

IN THE
STARS

EVENTS

Crosby
Chamber Gala
Feb. 22nd

The Crosby/Huffman Chamber of Commerce will hold its Annual Awards Banquet on Thursday, February 22nd from 6:30-8:30 at Stonebridge at Newport, 16401 Country Club Drive, Crosby. Reservations and Sponsorships, contact chamber@crosbyhuffmancc.org, or call.

You are asked to nominate Best Business, non-profit, volunteer, citizen and ambassador. Vote <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2XNKDS7>.

Wishing our
library fans a
Happy
Valentine's
Day!

We have dozens of authors of romance novels to offer a special Valentine's sale. We can meet your romantic gesture with a paperback from our sales section of the Crosby Library. Pick up 4 romance paperbacks for \$1.00 or another paperback of a different genre for .50 cents each for your special Valentine. This offer is good thru the month of February.

All proceeds from the book sale benefit the Library and support the Summer Reading programs. Questions call the Library - 832-927-7790.

Time Capsule buried to remember Crosby Bicentennial Celebration

By David Taylor
Managing Editor

Just a few feet from the foot of the pin oak tree at the corner of Runneburg Road and Pecan Street in Crosby, the Crosby Historical Society gathered last Thursday, Feb. 1, 2024, with community members and three classes of kindergarten students to memorialize the 2023 bicentennial celebration with the burial of a time capsule.

Work began on the time capsule committee over a year ago.

"The original plan was to bury the time capsule during the bicentennial week but we wanted to wait until the next editions of the newspaper came out



Crosby Historical Society members were excited to host the event at the museum and were joined by Crosby ISD Superintendent Paula Patterson. Members from left are Mark Moreau, Donna Davenport, Judy Culbreath, Randy Kubin, Ella Guaqueta, DeeAnn Rook, Patterson, and Kenneth Prasek. Not pictured is Jody Fuchs.

so we could include those and the bicentennial buttons in the time capsule," said Randy Kubin, who chaired the time capsule committee for the Crosby Historical Society.

Exhausted following the celebration, time got away from them, and the holidays were upon them quickly and they decided to wait until after the first of the year. The new year brought inclement weather with it and finally a short, dry spell made way for the celebration on Thursday, Feb. 1.

The time capsule is placed near the Crosby Area Museum of History facing Pecan Street near

Continued. See CROSBY TIME CAPSULE, Page 7

Crosby ISD Community Summit Strengthens Safety Measures; Students Shine in Spelling Bee; Scholarships

Hello East Harris County and Crosby ISD Families,

We are going strong this semester and I am happy to share a bit of it with you. I am so pleased to share that Crosby ISD hosted area law enforcement partners at a community policing summit during the first week of February. I had a chance to meet with Harris County Sheriff Ed Gonzalez and his command staff as well as members of the Harris County Precinct 3 Constable's Office and Harris County Precinct 3 Commissioner's Office. The school district is committed to safety in



Paula Patterson
Crosby Superintendent

our communities of Crosby and Barrett Station. As a result of the meeting, the Sheriff's Homeless Outreach Team is increasing the frequency of visits to our communities. We are also working on further

ways to strengthen our partnerships with all community stakeholders, increase visibility, and develop better lines of communication. As a reminder, citizens who need emergency help should call 911. For community members who would like to report non-emergency incidents and homeless-related issues, please call 713-221-6000. Our continuing conversations will hopefully lead to better outcomes and safer neighborhoods for everyone.

Kudos to the Crosby Historical Society for hosting two big events in recent weeks. First, Crosby Kindergarten Center students



Sheriff Ed Gonzalez and Superintendent Patterson meet with policing task force. See Story.

helped bury a time capsule as part of Crosby's Bicentennial Celebration. The students heard about the 200-year history of Crosby and then sealed the time

capsule before it was entombed near the corner of Runneburg and Pecan

Continued. See CROSBY SUPERINTENDENT, Page 6

TxDOT Meetings seek public input on I-10 future

By David Taylor
Managing Editor

The Texas Department of Transportation hosted a public meeting at the North Channel Library last week for the I-10 East Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study, an early step in the development of transportation for the east side of I-10 stretching from I-69 in downtown to SH-99 or the Grand Parkway in Chambers County. The 30-mile corridor connects with four major regional roadways including I-69, Loop 610, Beltway 8, and Spur 330. Contributing to



Bryce Pate, an engineer and consultant with Reynolds, Smith, and Hills engineering firm, left, is answering questions while Brian from the Sheldon area looks on.

much of the heavy truck traffic is the Port of Houston with their constant flow of freight.

