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Coming in February: BUSINESS & INDUSTRY SPECIAL EDITION

Featuring your Story and Ad in the STAR-COURIER and the **NORTH CHANNEL STAR. See** details on Page 5. Contact us at 713-266-3444 to be part of this Special Edition.

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THURSDAY, JANUARY 25, 2024

P.O. DRAWER 446, HIGHLANDS, TEXAS 77562

STARS

EPA set to take over Waste Pits remediation

County Commissioner Ramsey calls work "incompetent," vows to push for Action

EVENTS Waste Pits Meeting 1/23

The San Jacinto River Coalition will hold an important update meeting Tuesday, Jan. 23 at 6:30 pm at the Highlands Community Center. THEA will announce changes in the Superfund Clean-up.

TXDOT I-10 East **Public Meetings** Jan. 23-31

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is engaging the in a study to identify current and future transportation needs along I-10 East from I-69/US 59 to SH 99 (Grand Parkway). TxDOT is hosting a VIRTUAL

meeting with IN-PERSON options in multiple locations to share project information and receive input from the community.

In-Person Open Houses are from 5 – 7 p.m. TUESDAY, JAN. 23 Houston Food Bank Conference Center 535 Portwall St.

Houston, TX 77029 WEDNESDAY, JAN. 24 Lee College PAC 805 W. Texas Ave

Baytown, TX 77520

TUESDAY, JAN. 30 North Channel Branch Library 15741 Wallisville Rd. Houston, TX 77049

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 31 Barbers Hill ISD Leadership Support Center 9600 Eagle Drive

Mont Belvieu, TX 77523

The public meetings will be conducted in English and Spanish.

View the Virtual Public Meeting and take the online survey beginning Tuesday Jan. 23, 2024 at 5 p.m.: www.txdot.gov/projects/hearingsmeetings.html Or scan the QR code Questions? Please contact: (713) 802-5837 |

Stephan.Gage@txdot.gov

HIGHLANDS - County Commissioner Tom Ramsey joined THEA Executive Director Jackie Medcalf at a news conference last Thursday, to announce that the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) had issued a warning letter to the PRP (Potential Responsible Parties) that their Remedial Plan for cleanup of the Northern Waste Pits site was "deficient" and gave them 20 days to provide corrective date. After that date the EPA said they were prepared to take legal action to assume the responsibility for the cleanup, at the PRP's expense.

Ramsey, in a heated talk, said "I'm done with waiting. I'm done. It's not complicated. You have toxins in the river. Get rid of them."

THEA's Jackie Medcalf said the EPA has taken a big step that could result in the agency taking over the cleanup planning at the San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund Site.



PCT. 3 COUNTY COMMISSIONER TOM RAMSEY and THEA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JACKIE MEDCALF ANNOUNCE THE ACTION TAKEN BY THE EPA WARNING THE WASTE PITS RESPONSIBLE PARTIES THAT THEIR REMEDIAL PLAN IS DEFICIENT, AND EPA MAY TAKE OVER THE REMEDIATION WORK.

BACKGROUND

This month, the EPA's regional office sent a "Notification of Serious Deficiency" to International Paper Company and McGinnes Industrial Maintenance Corporation, the two companies that are

legally responsible for cleaning up the decadesold Superfund site. This rarely used regulatory tool gives the companies 20 days to come up with a plan that meets the EPA's requirements, or the government has the power to take over the planning process, order the cleanup and require the companies to pay the costs. This comes after the companies failed repeatedly to comply with the EPA's request for a plan that would remove all of the contaminated material, including dioxin, from the Northern Pit of the

NEXT STEPS

The EPA notified the responsible parties on January 5th that they had 20 days to address the agency's concerns. At that point, the EPA has the power to develop its own cleanup plan, known as the Pre-Final (90%) Remedial Design, take over the cleanup and require the companies to pay all costs. If the EPA determines that the companies are not complying with its orders, it also has the power to require them to pay triple damages.

STATEMENTS

Statement from Commissioner Tom Ramsey, Harris County 3rd Precinct 3: "I know as a regis-Professional tered Engineer with over 40 years of experience, it should not take five years to develop a quality plan to remediate the site. This

Continued. See WASTE PITS REMEDIATION, Page 5

Rotary Chili Feast includes unique Auction items

HIGHLANDS - Rotarians are in full preparation for their big annual Chili Feast, to be held next Satsocial hall of St. Jude's Catholic Church on S. Main Street.

A large crowd is expected this year, and people are anxious to get out and meet their friends in this 49th year tradition.

The event includes delicious chili dinners, cooked with Chester Stasnev's

world-famous recipe, a raffle for 16 prizes including a new 2024 Chevy SUV, a silent auction and a live urday, February 3rd at the auction. Chili Chairman GayLynn Melliorn pointed out that the live auction contains a number of desireable items, which are offered only once a year to

> This year the auction will include a Family

Continued. See ROTARY CHILI FEAST, Page 5

event participants.



The CHILI FEAST live auction will include several quilts by Connie Russell. These are always a favorite of the Auction bidders, and are unique and beautilful. AT LEFT, one of the quilts in previous year's auction.

Chamber hears of Bay Area Homeless Shelter

By David Taylor Managing Editor

HIGHLANDS - The Chamber of Commerce luncheon featured a talk about the Bay Area Homeless Shelter, by its VP Jim Wadzinski.

He told the story of a police chaplain and pastor riding shotgun with officers in ride-alongs noticed something bothersome to him. Rev. Mack Cook noticed a lot of homeless folks wandering around the streets of his hometown Baytown and he wanted to do something about it.

He began picking up some of them and bringing them home with him. Every weekend, he'd have five, six or seven people in his house who he and his



Jim Wadzinski spoke to the Highlands Chamber of Commerce membership last week as Vice President of the Board for Bay Area Shelter Services. The shelter is in a financial crunch and looking to the community for assistance.

wife Bettye fed and welcomed with open arms. After six months, however, they both knew this wasn't a good idea and began to look for a place where they Continued on 7. See BAY AREA **HOMELESS SHELTER**

Harvey Little retires after 31 years as Fire Chief

By David Taylor Managing Editor

HIGHLANDS - When Harvey Little left the scenic piney woods of Henderson in northeast Texas, he did so in pursuit of a better paying job. He didn't know that his journey to Houston would involve a firefighting career that would bring him notoriety and last more than three decades. Little retired from the department in December 2023 and will have more time to himself now after giving over the reins.

"I was hired to work in the polypropylene plant at Exxon in Baytown," he said. He spent his entire career for ExxonMobil in that same unit, advancing to supervisor in the process technology department and shifting to training supervisor his last 13 years. He took his retirement in 1999.

His interest in the fire department piqued after his son Michael Shane spent five years in the department after joining at age 15.

Continued on Page 7.



