance tax rate to the voter-approval tax rate under Section 49.23603, Water Code.

There were no residential homesteads on either January 1, 2022, or January 1, 2020, therefore the tax that would have been imposed on a residential homestead is \$0.00. Due to this the tax election rate is not applicable for 2023 tax year.

The Defined Area No. 2 tax rate above includes the Newport MUD tax rate \$0.60230.

The 86th Texas 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.

Should you have any questions concerning this notice, please contact the tax office at 281-482-0216.

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To advertise in the Business Directory, please call 713-266-3444 for details

Czech Fest attracts crowd,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



The auctioneer and helpers lead the live auction in hopes of bringing in thousands of dollars to support the efforts of Sacred Heart Catholic Church and school.

built the school in 1946 and then added a new church hall and we just couldn't handle the volume of people there, so we moved it to the fairgrounds," he recalled.

Most Catholic churches call theirs a bazaar, but Janak said the Crosby church has called theirs the Czech Fest named after the large contingent of Czechs who migrated to the town in the early 1800s.

"We get people that aren't Catholics that aren't parishioners who come for the music and the food," he said.

They received a boost from the Czech Center Museum Houston, also known as Czech Cultural and Community Center who promoted the event through their contacts on Facebook and other social media.

There's something for everyone to do including booths for the children, bouncy houses, cake walks, and much more while the adults are bidding at the live auction.

"Our local businesses support us with their donations for the auction," he said gratefully.

While he's been leading the fundraiser for the last dozen years, he said it still takes a good bit of planning to get the fundraiser together.

"We start just after the Fourth of July with meetings about every two weeks planning out the event," he said.

Licenses must be secured for liquor, from the fire marshal, and many others before an event of that size can be executed.

"It has to be notarized, sent to the state, and we also deal with the diocese when executing contracts," he said.

In years past, Czech dancers used to attend the festival as well, but many of them have aged past their dancing days.

Janek's kolache eating days are long gone, he said.

"When I lived in Hallettsville, another Czech community here in Texas, my grandmothers on both sides made them ever since I was a little kid. I can tell you honestly, I don't even want to look at another kolache," he laughed.

The money raised during the festival goes to support the school and the church. The school boasts an enrollment now over 125-plus, he said.

At one time, the school, which goes to sixth grade, hosted nuns as teachers. Lately, however, it has been lay teachers who educate the students.

"We're hoping to update the convent so we can host nuns again," he said.

To learn more about Sacred Heart Catholic Church and school, visit their website at shcrosby.org.

KNOW the signs
RECOGNIZE the patterns
END the cycle of
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OFFICE OF DISTRICT ATTORNEY
HARRIS COUNTY, TX

KIM OGG

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Water District

Notice of Public Hearing on Tax Rate

The HARRIS COUNTY MUNICIPAL UTILITY DISTRICT NO. 213-A will hold a public hearing on a proposed tax rate for the tax year 2023 on Wednesday, October 25, 2023 at 12:00 p.m. at the office of Coats Rose, P.C., 9 Greenway PLaza, Suite 1000, Houston, Texas 77046. Your individual taxes may increase at a greater or lesser rate, or even decrease, depending on the tax rate that is adopted and on the change in the taxable value of your property in relation to the change in taxable value of all other property. The change in the taxable value of your property in relation to the change in the taxable value of all other property determines the distribution of the tax burden among all property owners.

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.

FOR the proposal: Jacob Saour, W. Fritz Maxwell, Alexander Soler, James R Bowles, James Coursey
AGAINST the proposal: None
PRESENT and not voting: None
ABSENT: None

The following table compares taxes on an average residence homestead in this taxing unit last year to taxes proposed on the average residence homestead this year.

	Last Year	This Year
Total tax rate (per \$100 of value)	\$1.45000 /\$100 Adopted	\$1.43000 /\$100 Proposed
Difference in rates per \$100 of value		\$-0.02000 /\$100
Percentage increase/decrease in rates(+/-)		-1.38%
Average appraised residence homestead value	\$277,562.00	\$288,277.00
General homestead exemptions available (excluding 65 years of age or older or disabled person's exemptions)	\$0.00	\$0.00
Average residence homestead taxable value	\$277,562.00	\$288,277.00
Tax on average residence homestead	\$4,024.65	\$4,122.36
Annual increase/decrease in taxes if proposed tax rate is adopted (+/-) and percentage of increase (+/-)		\$97.71 2.43%

NOTICE OF TAXPAYERS' RIGHT TO ELECTION TO REDUCE TAX RATE
If the district adopts a combined debt service, operation and maintenance, and contract tax rate that would result in the taxes on the average residence homestead increasing by more than 8 percent, the qualified voters of the district by petition may require that an election be held to determine whether to reduce the operation and maintenance tax rate to the voter-approval tax rate under Section 49.23603, Water Code.