TxDOT officials say they're considering a

project along that corridor.

"We're looking at stud-

Continued. See TxDOT I-10 MEETINGS, Page 2

Citizens receive Active Shooter Safety Training

By David Taylor
Managing Editor

HIGHLANDS - More than 50 citizens and business leaders assembled at the San Jacinto Community Center in Highlands last month to gain insight in how to protect themselves in the event they find themselves amid a mass attack or by an Active Shooter.

While it's easy to say it could never happen here, that was also the same mindset for many others that have gained national attention over the last decade.

The training was offered by Sgt. Louis Hooper with Pct. 4 Constable Mark Herman's office and Sgt. Landon McDonald with Pct. 3 Constable Sherman



Sgt. Landon McDonald and Sgt. Louis Hooper teamed up together to teach the CRASE training to residents in Highlands preparing them for an active shooter incident.

Eagleton's office.

Several of the officers in both constable's offices are promoting the training around their precincts after the Uvalde shooting caught the attention of the nation and teaching on how to survive has

changed since the Santa Fe High School shooting.

"I go as often as I'm scheduled and happy to make a presentation to any business, organization, or

Continued. See ACTIVE SHOOTER TRAINING, Page 7

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GOOSE CREEK CISD NEWS

New GCCISD Director of Education Foundation and Partnerships

The GCCISD Board of Trustees approved Anna Espinoza as the new Director of Education Foundation and Partnerships at January's Board meeting. Ms. Espinoza has served as the Coordinator of Counseling and College & Career Readiness since July of 2021, coming from Lee College and Henderson State University after a combined 12 years in higher education. Her background in dual enrollment, academic advising, and recruitment brings widespread knowledge of building partnerships and program management.

Ms. Espinoza earned her Bachelor of Arts in political science and Master of Arts in social science from Henderson State University and will graduate from The University of St. Thomas with her doctorate in Ethical Leadership in May 2024.

When asked about her new role, Ms. Espinoza stated, "I am honored to step into the role of Director of Education Foundation and Partnerships at GCCISD. I eagerly embrace the opportunity to cultivate educational innovation that uplifts our community and paves the



Anna Espinoza

way for a transformative journey in learning."

The GCCISD Education Foundation has been able to provide more than \$1.9 million to district teachers in the last 14 years. Committee members review grant applications and award teachers with innovative teaching ideas. In addition to serving as the new director for the Education Foundation, Ms. Espinoza will also be working closely with other district partnerships, such as Partners in Education

and volunteers, that also work to contribute in areas such as mentoring, career education, enrichment programs, extracurricular and community service activities, and office and classroom assistance.

For more information on ways to get involved at the campus or district level, contact the GCCISD Education Foundation office at 281-420-4800 or visit them on the web at www.gccisd.net/EducationFoundation/home.

GCCISD Counselor Honored with CTAT Counseling and Career Development Professional Award



Kim Kujawa, CTE Counselor of the Year talks to a STEM student Michelle Pulid, 10th about her project she will be taking to competition.

The Gulf Coast Career and Technical Association of Texas (CTAT) has recently announced Ms. Kimberly Kujawa as a recipient of the CTAT Counseling and Career Development Professional award, recognizing her exceptional contributions as a counselor at Goose Creek CISD's Lee High School.

Mrs. Kujawa's dedication to her role as a counselor has not gone unnoticed. Over the past six years at Lee High School, she has been a great advocate of Career and Technical Education (CTE). Two years ago, she assumed the role of the College and Career Readiness Counselor while also serving as the Lead Counselor for the campus and the counselor for the STEM Academy. Her tireless efforts and commitment to the organization and the community make her a prime candidate for this prestigious award.

The nomination from her colleague speaks volumes about Mrs. Kujawa's impact. Under her leadership, there has been a significant increase in college visits, guest speakers, military recruitment, and Texas Success Initiative (TSI) testing. Mrs. Kujawa's proactive approach and team spirit are evident in her consistent volunteering to assist whenever there is a need.