HARVEY LITTLE

RACHEL'S DINER Southern Cooking Buffet -- NOW OPEN

14280 FM 2100 (Across from Walmart) 281-462-7349





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GOOSE CREEK CISD NEWS

Head Tennis Coach at REL Receives the Groce Vision Award Receives TASPA Award

Congratulations to Brandon Funderburg, Head Tennis Coach at Robert E. Lee High School for receiving the Groce Vision Award at the Texas Tennis Coaches Association Convention (TTCA) in Decem-

This award is presented to a coach that demonstrates a clear vision for his team, players and program. This coach doesn't just keep that vision for tennis, but also for life. This coach clearly knows where their program is going and knows how to motivate his players and the people around him to get the job done! Coach Groce shared his vision in tennis while coaching Brownwood, Abilene, and Lubbock before being named the head women's tennis coach at Oklahoma State University. In 2009 this award was named after



him and was accepted by his daughter Cari Groce, the former Texas Texh women's tennis coach. Coach Ike Groce passed away in December of 1985. He was inducted into the

TTCA Hall of Fame in 1986.

TTCA special recognitions are chosen by committee from nominations submitted from the members of TTCA

GCCISD HR Director

Congratulations to Dr. Tyrone Sylvester, GCCISD Human Resources Director, who was awarded the Distinguished Service Award from the Texas Association of School Personnel Administrators. This is given to someone with exceptional leadership ability, a high degree of personal and professional integrity, and the ability to recruit members to the organization.

completed a Bachelors of Music from Stephen F. Austin State University, Masters of Education from Prairie View A&M University, and a Doctorate in Organizational Leadership from Grand Canyon University. His career started as a band director in Beaumont ISD in 1994. He then served eleven years in Alief ISD; four as an assistant principal and seven as the campus principal of O'Donnell Middle School. In 2008, Dr. Sylvester be-



resources and in 2015, he moved to Goose Creek CISD to serve the Baytown and Highlands school communities as a director of human resources.

Dr. Tyrone Sylvester gan his charge in Spring ISD as a director of human

LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT | DR. RANDAL O'BRIEN

Ribbon Cutting Resiliency Room at Peter. E. Hyland



GCCISD Board Members and Executive Council pose alongside BACODA and Peter E. Hyland Students and Staff at the Ribbon Cutting (Photos by Carrie Pryor-Newman)

By Norma Martinez Goose Creek CISD is delighted to announce the official opening of the Resiliency Room at the Peter E. Hyland Center. The ribbon-cutting ceremony for this significant addition to the school took place on December 12, 2023.

The Resiliency Room is a dedicated space designed to provide support and comfort for teen parents within the school community. This initiative was made possible through a collaborative partnership between the Goose Creek CISD Education Foundation, the S.E. Harris County Community Coalition, and BACODA.

The Resiliency Room is not just a physical space; it symbolizes a collective



GCCISD Superintendent talks to student about Resiliency Room (Photos by Carrie Pryor-Newman)

dedication to fostering resilience, empowerment, and a supportive atmosphere for all students facing the unique challenges of parenthood during their teen years.

Teen parents are invited to visit the Resiliency Room and witness the positive impact it can have on the lives of teen parents. Together with the community, GCCISD can continue to create spaces that promote inclusivity, understanding, and success for every student.

Quid Quo Pro GAFFE



The fourth special legislative session ended on December 5. I wanted to take a moment to reflect on the outcomes and the implications for Goose Creek CISD. Despite our collective hopes and efforts, I am disappointed to share the news that the session has ended without the agreeable results we had anticipated for the betterment of public education.

GCCISD works tirelessly to advocate for the needs of our students and staff. We engage with legislators, voice our concerns, and champion policies that enhance the quality of education in our community. Despite these efforts, the session concluded without the comprehensive support we had sought.

One of the major challenges school districts face is lack of state funding. Because the state holds the largest surplus in its history - \$33 billion - we had hoped for increased investment in our schools to address crucial needs such as classroom resources, teacher salaries, and facility improvements. Regrettably, the session failed to provide the basic financial commitments to adequately support the needs and further development of our educational institutions.

While the 2019 school finance and tax-cut legislation raised the basic student allotment to \$6,160, ending its plateau for a decade from 2009 to 2019, the Texas Legislature has not adjusted the basic allotment since then. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) estimates that inflation in Texas has been on the rise since mid-2021 and now is as high as 9 percent. Had the Legislature adjusted the basic allotment for inflation in 2022, as estimated by BLS annually, the basic allotment would be \$7,075, which is \$915 more than what each district is receiving per student. Based on the BLS inflation rates, this amounts to over \$22 million owed to school districts of our size with nearly 25,000 students in 2022. Must we wait another 10 years to receive another adjustment to meet the minimal needs of our students?

6.2K Basic Allotment (\$) 6K 5.6K 5.4K 5.2K 1.5 4.8K 2019-2020 2020-2021 2021-2022 Basic Allotment (\$) online Inflation Rate (%)

I call upon each of you to stand united in commitment to our children. Now, more than ever, we must advocate for the resources essential to nurturing our

> students' potential. Let us rally together, amplify our voices, and tirelessly fight for the future of public education. You can reach out to elected officials wilson@house.texas.gov, briscoe.cain@house.texas.gov, ana.hernandez@house.texas.gov, brandon.creighton@senate.texas.gov carol.alvarado@senate.texas.gov, mayes.middleton@senate.texas.gov and charge Spending them to support your children's public education and urge them to advocate for increased \$25,139 funding for public schools. The desire to fund \$9,827 private schools through tax-payer funding \$7,985 should in no way be related to the obligation to educate all children through the public education system as established by this nation from

its origin as a commitment to our desire to provide opportunity to all citizens for advancement in their personal lives through attainment of a quality basic educa-

Remember, the strength of Goose Creek CISD lies in our unity and resolve. Let's stand up for our students and ensure they receive the resources they need to thrive. After all, our children are the future of our community.

Thank you for your unwavering support.

Texas is ranked

out of all 50 states

for per-pupil spending

State

New York

Texas

Idaho

#1

#43

#50

Dr. Randal O'Brien Goose Creek CISD Superintendent of Schools

Lee Student Receives Four-Year **Scholarship to Vanderbilt University**

Robert E. Lee AVID is proud to announce that Au'Zjahnae Bruno, senior, matched with Vanderbilt University after applying for the QuestBridge Scholarship. Out of over 20,800 applicants, QuestBridge selected 6,683 Finalists to be considered for the QuestBridge National College Match Scholarship. This year, Quest-Bridge's 50 college partners matched with 2,242 Finalists, who are recognized as Match Scholarship Recipients. Au'Zjahnae Bruno has been admitted early to Vanderbilt University with a full four-year scholarship provided by the university. AVID students are supported in applying for scholarships like these ensure that an education at a top college is affordable for all stu-



dents and their families. AVID's mission is to close the opportunity gap by preparing all students for college readiness and success in a global society. Goose Creek CISD has AVID in all secondary campuses to support our students.