The 86th Texas 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.

Should you have any questions concerning this notice, please contact the tax office at 281-482-0216.

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Water District

Notice of Public Hearing on Tax Rate

The HARRIS COUNTY MUNICIPAL UTILITY DISTRICT NO. 213-B will hold a public hearing on a proposed tax rate for the tax year 2023 on Thursday, October 26, 2023 at 12:00 p.m. at Saltgrass Steak House located at 4400 East Freeway , Baytown, Texas 77521. Your individual taxes may increase at a greater or lesser rate, or even decrease, depending on the tax rate that is adopted and on the change in the taxable value of your property in relation to the change in taxable value of all other property. The change in the taxable value of your property in relation to the change in the taxable value of all other property determines the distribution of the tax burden among all property owners.

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.

FOR the proposal: Mark Prause, Stacy Lord, Jimmy Flowers
AGAINST the proposal: None
PRESENT and not voting: None
ABSENT: None

The following table compares taxes on an average residence homestead in this taxing unit last year to taxes proposed on the average residence homestead this year.

	Last Year	This Year
Total tax rate (per \$100 of value)	\$0.80000 /\$100 Adopted	\$0.73000 /\$100 Proposed
Difference in rates per \$100 of value		\$-0.07000 /\$100
Percentage increase/decrease in rates(+/-)		-8.75%
Average appraised residence homestead value	\$281,496.00	\$310,297.00
General homestead exemptions available (excluding 65 years of age or older or disabled person's exemptions)	\$0.00	\$0.00
Average residence homestead taxable value	\$281,496.00	\$310,297.00
Tax on average residence homestead	\$2,251.97	\$2,265.17
Annual increase/decrease in taxes if proposed tax rate is adopted (+/-) and percentage of increase (+/-)		\$13.20 0.59%

NOTICE OF TAXPAYERS' RIGHT TO ELECTION TO REDUCE TAX RATE
If the district adopts a combined debt service, operation and maintenance, and contract tax rate that would result in the taxes on the average residence homestead increasing by more than 8 percent, the qualified voters of the district by petition may require that an election be held to determine whether to reduce the operation and maintenance tax rate to the voter-approval tax rate under Section 49.23603, Water Code.

The 86th Texas 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.

Should you have any questions concerning this notice, please contact the tax office at 281-482-0216.

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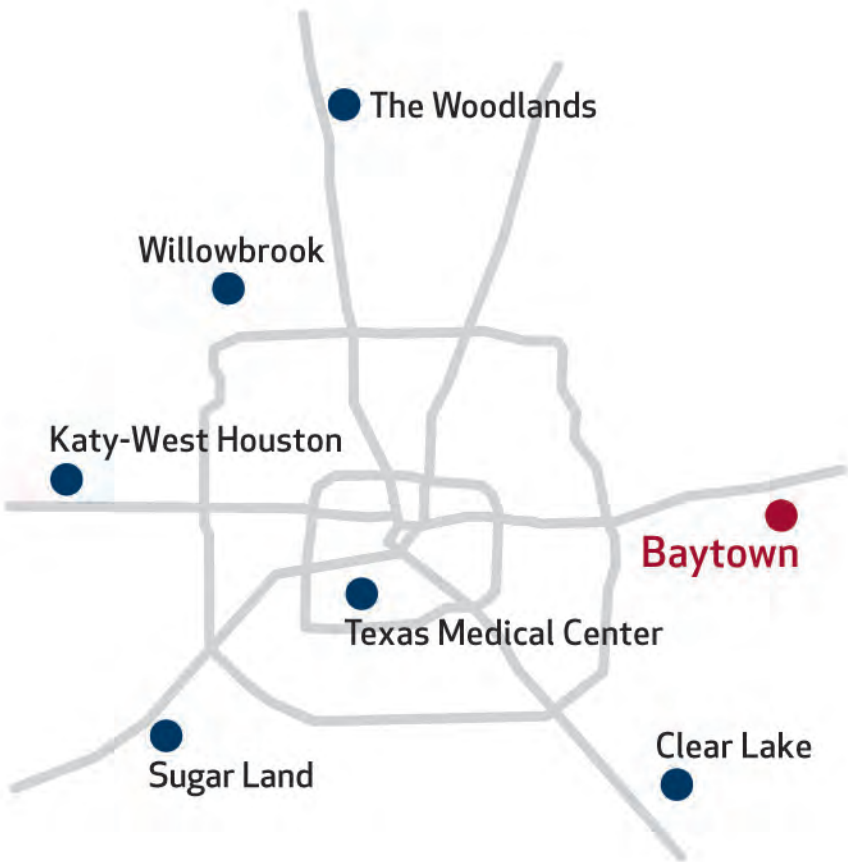
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