One of Mrs. Kujawa's notable achievements is the substantial increase in the availability and uptake of dual-credit courses during her tenure at Lee High



Kim Kujawa, CTE Counselor of the Year.

School. Her ability to build meaningful relationships with students is recognized as a key factor in the success of the College and Career Center, which has become an inviting space for students seeking assistance with scholarships, college applications, and career guidance.

The College and Career Center, bustling with activities for the benefit of students, owes much of its success to Mrs. Kujawa's dynamic leadership. Her work ethic and commitment to student success were particularly evident at the beginning of the school year when the counseling staff faced shortages. Despite the challenges, Mrs. Kujawa worked tirelessly through the master schedule and student schedules, ensuring a smooth start to the academic year.

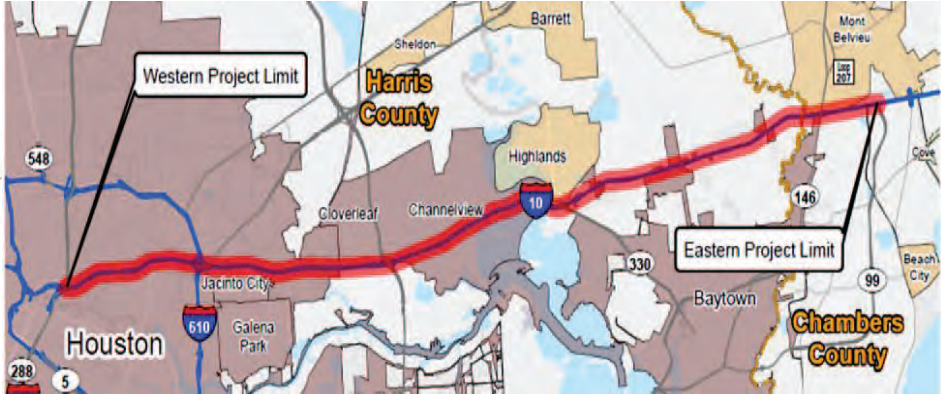
Mrs. Kujawa's advocacy for Career and Technical Education programs is reflected in her collaboration

with the campus CTE Specialist. This partnership ensures that students are on the right path, progressing through appropriate pathways, and working toward increasing CTE completers across the district.

The recognition of Mrs. Kimberly Kujawa by CTAT is a testament to her exceptional qualities as a counselor and her positive impact on the lives of students in the Baytown community. As the recipient of the CTAT Counseling and Career Development Professional Award, Mrs. Kujawa is now eligible to compete at the state level. Her interview is scheduled to take place at the CTAT Winter Leadership Conference in San Antonio from Monday, February 5, to Wednesday, February 7. The entire community joins in congratulating Mrs. Kujawa on this well-deserved honor and wishes her the best in the upcoming state-level competition.

TxDOT I-10 Meetings,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



ies and what it could possibly look like," said TxDOT spokesperson Bambi Hall.

"We've developed the universal alternatives, meaning all the scenarios that could possibly happen in construction. It will be a lot of money. We must get through this particular part of the process before we're able to identify funding for the project," she said.

Work on the project isn't new. It began in 2017 with stakeholder and public meetings until it was sidelined by the COVID-19 pandemic. The project was placed on hold for three years allowing TxDOT to focus on projects already funded for construction.

"When it comes to the planning and environmental linkages process, we have to get a full picture of what all of the projects could entail. That includes what congestion may look like, to address reliability, and address crash rates," Hall said.

TxDOT is projecting traffic volumes along I-10 East to increase by an average of 68 percent by 2045. Eastsiders are already feeling some of that increase with the increased development in Channelview, Baytown, and Mont Belvieu. According to 2022 TxDOT numbers, Segment 1 currently boasts 159,000 vehicles per day and is expected to rise to 265,000 by 2045. In Segment 3, where most of it is near Channelview and the Beltway, the current 112,000 will nearly dou-

ble to 216,000 in the same time period.

Bryce Pate, an engineer and consultant with Reynolds, Smith, and Hills engineering firm is conducting the study. "This project will likely be broken up into five segments. Each segment has different characteristics, so we have to find out which segment needs what done to it," he said.