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





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Barbers Hill * Dayton PICS

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THURSDAY, JANUARY 25, 2024

Metrics show GCCISD Early Learning

MONT BELVIEU, TEXAS 77580

ON THE HILL

Academy Experiment is a Success By David Taylor

TXDOT I-10 East **Public Meetings** Jan. 23-31

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Friends of The Jones Library **Book Sale**

The Friends of the Jones Public Library will be hosting a BOOK SALE inside the library from January 22nd - 27th. Stop by throughout the week to find some great deals on gently used and previously loved books! The friends are clearing inventory to make room for the 2024 donations so the deals will be abundant! All proceeds go directly back into the library.

Jones Public Library 801 S Cleveland St Ste

Dayton TX 77535

The mission of the Jones Public Library is to enhance the scholarpursuit knowledge, to foster intellectual curiosity, to promote life-long learning, and cultural pro-Social development improves and enriches the lives of our users through information, education, and recreation. The Library values the citizens of Dayton Texas and responds to their needs by providing clean and inviting space, well-organized and upto-date collections, friendly professional service, and well-trained staff who are committed to the Library vision."A thriving Library that is an integral part of the lives within our community'

Managing Editor

No tests. No paperwork. Just fun learning.

It's an experience that has Goose Creek CISD parents clamoring to enroll their students in the Early Learning Academy for Pre-K students who qualify for the groundbreaking program.

Three years into the Early Learning Academy in Goose Creek Consolidated Independent School District and district officials are already seeing the success they had hoped for.

"We're focused on building their executive functioning, teaching the brain how to learn," said Susan Jackson, deputy superintendent of curriculum and instruction at Goose Creek CISD. "Once that executive functioning continues to grow and build, they continue to learn on their own at faster rates."

Keyshawn Battle, with Fueling Brains, the curriculum model adopted by Goose Creek CISD, explained how the program is gaining interest around the country.

"Those include nearby districts Sheldon, Pasadena, and Fort Bend and Lake Worth in the northern part of the state and we're expanding into Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Arkansas," Battle said.

"The absolute truth is no one looks like Goose Creek's," Battle said. "The way it looks, the way the curriculum is aligned."

John Strycker, a former superintendent, left his education job to work at Fueling Brains and was at Pumphrey Elementary observing last

"When I saw these young people operating independently, I wish I would have known what I know now 20 years ago," he said. "I would have been a much better leader. I was so focused on high



Dr. Randal O'Brien joins Pumphrey Pre-K students and a live rabbit (in front) in their daily learning experience.

school. It's in brain development," he said.

He said executive function is simply the way one organizes their thoughts and behav-

"You only have so many years, up to five, maybe seven years old. After that, its remediation," he said.

As a former superintendent of three different districts for over 20 years, Strycker said he had heard of the concept but never implemented it.

GCCISD has now gone through three cycles. The first was a pilot program and the data was overwhelmingly

The second year, it was expanded to a total of three campuses.

Last year, Hopper Primary School was added to the list. Now the locations cover the north, south, east, and west of the district.

Enrollment is limited to those who meet federal requirements for pre-K including a second language spoken in the home, free and reduced lunch, homelessness, foster care, Texas STAR program, or child of military.

Any additional seats not filled in the classrooms are open for low, tuition-based

The state of Texas only funds pre-K for a half day, but GCCISD has opted to pay the balance for the full day.

In the Winter 2023 edition of the Goose Creek CISD At A Glance magazine, Dr. Norma Martinez, GCCISD director of communications, cites numbers from the Kindergarten Readiness Data from 2021-2022 that show 82.4 percent of students who attended PK were ready for kinder versus the 62.0 percent of those who did not attend.

"We understand that children develop at different rates, and our experienced teachers tailor their approach to meet each child's unique needs, focusing on movement and the different sides of the brain," she said.

The program is the brainchild of Superintendent Dr. Randal O'Brien.

"I was blessed to be selected for an executive leadership training with Dr. Bob Thompson, and Elvis Arterbury about 10 years ago. It was unique in that it's a yearlong, professional development offered to CEOs and superintendents." O'Brien said. The 40-member cohort met in Beaumont every month for three days-Thursday, Friday, and Saturday—and they learned from other districts.

Thompson had a strong belief that they needed to go see how education is done in another state and he selected New York. Cohort members saw how pub ed performed in the Bronx, Harlem, and other boroughs.

In the Pet Vet room, students have visitors like a life-like gorilla and

elephant in the classroom with them. The additional props allow students

One school, in Times Square, was a vertical cam-

"In Texas, we want land to go with our schools because we want outdoor activities," he said, but the Times Square school had none. The eightstory building housed a different grade on each floor. PE classes and recess were on the top floor or the roof.

They walked over to Columbia University where a psychology professor friend of Thompson's gave a lecture on brain science including left brain right brain executive function.

"We had never heard of this, and I carried that around for several years wondering how I could bring that to our school district," O'Brien explained. Years later they visited

Dallas school where they experienced play learning, but O'Brien didn't like the fidelity of the programming.

O'Brien was having lunch with another professor friend who listened to his thoughts and struck gold.

"We're having lunch, and he tells me he knows of a professor working with a company in Canada that would meet that need," he said.

O'Brien met Dr. Anil Karim who presented him with the facts and figures he need-

to fantasize travel outside their community. ed to convince him there was something legitimate to the research from Harvard and hard facts over a decade to show improvement.

> "It is scientific, based upon the research provided to us through a decade of that utilization in Canada," the superintendent said.

> With that, O'Brien got the approval from his executive council and then took it to the school board where Fueling Brains made a presentation.

> The board approved the measure after the presentation and for three years, the program has brought excitement and growth in the Early Learning Academy and the results are beginning to show in succeeding grade levels.

The program boasts more than 1,000 students spread across four campuses.

"It drew interest in employees, and we were able to hire some really top-notch educators to join us," O'Brien boasted.

The district also doubled their Pre-K numbers in one

"It's been a game changer. It's changing the trajectory of that four-year-old because they're no longer going to struggle the next three years with the content that's coming to them because they've learned how to learn," the superintendent said.

Mont Belvieu 2024 Calendar of Events

Saturday, January 27th, 2024 | 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. | City Park

Get your pole ready to catch some rainbow trout in the pond at City Park. Then, the race will be on to see who can land the biggest one! This great free event is open to everyone from 5 to 55+ with prizes in each age category. The City partners with Texas Parks and Wildlife for this event so no license is required. All you have to do is come to fish and have

Daddy Daughter Dance Friday, February 2nd, and Saturday, February 3rd, 2024 | Eagle Pointe Recreation Center

Fathers, come dance the evening away with your little angels! Join us for a lively dance party with a DJ, snacks, giveaways, photo ops, and a very special

Tickets for the 2024 dance go on sale January 2, 2024. Click here to purchase

Spring Sprint

Saturday, March 23, 2024 | 8:00

This event is a family 5K run/walk and kids fun run. The 5K course starts and ends at Mont Belvieu City Park. Run on City streets and sidewalks; finishing the last mile on the gravel trail around the City

Visit our Spring Sprint page for info & registration

Easter Egg Hunt Saturday, March 30th, 2024 | City Park, Little League Soccer Fields

You don't want to miss all the EGGcitement at Mont Belvieu's yearly Easter Egg Hunt. This event is held at the soccer fields at City Park on Eagle Drive and begins at 10:00 am. The event is broken into three age groups: 1-4-year-olds, 5-7year-olds, and 8-10-year-olds. That way, everyone is sure to have fun and get a lot of eggs! Children must be accompanied by an adult and they must bring their own baskets. After the event, families can stay

for refreshments and kids can have their

pictures made with the Easter Bunny.

Patriots Day Celebration Monday, April 1st, 2024 | 10:00 a.m. - 2:00

p.m. | City Park Celebrate our local heroes at the Annual Patriots Day Celebration in collaboration with the Chambers County Veterans Association! Join us for a day filled with military appreciation, thrilling activities, and heartfelt recognition of our service members in and

around Chambers County Enjoy games and giveaways for all ages, explore military vehicles at the touch-a-truck exhibit, get up close with local emergency response vehicles from Mont Belvieu Police & Fire Departments, and experience the excitement when a helicopter touches down at

the stage field. You have your marching orders! See you at the park on April 1st! Movies Under the Stars Lights, camera... action! The Mont Belvieu

Parks and Recreation Department brings the best of Hollywood to City Park with our familyfriendly outdoor film series. All of the shows are free and begin at dusk. Bring your own chairs and blankets; refreshments are available on site. Coolers are permitted but alcohol is not nitted in the park

Spring Outdoor Celebration Saturday, April 27, 2024 City Park

Join us at City Park for a fun-filled day of outdoor exploration. Enjoy kayaking, archery, dog training, a wild bird show, outdoor education, and a lot more. Plus, you can learn fire safety with the Mont Belvieu Fire Department and check out the Texas Parks and Wildlife Game Warden helicopter while you enjoy your day in the park. There's something for everyone at the Spring Outdoor

Celebration! Tea Party

Saturday, May 4th, 2024 | Eagle Pointe

Golf Course Pavilion Celebrate the favorite ladies in your life by inviting your mothers and daughters and friends to don frilly frocks and sip on cups of tea at an Eagle Pointe tea party.

Tickets coming Spring 2024. Rock the Park

Come out and rock City Park with us! Bring a lawn chair, your friends, your dogs (on

leashes, please), and your kids for a-rockin' good time! All concerts are FREE to attend and in addition to the great music, we also have food trucks and family-friendly activities. We can't wait for you to join us and make more

Mont Belvieu memories

Dive In Movies You've heard of a drive-in movie, but have you ever been to a DIVE-in movie? It's a splash-tastic time for the entire family! Everyone starts the evening with some tasty treats and splash time at the Eagle Pointe Recreation Center wave pool. Then, when the sun goes down, you'll want to stay in your tube and float your way to the best seat in the house to watch a blockbuster on the big screen. Let's face it, there's no better way to beat the

summer heat! July 4th Celebration

Tuesday, July 4th, 2024 | City Park Put on your best red, white, and blue, and join us for our annual July 4th Celebration! This vearly event is held at City Park on Eagle Drive and provides a day full of fun and food. The kids will love the moonwalks, rock climbing wall, face painters, and other attractions, while the grown-ups enjoy live music, delicious food vendors, and a washer pitching tournament. Then, when the sun goes down, you won't want to miss our magnificent patriotic fireworks

811 Day + Touch A Truck Saturday, August 10, 2024 from 9:00 a.m.

- 12:00 p.m. | City Park Join us at the Mont Belvieu City Park for a day 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.

Anything but a Boat Race Saturday, September 7, 2024 at 10:00

a.m.| City Park Get ready for a race like no other! Join us for the exhilarating Anything But A Boat Race, where participants will defy convention and race in vessels that are anything but traditional boats. Leave your expectations at the shore and embrace the creativity and ingenuity of this one-of-a-kind event. Details & registration will

be posted summer 2024. Walk-A-Thon

Saturday, October 5, 2024 from 8:00 a.m. -

12:00 p.m. | City Park Mark your calendars as the city of Mont Belvieu comes together for a meaningful cause. Our Walk-A-Thon fundraiser is dedicated to supporting a local fund, which offers crucial financial assistance to community members undergoing cancer treatments. During this

event, participants will have the chance to walk or run around the scenic City Park Amphitheater. For four hours, from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., each lap spans 0.25 miles - a small distance with a big impact. Your generous financial support makes all of this possible Whether it's a small contribution or more, every bit counts. Your ongoing dedication to our cause warms our hearts and fuels our mission to make a difference. Visit our Pledge Site to join the Walk-A-Thon and make your

Veterans Day 5k Fun Run & Ruck Saturday, November 9, 2024 | City Park Run with us in honor of those that served. We welcome you to join our fun run at Mont

Belvieu city park on Veteran's Day! Sign ups 1k Kids Fun Run Lace up those little sneakers & let the kids

run alongside some heroes as we celebrate their service. 0800 start | 5k Fun Run 5k Ruck Run / Fun Run

Grab your pack and join us for a salute to the brave men & women who've proudly served our nation in the military. • Men's weight: 50 pounds• Women's weight: 35 pounds0815 start Runners will receive dog-tag style medals at the finish line! This will not be a timed race

but a fun run. Volunteers

We couldn't make these events great without a little help and we appreciate everyone that wants to help & make a difference

Interested? Sign up coming soon Chili Cook-Off & Car Show

Saturday, November 16, 2024 | City Park Classics on classics. We want to see you show out in November with a classic chili cook off and a classic car show! Come check out the coolest hot rods while we judge some hot chiliChristmas on the Hill Parade

One of Mont Belvieu's biggest and most beloved events is the Christmas on the Hill Parade. This "can't miss" holiday event occurs on the first Sunday in December. You'll want to bring the entire family to see amazing floats, cool cars. marching bands, and more light up the night as they stream down Eagle Drive. And, you better not pout or cry, because you never know if Santa himself will come

> Visit our Parade page for more info. Breakfast with Santa

Saturday, December 14, 2024 Bring the family out and capture a special moment with Santa at our selfie station while we cater a tasty breakfast including a biscuit bar full of goodies. After breakfast, keep the kids engaged with a decorate-it-yourself ornament for

your tree TICKETS

Purchase your breakfast tickets below! Choose from 3 time allotments: • 8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. • 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. • 10:00 a.m. - 11:00

Tickets will go on sale Fall 2024. Buy your tickets in advance because this will sell out! Each person in

attendance will need a ticket. Santa in the City Santa Claus will be riding in style onboard one of the Mont Belvieu Fire Department engines through a

neighborhood near you! 2024 Dates TBD. Pictures with Santa Friday, December 13, 2023 | 5:00

p.m. - 7:00 p.m. Santa's last stop is at Eagle Pointe for a photo op where kids can pick up some cookies & milk after their photo with

This is a free event and no membership necessary. Cookies & milk are while supplies last. No tickets or preregistration needed





★ OPINION PAGE ★



Reimagining Plastic for the Future of Our Earth

Plastic has wrapped itself around everything we do. It keeps our food fresh, our medical supplies sterile, and gadgets affordable. It has provided immense value to the world, but like all of us, it is far from perfect. The plastic waste crisis has become increasingly worse, and plastic itself has caught the ire of environmentalists across the world. But is plastic bad, or are we just using the wrong resources to make it?