Stephen Gage, project manager with TxDOT, said at this point this was a high level of study where you're looking at concepts and ideas and then those concepts can get flushed out in actual projects.

"Then those projects will be put in the pipeline to get funded."

He pointed out that the bridge at the San Jacinto River is a separate project that will be addressed sooner than later.

Brian from Sheldon was curious when he saw a flyer and attended the meeting.

"It's interesting to see what they want to do to the roadway," he said. "I came because I wanted to see what exactly was going on."

He said he came with no agenda other than to give his feedback.

"This is one of those times when customers who use the freeway get to share their feedback. For me, the biggest bottleneck I endure is the San Jacinto River bridge," he said. He said he hoped they would widen the freeway there and make a higher bridge to

accommodate boat and barge traffic.

From Anahuac to Baytown across the San Jacinto River into Channelview and into downtown, Market Street was the main spur for farmers to transport their crops into the downtown Market Street Square to sell their products. But in 1957, that dynamic changed with the construction of Interstate 10.

For Galena Park ISD, it also became the dividing line for a new North Shore High School constructed in 1962 with students in grades 10-11 the first year. Ninth graders were still a part of the junior high school at that time.

The new construction brought with it tremendous development along the I-10 corridor and some 65 years later, the aging interstate needs a makeover to handle the current congestion and the coming increase with the development of the northeast quadrant of the county.

While this round of public meetings is done, there is still time to watch the presentation and comment.

To still comment, Google the I-10 PEL Study. Hall encouraged residents to watch the virtual meeting online to see for themselves what was presented at the in-person meetings.

"They can go to HYPERLINK <http://www.txdot.gov> www.txdot.gov and look under projects. There they'll see a listing and can scroll for the item or type it into the search box," she said.

Goose Creek CISD Champions: Elementary Students Shine at UIL Competition

Goose Creek CISD celebrated another successful Elementary University Interscholastic League (UIL) competition. The event was held on Friday, January 26 and Saturday, January 27 at Goose Creek Memorial High School. Dr. Randal O'Brien, superintendent, and Dr. Shannon Ramirez, Coordinator of Advanced Academics and Special Projects, presented the winners with their certificates, ribbons, medals, and/or trophies on February 1, 2024.

The elementary students demonstrated their skills in a wide range of UIL categories, including Spelling, Storytelling, Number Sense, and Ready Writing. Each category tested the students' knowledge, creativity, and quick thinking, challenging them to showcase their academic abilities beyond the traditional classroom setting.

The events not only en-



Dr. Randal O'Brien and Dr. Shannon Ramirez presented the awards on February 1, 2024

couraged healthy competition but also cultivated a sense of sportsmanship and teamwork among the young participants. Students collaborated with their peers, cheered for each other, and celebrated both personal and team achievements.

As the tradition of excellence continues, Goose Creek CISD remains proud of the accomplishments of its elementary students and looks forward to nurturing the next generation of lead-

ers, thinkers, and problem-solvers. The UIL competition serves as a reminder that academic excellence can be achieved in an engaging and enjoyable environment, setting the stage for future success both inside and outside the classroom.

To learn more about UIL and how to get your student involved, please contact your home campus or Dr. Shannon Ramirez, at 281.707.3552.

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Mont Belvieu becomes the 57th Music Friendly Texas Certified Community. Learn more about the Music Friendly Texas program: gov.texas.gov/music/page/music-friendly-communities

ty and betterment of this city. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the city office at 281-385-1735 or e m a i l a t cityorw@gmail.com.

Western Welding Academy Brings Excitement to Mont Belvieu with 2024 Blue Collar Tour

Upcoming Events at the Jones Public Library

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OPINION PAGE

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COUNTY MATTERS

Harris County Attorney Christian Menefee



New Federal Air Quality Standards

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced new air quality standards for fine particulate matter (PM2.5), an airborne pollution typically emitted in large quantities at refineries and plants, construction sites, and other industrial facilities. Harris County Attorney Christian D. Menefee had previously submitted a formal comment advocating for stronger protections.

These stronger standards will lower the amount of fine particle pollution emitted by plants and factories and better control pollution often produced in densely populated areas. The EPA estimates this could prevent up to 4,500 premature deaths across the country.