Traditional plastic is made primarily from petroleum, which takes over a million years to produce. We then turn that plastic into single-use products that we use for just a few minutes. After we're done, we throw that product away, where it lasts in the environment for hundreds of years and then breaks down into microplastics.

A million years to create, a few minutes of use, and hundreds of years to go away.

This is one of the worst examples of resource efficiency that we as human beings have managed to create. That's why about four years ago, I realized that there has to be a better way to do this. And so, I dove down a rabbit hole, researching the various ways we have tried to fix this problem. What I found was highly disappointing.

Why Recycling Isn't the Silver Bullet We Hoped For

Recycling seems like the logical fix, right? If we could just reuse all plastic for eternity, that would effectively fix the problem. Unfortunately, the 50-year recycling experiment we've conducted has proven that this solution just doesn't work.

Despite blue bins peppering curbsides across America, our recycling rates for plastic were under 5% in 2021 according to a report from Beyond Plastics. It turns out, not all plastics are created equal—or I should say, equally recyclable. The sorting process is complicated, the economic return is often lacking, and the quality of plastic degrades with each recycle. So, instead of an infinite loop, we've got a system that's more leaky sieve than full circle.

To make things worse, recycling is also exacerbating the microplastics problem. A recent study on a UK recycling facility showed that their wastewater contained up to 75 billion particles of microplastics per cubic meter. That translates to up to 6.5 million pounds of microplastics emitted from this single facility every year. It seems that we may have inadvertently created a worse problem in our attempt to find a solution.

The Not-So-Great Alternatives

Paper straws are one of the most hated products in recent memory. I have yet to hear a single person say they like them. But consumer dissatisfaction aside, are they actually more sustainable than plastic? A 2014 study by NC State University showed that when comparing the environmental impact of paper vs. plastic bags, paper was significantly worse. Paper bags use double the fossil fuels, create over four times as much waste, emit double the greenhouse gas, and use seventeen times as much water.

Glass is another alternative material with a much worse carbon footprint. It is much heavier and uses more energy to produce, making its overall carbon impact about 5 times worse than plastic. Additionally, the mining of the silica sand used to make glass can cause significant environmental damage.

The Obvious Solution

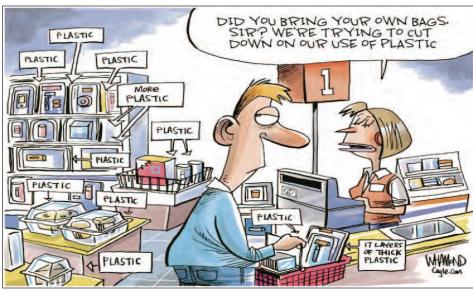
If the aforementioned alternatives don't work, and recycling doesn't either, what do we do? The solution lies in using renewable resources to create plastics that naturally compost or biodegrade quickly, and don't leave behind microplastics or natural chemicals. However, it is important that these natural resources don't create more problems than they solve: they can't compete with food sources, they must be available at a great enough scale to make a dent, and they can't be more expensive than petroleum.

Agricultural byproducts are the discarded materials left over from processing our food. Examples include rice husks, wheat straw, corn stover, and more. These materials are very inexpensive as there are very few uses for them, and they are also rich in cellulose, which can be the building block for bioplastic polymers. It is estimated that we generate 998 Million tons of agricultural waste every year. Globally, we produce 400 Million tons of plastic every year. We have more than enough of this feedstock to revolutionize the way the plastic supply chain is constructed and create the circular model that recycling was supposed to be.

Let's not demonize a material that has done a lot of good for the world. Instead, let's reimagine the way plastic is made. The fastest and most effective way to solve the plastic problem is to transition to agricultural byproducts instead of petroleum, creating zerowaste materials. We can go from petroleum plastics taking millions of years to create and thousands of years to get rid of, to plant-based plastics taking mere months to create, use, and disappear.

This isn't a pipe dream; it's science, it's economics, and it's a more thoughtful way to coexist with the stuff we make. At the end of the day, the plastic issue is a human issue—it's about how we value our resources, our planet, and ultimately, each other.

Dillon Baxter is co-founder and CEO of PlantSwitch, a company whose proprietary technology upcycles agricultural residues into a plant-based resin that is being used to make plastic products for publicly traded and Fortune 500 companies nationwide.



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS By Gary Borders

Voter Registration Deadline for Primary Approaches

The deadline to register to vote in the Texas Democratic and Republican primary elections is Feb. 5. Voters on March 5 will choose their nominees for president, U.S. Senator, all 38 U.S. House members from Texas, and a number of other state and local offices, from the Texas Supreme Court to district attorneys, sheriffs and county commissioners.

Any registered voter can cast a ballot in either party's primary election, but not both primaries in a single election cycle. Successful nominees in the primaries advance to the general election. Early voting begins on Feb. 20 and ends on March 1.

Anyone who wants to confirm their voter registration status can go to votetexas.gov.

RAZOR WIRE CASE GOES TO SUPREME COURT

The U.S. Justice Department last week asked the U.S. Supreme Court for an emergency ruling to allow Border Patrol agents to resume cutting razor wire installed by the state along the U.S.-Mexico border, The Dallas Morning News reported.

"Texas's placement of the wire near the riverbank in Eagle Pass has proved particularly problematic for Border Patrol agents," the justice department wrote in its plea. "By preventing Border Patrol agents from reaching noncitizens who have already entered the United States, Texas's barriers in Eagle Pass impede agents' ability to apprehend and inspect migrants under federal law."

Gov. Greg Abbott has accused President Joe Biden of impeding immigration enforcement.

"Americans and courts will reject Biden's hostility to immigration laws," Abbott posted on X. "Texas will continue to deploy National Guard to build border barriers and repel illegal immigrants."

COMMUNITY COLLEGES GET MILLIONS IN ADDITIONAL FUNDING

The state's community colleges are receiving millions in additional funding under a move to merit-based funding and a departure from funding based strictly on enrollment numbers, the Austin American-Statesman reported.

House Bill 8 was signed into law by Abbott in June.



Community colleges now are receiving state money based on how many degrees, certificates, transfers and "credentials of value" are awarded. The state budget is allocating \$683 million in additional funds to the state's 50 community college districts.

"It's a game changer, not just for bottom line revenue that will come to our colleges, which is sorely needed, but it is a game changer again because it will really allow us to focus on what we're really there for and that is to serve the students that grow in our colleges," Ray Martinez, CEO of the Texas Association of Community Colleges, said.

MORE THAN A THIRD OF STATE AGENCIES USING AI

More than one third of state agencies are using some form of artificial intelligence, according to a 2022 report from the Texas Department of Information Resources. The Texas Tribune reported agencies such as the Texas Workforce Commission are using chatbots to serve patrons. In the TWC's case, the chatbot was designed to help Texans sign up for unemployment benefits after the pandemic in March 2020 vastly increased the number of jobless claims.

"This is going to totally revolutionize the way we do government," said state Rep. Giovanni Capriglione, R-Southlake. Capriglione wrote House Bill 2020, which is aimed at helping the state make better use of AI technology. It creates an AI advisory council to ascertain how state agencies are now using AI and whether a code of ethics is needed.

Some of the current uses of AI by state agencies include translating languages into English, enhancing cybersecurity and fraud detection, and translating speech into text at call centers.

TEXAS ECONOMY STILL BOOMING

New data released by the Bureau of Economic Analysis indicates the Texas economy continues to grow faster than the nation as a whole for the fifth quarter in a row. During the third quarter of 2023, the state's gross domestic product – the value of all goods and services produced – grew in Texas at an annual rate of 7.7%, considerably higher than the national GDP's growth of 4.9%.

"Texas is America's undisputed economic leader, outpacing the nation in economic expansion and job growth," Abbott said.

Kansas posted the highest percentage increase in the nation at 9.7%

NOVELTY PLATE SALES ON THE RISE

Whether it is buying a personalized plate, supporting one's alma mater or opting for a plate with a black background, Texans spent more than \$10 million on novelty plates in 2023, The News reported.

While plates with black backgrounds have been the top sellers for the past three years, there has also been an increase in personalized plates.

"More people are wanting to add their own personal message on their plate that means something to them," said Steve Farrar, CEO of My Plates.

The maroon plate purchased by Texas A&M University fans dominated the school-related novelty plates, followed by Texas Tech University plates.

CEDAR POLLEN CLOUDS CAUSING MISERY FOR MANY

It's that time of year when many Texans suffer from itchy, watery eyes, sneezing fits, and runny noses, caused by pollen from mountain cedar trees and commonly called "cedar fever." As the Houston Chronicle noted, while cedar fever is most often associated with the Ashe juniper common in Central Texas, red cedars in the eastern part of the state also pollinate around this time.

Pollen production peaks in mid-January and tapers off by spring.

"During cold fronts, it gets very dry and windy and the pressure changes very rapidly," said Jonathan Motsinger of the Texas A&M Forest Service. "This triggers the opening of pollen cones and the release of pollen grains. When the conditions are right, you can actually see the pollen blowing off of some trees." Allergy medications can provide some relief, and it is advisable to keep doors and windows closed until the pollen dissipates.

FERAL HOGS SPOTTED ON GALVESTON BEACH

It is not exactly peak tourist season on Galveston beaches, but a group of feral hogs have decided to visit Galveston Island State Park, officials reported.

Photos released by park officials show the hogs traipsing along the beach at night, leaving hoof prints in the sand. Roughly half of all the feral hogs in the United States take up residence in Texas.



Making Progress

"Perfection is the enemy of progress," according to Winston Churchill.

It's the time of year when we try to do too much, change too quickly. Already expectations are lowering, and reality is setting in. The sky is gray, the temperatures cold, and I am coming to grips with the fact that I cannot eat toffee every day. (At least, not a lot of toffee every day.)

It's the mid-January new year letdown.

More people die this time of year than on average. I imagine they make it through the holidays, finish off the toffee, take down the tree, look out at the gray weather, decide the New Year is not looking significantly better than the previous one and give up the effort to keep on living.

I spoke with my grouchy friend yesterday. This is the same grouchy friend who has cursed my cheerfulness in the past—and is a source of unflagging pessimism-so I should have known what was coming. He says there is no cause for rejoicing in the new year. He says the days are growing longer, and that means intolerable heat is around the corner. He says any promises he makes to himself will be broken. "I gave up goals and dreams in the summer of 1971," he

He thinks I am a fool. I think he's right. And I believe this may be one of my best qualities.

Because the older I get, the less seriously I take myself. I used to obsess over not looking my best, walking around with spinach in my teeth or toilet paper on my shoe or a tag hanging out the back of my shirt. I used to beat myself up (usually hours later, while doing the dishes or trying to fall asleep) for some dumb thing I said—something that someone could have taken the wrong

"Ack!" I'd yell aloud while washing my vegetable steamer. "Why did I say that?!"

Accepting that I'm foolish removes this burden. If I don't take myself too seriously, I can't expect anyone else to. If I accept that I am imperfect and just treat myself with love, I can hope folks will follow suit. I might wonder (as I did last night), what I am doing in the kitchen at 1 o'clock in the morning eating the last of my sister's homemade toffee.

"Should I really be doing this?" I might ask myself.

But now I answer, "Who wants to know?" And there is silence.

It turns out that no one cares if I stay up too late eating toffee. There is no editorial committee reviewing my statements from the previous day, informing me of how they might have been more clever or less embarrassing.

As a result, I feel a lot more free.

I can make that phone call, not knowing what I will say until I say it. I can have a conversation with a stranger—not caring so much about what they think of me, but letting them know that I am interested in them. But the key to all of this—to any of this—is action. I have to forgive my gaffes and blunders in advance and do something rather than nothing. I have to do something imperfectly if I am to make any progress at all.

Today, I am doing situps. I can only do a few. My form is terrible. I cannot see how this will ever make me stronger. But I'm doing them anyway. And, while it's much too early to tell, it's possible that I'm making progress.

Till next time,

Carrie



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Waste Pits Remediation,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

site has been impacting er, the planning process will continue to communiand is a danger to the entire bay area region. Twothirds of the original volume has already washed away making any further delay unacceptable. It's time to get this site cleaned up for good."

Statement from Jackie Medcalf, Founder and CEO of Texas Health and Environment Alliance: "This is an important decision that we hope will jumpstart the effort to protect public health and our environment. The community has been clear in saying the dioxin and other chemical waste need to be fully removed from our river. The EPA has been clear in ordering the companies to come up with a plan that accomplishes that. Howev-

nas dragged on for nearly five years and the companies still have not produced a plan that meets the EPA and community's requirements. We fully support the EPA issuing this order." Texas Health and Environment Alliance (THEA) has led the fight to remove the health threat that the toxic waste site poses to the community and the Galveston Bay watershed.

Statement from Representative Dan Crenshaw (TX-02): "The health and safety of the citizens across TX-02 is of utmost importance to me. Over the past year, I have been monitoring the situation at the San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund Site, as we move forward my office

sure they are taking all appropriate steps to make certain the clean-up is done in a safe, effective, and timely manner."

Statement from the PRP, Potential Responsible Parties: "The two respondent companies for the San Jacinto Waste Pits Superfund Site - International Paper and McGinnes Industrial Maintenance Corp. (MIMC) - have informed EPA that while they believe some aspects of the characterizations made in Region 6's recent notice to the companies are not accurate, they are committed to working cooperatively with the Agency to achieve progress at the site."