PM2.5 exposure can lead to respiratory issues, irregular heartbeat, death in people with heart or lung diseases, and aggravated asthma. Harris County’s formal comments pointed to communities like Settegast in Northeast Houston where air monitors consistently report heightened PM exposure and has some of the lowest life expectancy in the county.

“Black and Brown communities in Harris County and around the country have disproportionately been affected by air pollution for decades,” said County Attorney Menefee. “Many of the facilities are located directly in neighborhoods, and these guidelines will ensure that we do as much as we can to limit harmful exposures. I’m pleased to see the EPA make this move, and I will do everything I can to ensure every person living in Harris County has clean air and water”

This decision is expected to impact the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality’s (TCEQ) process for issuing permits to industrial facilities.

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About the Harris County Attorney’s Office

Christian D. Menefee serves as the elected, top civil lawyer for Texas’ largest county. The Harris County Attorney’s Office represents the county in all civil matters including lawsuits. Menefee leads an office of 250 attorneys and staff members. He entered office at 32 years old, making him the youngest person and first African American elected as the Harris County Attorney.

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OPINION

By Jennifer Hadayia, Exec. Director, Air Alliance Houston

Moving the Needle on Particulate Matter Pollution

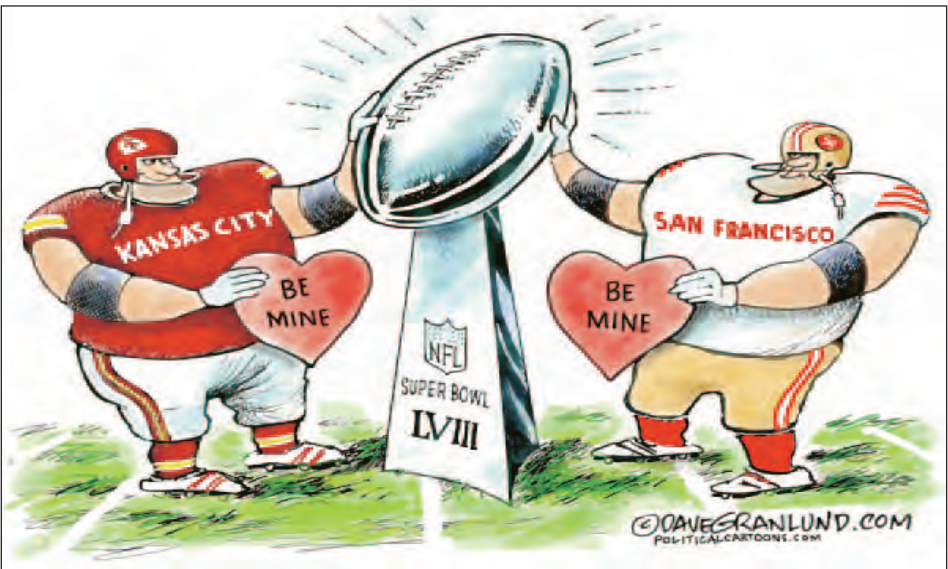
The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has released the new, more protective standard for annual Particulate Matter 2.5 (PM2.5) pollution - from 12 microns (µg) m3 to 9 µg m3. This will put the Houston Area out of attainment and require improvement plans and stricter protections to help us reach attainment of the new PM2.5 standard.

Air Alliance Houston has been working to strengthen the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for PM2.5.

- Our Executive Director Jennifer Hadayia, MPA, Government Relations and Community Outreach Director Leticia Gutierrez, and Community Air Monitoring Program Manager Juan Flores all went to Washington D.C. last year and talked about these issues with multiple federal offices.
- Our Research and Policy team including Dr. Inyang Uwak and Coordinator Anthony D’Souza wrote a comment letter last March on this issue. The World Health Organization’s guideline level of exposure is much lower (5 µg m3) but this is a move in the right direction, and it will save lives. This was a brave decision for EPA as industry continues to lobby legislators against standards that protect community health. Read our Statement. Concrete batch plants are a major source of health-harming Particulate Matter 2.5 (PM 2.5) pollution in many Houston neighborhoods. For years, AAH has held that the standard permit that these facilities are governed by does not do enough to protect communities from PM 2.5 and has advocated with residents for more protections.