Rotary Chili Feast,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Weekend Trip on Lake Limestone, a Texas themed Fire Pit, an Expresso Machine, Valentine's Basket, Wine Basket, Outdoor furniture, Shark Robot Vacuum, Texas themed metal bench. Tool Sets, Air Compressor, Picnic Table, ad in the Star Courier, and miniature vehicles. The unique vacation venues promise to bring a lot of interest.

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With Valentine's Day coming up, there are several Valentine themed items to be auctioned.

Rotarians and local

businesses are selling tickets now, for \$100 for the raffle and two chili dinners. GayLynn said they are going fast this year. Tickets are available at local banks, businesses, Dr. White's dental office, Turner Chevrolet, and many other locations. Or you can call 832-483-3505 for more information.

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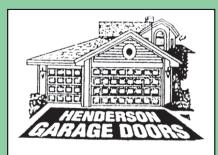
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Bay Area Homeless Shelter,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

could provide more help on a permanent basis.

'They moved into a house on Wisconsin Street in old Baytown and named their homeless encampment Sheltering Arms," said Jim Wadzinski, vice president of the board of the charity to attendees at the Highlands Chamber of Commerce luncheon.

It was later renamed to Bay Area Homeless Shelter Services and since 1983 has been a viable resource to the citizens of Baytown.

Cook passed away in 2009, but the work he began continues to thrive and grow in his absence.

It's the only full-service shelter that provides services to the homeless in east Harris, Liberty, and Chambers counties but not in the same sense one might normally think of a shelter.

 $\hbox{``When you say homeless'}$ shelter, you might think of something a little more along the line of Star of Hope in Houston where you show up at 5 p.m., receive a bed if it's available for the night, take a shower, be fed a hot meal, and by 7 a.m. the next day, you're out on the street on vour own again." Wadzinski said. "That's not how Bay Area works."

He described the vision of Cook as a place with more comprehensive services to give the homeless a lift back onto their feet and return them as a functioning member of society and contributing mem-

In terms of financial impact, Wadzinski said they estimated the residents returning to the community impacted the local economy by up to \$1 million in revenue.

"That includes rental properties, goods and services, transportation, and much more," he said, 'which makes us a vital

resource to the town."

The ministry expanded from the one building on Wisconsin Street now to three buildings. The administration building which houses the offices is about 100 years old. The men's shelter next door is also 100 years old and the women's shelter is behind the administration building and is a younger building.

The Britton -Fuller Family Center Program was opened in 2016 and can house six intact families of five members at any given time. The facility helps the shelter abide by federal requirements and allow families to remain together.

"We had a sad case of a 19-year-old lady working for McDonalds making about \$12 an hour. Her mom and dad were killed in a car accident and as the only child, she's now left with the house and a mortgage payment. She was able to make her mortgage payments, but the city of Houston came in and condemned the house and tore it down. She now has no place to live and is still saddled with the mortgage. She now must pay for a house that doesn't exist," Wadzinski said.

She ended up sleeping in her car and finds her way to Bay Area Homeless where she receives help.

"We ran her through our program, got her enrolled in Lee College in their carpenter apprentice program. Nine months later, she left with her certification and is roughly earning \$30 an hour," he said.

In another case, a young lady from the East Coast had gone through a divorce and was wanting to move to get away from her circumstances. She came to Houston with her daughter and was hired as a teacher in Channelview

ISD. She had paid a deposit on a rental house, but the house wasn't available, and she couldn't get her money back.

"She's stuck here with no money in the bank, and no check from her job for another two to four weeks. She's looking at no income for the next six weeks. After a few paychecks, she had earned enough to rent an apartment. We were able to provide a safe place for her and the child during that time.

Depending on their length of stay, Wadzinski said they can assist them with job searches, writing resumes, teach them financial literacy and help with other life skills.

"Sometimes it's as simple as trying to help them get an ID, or get them access to a phone, or computer," he said.

In 2023, BAHS helped 30 unemployed adults find employment with 26 different employers in the area adding up to \$787,000 added to the local economy.

The shelter is experiencing an operational funds crisis with the inability to increase wages for their caseworkers and pay for food and supplies.

"We operate 24/7 and 365 days per year," he said. Residents do their part in sharing chores around the shelter, but Wadzinski pointed to the aging buildings and high maintenance.

"They were never built for something like this," he

A capital campaign is underway led by Steve Don Carlos and he's asking everyone in the community to pitch in and help.

They are planning a fundraiser at the Hyatt Regency on February 24. To learn more about how to help the shelter, visit their website at www. https://bahs-shelter.org/

"He asked me to come and check them out and so I did," he said.

Little joined in 1987 and began a storied career. "It was all volunteer

when I joined, and we had about 60 volunteers. We had two stations at the time, the one at 123 San Jacinto Street, and the second one at 2301 East Wallisville," he said.

Little spent a lot of his spare time working at the department and making calls. He was also making a lot of friends in the process.

Five years later, in 1992, he was voted in as the new fire chief. He has remained at the helm of the department for 31 years.

Little earned incentive pay, but no salary from the department. His service, he said, was for the love of his community.

In 2022 when the fire services came under the umbrella of the Emergency Services District, residents voted in a property tax of five cents on every \$100 valuation. They later voted in a 2-cent sales tax. Both of those collections have helped the department fund additional equipment and better facilities.

"During my time as chief, we redid the fire station at 123 San Jacinto to what it is now, and then six or seven years ago, we replaced the station at 2301 East Wallisville," Little

Now it's big enough to hold three big trucks, two squad trucks, and a brush truck.

"We've replaced just about every piece of equipment we had since I was chief," he said, "which was no easy feat."

Funds in those early days came from donations through the water districts. They still receive about \$5,000 per month from the water district office that sits next door to the fire sta-

> **ACROSS** Hot tub

division 12 Joke

13 Teen fave

name

18 Celery unit 20 Pantheon member

Morays

Bombeck 33 Raw rock

37 Actress Meg

Wheel con-

39 Maintains

nectors

43 Bake sale

orgs.

44 - Victor

ically "Bravo!"

34 Begets

36 Melody

32 Wrv

lem

Harvey Little Retires,

"Sometimes, area citizens would walk the streets and collect funds and bring them to us," he said.

The EMS began billing in 2002, but coffers didn't fill up necessarily with the extra \$300 per month they received.

"Our annual budget back then was only around \$30,000," he said.

Now the budget exceeds \$1.6 million which has allowed them to hire eight full-time EMS personnel to maintain a 24/7 schedule, 18 that are part-time pay and work somewhere else, and two years ago they began paying a day crew of three firefighters, seven days a week.

"Now we have raised that to four full-timers and that helps us meet our need," he said.

They recently began running two ambulances 24/7 every day of the week.

The ESD paid off the debt of the new fire station within five years after it was built.

"I feel good that I have left them in good financial shape. We've paid off trucks including three that we owe only one more payment on and we'll be done with them," he said.

Little said they are still seeking additional volunteers and its no cheap venture to equip them for service.

"One handheld radio these days costs almost \$6,000," he said. Fire gear fully dressed is more than \$5,000. They furnish helmets at \$400 each, boots, and gloves.

All the equipment has to be replaced approximately every 10 years.

Little's leadership exploits have earned him numerous awards including the Citizen of the Year award from the Highlands-Lynchburg Chamber of Commerce, Highlands Rotary Club, Harris County

Firefighters Association Award of the year in 2007, and twice honored in 2005 and 2023 named as the Firefighter of the Year by his peers at the Highlands Volunteer Fire Department banquet.

"I've had some good times and some bad," he said.

One of his proudest accomplishments was no Line of Duty Deaths.

"I didn't lose any firemen during my time. That's a hard record to keep," he

The worst fire he responded to? Four Corners.

"It was right after I joined the fire department. I was inside the one part that was the liquor store," he said. The walls began falling in. He and the other firefighters working inside were able to escape, but the whole block was a total loss.

"The wind was blowing about 30 mph which made it considerably worse," for Highlands, Sheldon, and Channelview who also responded.

Little, who has literally made thousands of calls over his career, said he will miss his fellow firefighters. Many community members affectionately call him the mayor of Highlands.

Little always kept candy in his office for the children who would visit the fire department. Now he'll spread it around to his heritagethree sons, nine grandkids, and seven great grandchildren.

Harvey Little will always be chief.

"I'll miss the firemen and medics. I feel like I was a friend to all of them. They were my friends. They all come by and tell me they love me, so I guess they appreciated everything I did,"

They did, Harvey, and so did the community.



ENTERTAINMENT

Amber Waves by Dave T. Phipps MY TEACHER SAYS I THIS ONE I CALL "CRAVING" I WAS JUST HUNGRY FOR WOW, THE COLORS CLASH SHOULD EXPRESS MYSELF THROUGH MY ARTWORK. I USED VIBRANT COLORS TOGETHER IN SUCH A MANNER SOME MAC AND CHEESE WHEN I PAINTED IT. TO EXPRESS THIS EMOTION TO PROJECT TRUE ANGST. BUD BLAKE MOM SAYS STAY IN BED. YOU'VE GOT A COLD GET BACK IN BER, PUNKINHEAD BRING ME SOMEJUICE The Spats by Jeff Pickering LAST NIGHT I ATE YEAST AND DRANK SHOE POLISH. SO I COULD RISE AND SHINE THIS MORNING. DO THAT ?? 16

7. IV (Four),; 8. Having an extra nipple, which affects about 1%-5% of the

3. Switzerland.; 4. Destiny's Child.; 5. Arizona.; 6. "Through the Looking-Glass.";

Trivia Test Answerst

1. His full name is Kenneth Sean Carson.; 2. Scranton, Pennsylvania.;

Weekly SUDOKU by Linda Thistle 5 9 2 7 6 3 3 4 9 8 7 8 6 1 1 7 5 9 6 3 5 8 1 2 Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine. DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆ Moderate
 ◆◆ Challenging

◆◆◆ HOO BOY!

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HOCUS-FOCUS HENRY BOLTINOFF Differences: 1. Broom handle is longer. 2. Cloth is different. 3. Cap is different. 4. Cup is missing. 5. Cabinet is wider. 6. Flower picture is reversed. population.; 9, 118.; 10, 1924.

Solution time: 24 mins. SIOMSUA - King Crossword -



Pack (down) Honeycomb 26 14 Celestial bear 15 Capote nick-16 Difficult prob-40 48 Twilight, poet-50 51 53 58 60 Workout 10 Baton Rouge 35 Equine homes

count 61 Mimic

DOWN Boot camp

VIPs 2 Section Water, in 3

46 Dugout seating Mexico 50 Sociable and Hearts, slanlively gily

5 "Caught ya!" plant

56 Medicinal 57 Vogue rival

58 Singer Phair

59 Reporter's

quest

6 9 9 L

2 1 2 8 3

1 9 1

3 8 2 4 1 8 6 7 2

3 8 2

1 9 4 8 2 8 4 6 7

8 2 4 7 8 9 1 5 8

2 1 7 8 9 6 3 4 5

9 6 7 4 7 8 8 9

4 8 8 8 2 6 9 t

Answer

Weekly SUDOKU

Big fuss 6 Calendar abbr.

Advertise

8 Get cozy

9 4 6

1 5 4

6 4 5 8

(with) 9 Blunder

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26 During 27 Red planet 28 Mrs. Dithers

29 African antelope

Felon's flight

Eggy quaff

19 Triathlon seg-

23 Razor sharp-

ment

22 Secular

ener 25 Algerian port

"Hud" actress 30 Patricia 31 Faxed

49 Visibility hindrance of "Blondie"

Fire cheer

51 Flamenco 52 At once

38 Butterflies

suffix

subj.

45 Declare

42 High school

"The Lion

King" lion

48 Intel product

Language

40

47

53 -de-France 54 Jungfrau, for one

1. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: What is the last name of Ken, who was Barbie's boyfriend? 2. TELEVISION: In the sitcom "The Office," the company is in which U.S. city?

Rodriguez

3. GEOGRAPHY: In which country is The Matterhorn located?

4. MUSIC: Which 1990s group was the singer Beyonce a part of? 5. U.S. STATES: In which state is Monument

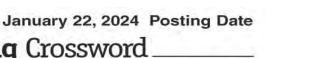
Valley located? 6. LITERATURE: In which children's book do the characters Tweedledee and Tweedledum

appear? . MATH: In Roman numerals, what is XLVIII divided by XII? 8. MEDICAL: What is a common name for

polythelia? 9. CHEMISTRY: How many elements are listed on the Periodic Table? 10. MOVIES: What is the year of the Olympics

in the movie "Chariots of Fire"? © 2024 King Features Synd., Inc.



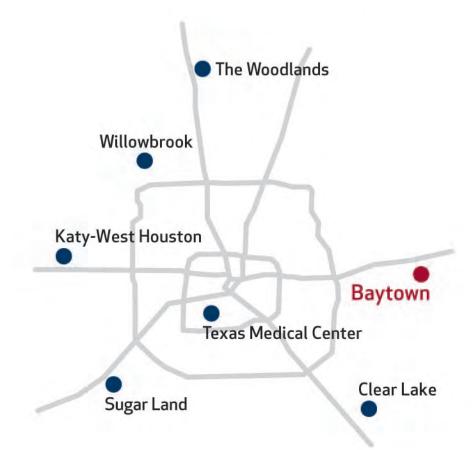




At Houston Methodist Neal Cancer Center, we treat every aspect of your cancer. Leading oncologists work with our specialists across disciplines to minimize cancer's effects on major organs. One comprehensive team — dedicated to your individual care — uses the latest research, treatments and technology to stop your cancer. From infusion and clinical trials to surgery and reconstruction, our innovative care is available in Baytown.

That's the difference between practicing medicine and leading it.

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