We are glad to share with you that, earlier this month, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) adopted improvements to the standard permit for concrete batch plants. While they did not go as far as we had hoped, this is a step in the right direction.

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.*



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STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

By Gary Borders



TEA Annual Report Just Released

The Texas Education Agency’s annual report was released last week. It indicates per-student funding in the 2021-2022 school year averaged \$14,928 per student, up 42% since 2011. However, state funding has only risen slightly in the past decade, while local funding has increased substantially.

Texas public schools educate 5.518 million students while employing 371,778 teachers on 9,054 campuses, according to the report.

Compared to other states, Texas ranked 33rd in reading among fourth graders, and 41st among eighth grade readers, which were improvements over previous years. Texas public school students ranked 14th in math for fourth graders, down two slots, and 25th among eighth graders, up seven slots.

BORDER STANDOFF CONTINUES IN EAGLE PASS

Despite a 5-4 ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court that U.S. Border Patrol agents can cut razor wire placed along the Texas-Mexico border to deter migrants from crossing the Rio Grande, Texas National Guard members and state troopers continue to lay down wire as a convoy of protestors from across the country heads to Eagle Pass. The Texas Tribune reported Gov. Greg Abbott has been joined by 25 Republican governors who support his claim the state has the right to supersede the federal government’s constitutionally mandated rights to control the nation’s border because of the migrant “invasion.”

Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick also defended ignoring the high court ruling.

“We believe, constitutionally, we are right. We have a right to defend our citizens. We have a right to defend this country,” he said on Fox News.

Immigration rights groups say claims that immigrants are part of an invasion could lead to increased border vigilantism and violence.

WHISTLEBLOWER LAWSUIT AGAINST PAXTON CAN CONTINUE

The legal saga of a whistleblower lawsuit filed against Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton will continue despite his efforts to have it thrown out, even though the Texas Supreme Court issued an emergency rul-



ing to delay his testimony temporarily, the Austin American-Statesman reported.

Travis County state District Court Judge Catherine Mauzy ruled that the case, brought by four former top aides to Paxton who allege wrongdoing on the part of the attorney general, can move forward despite Paxton saying he will not contest the suit and will comply with any settlement agreement issued by the court.

TJ Turner, an attorney for the whistleblowers, said Paxton is attempting to avoid taking the stand.

“This is just the latest parlor trick in OAG’s quiver that they’ve deployed to avoid what the Attorney General fears most, and that’s testifying under oath,” Turner said, referring to the Office of the Attorney General.

Mauzy noted Paxton has been willing to concede the whistleblowers’ case but simultaneously maintain his innocence.

“Those seem to me to be contradictory positions,” she said.

CRIMINALS IMPERSONATE STATE IN ASSET SEIZURE ATTEMPTS

Some taxpayers are receiving fraudulent letters warning the state will seize their assets and property for unpaid taxes unless payment is received with seven days, the state comptroller’s office said. The letters did not come from the Comptroller’s office, which said in a news release that criminals have been running these types of scams for years. The letters demand immediate payment and often provide a false link for such payment.

“Be incredibly wary whenever you receive unexpected messages like these, as they can be a trap. The criminals’ threats

are designed to get you to react by calling the criminals’ phone number or clicking on a fake link to solve the problem. The consequences can be catastrophic,” the news release said.

Victims can not only lose money but can become victims of identity theft or have malware installed on their computers simply by clicking on a scam link.

If you receive an unexpected message of this type, do not respond in any fashion. Instead, call the Comptroller’s Collection Team at 800-252-8880.

COURTHOUSE ARSONIST FOUND GUILTY

A man accused of setting fires at the historic Mason County Courthouse and an occupied home was found guilty last week. Nicholas Miller was accused of starting both fires almost three years ago, according to investigators with the state fire marshal’s office.

“I want to thank our investigators and the local public safety authorities for their exemplary work in this case,” said Debra Knight, state fire marshal. “By coordinating evidence, communication and resources, we worked together to achieve justice and further enhance the safety of Texans.”

The building was being prepared for restoration at the time of the fire, and all county records and documents had been relocated just weeks before the blaze.

Sentencing is scheduled for Feb. 28.

HIGH COURT QUESTIONS 2021 STORM POWER PRICES

The Texas Supreme Court heard arguments last week in a case questioning a government order that sent electric rates soaring during 2021’s Winter Storm Uri. The case was brought by Luminant, a subsidiary of Vistra Corp., which argues the Public Utility Commission exceeded its authority with the emergency pricing order, according to The Dallas Morning News.

The emergency order was put in place during a widespread blackout that resulted in \$16 billion in overcharges, The News reported. The high prices led to a number of bankruptcies among utilities, including Brazos Electric Power Cooperative.

Luminant argued that the PUC is prohibited by law from overruling the competitive market to set prices.

“This is as clear a case as we believe ... of an agency not staying within its lane and busting through the rails, the guardian rails that the Legislature has put in place,” Luminant’s attorney Allyson Ho said.

TEXAS IS THIRD-DEADLIEST STATE TO DRIVE THROUGH

Texas trails only California and Florida as the most dangerous state to drive through, according to a recent study reported by the Statesman. The state averages 15.4 fatal crashes per 100 miles. Of the 10 most dangerous interstates in the country on which to drive, two of them come through the Lone Star State – I-35E and I-45.

I-35E, which runs northbound through the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex, had nearly 30 fatal crashes per 100 miles, while I-45, from Galveston to Dallas, averaged 24.6 fatal crashes per 100 miles.

Be careful out there!

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THE POSTSCRIPT

By Carrie Classon

Palazzo Pants



My Facebook feed reminded me that, exactly 12 years ago, I was considering buying palazzo pants.

I found this astonishing because just that day I had been looking at palazzo pants, and I had not mentioned it to Facebook—or anyone else, except my husband, Peter. Peter did not even know what palazzo pants are.

“You know, they have really wide legs,” I told him.

“Isn’t that what you just bought?”

I honestly wonder if Peter notices anything at all. The pants I just bought are harem pants. They have elastic around the ankles. They are 100% cotton, and they are green and blue and have pockets. They are fun to wear and very comfortable, but they are certainly not palazzo pants.

“Palazzo pants have big bells at the bottom. And they are usually slipperly.”

“Slippery?”

“Yeah. Kind of.”

“Whatever.”

I could tell no useful wardrobe advice was going to come from Peter. But I must add, in all fairness, he always dutifully tells me I look fine in whatever I wear.

I did not buy palazzo pants 12 years ago. Apparently, I considered it, but I remember I did not do it. And I guess, after that first palazzo pant flirtation, I thought the subject was closed, and I was simply not a palazzo pant wearer.

But I have heard that the periodical cicada hatches every 17 years and wreaks havoc on the fruit trees, and, when I was young, I saw a forest tent caterpillar outbreak, where every bit of green was devoured by nasty worms that appear every 10-16 years. I now suspect that the urge to buy palazzo pants is something similar. It’s best to be prepared.

Once I was reminded of my close brush with a palazzo pants purchase in the past, I did what any sensible person would do. I posted my dilemma on Facebook, telling folks that I was, once again, considering it. My friends immediately weighed in.

“Resist that urge, Carrie! Stay strong!” my friend from college, Jennifer, wrote.

“I think we need more baggy pants,” wrote Chris, who is a man and, like my husband, obviously had no idea what palazzo pants are.

A couple of friends said, “Go for it!” But I had the impression they would have said that if I’d suggested shaving my head, getting a navel piercing or joining a cult. These are good friends to have, but not always the best source of objective advice.

I went back to the store to look at the palazzo pants in question. I tried to imagine where I would wear these pants, and nothing came to mind. I could imagine them swishing around my ankles. I would wear platform shoes and enormous hoop earrings. I imagined the person I would be, wearing palazzo pants, and a whole new world opened up before me. A world that, in actual fact, did not exist.

In the end, better sense prevailed.

I did not buy palazzo pants. I left them hanging in the store, where I am sure they will be purchased by someone much younger and hipper who already owns a lot of hoop earrings. But I now feel prepared.

I fully expect another attack of palazzo pants to hit. I’ll be in my 70s when the next outbreak arrives, and I’ll be ready. This time, I suspect I will buy palazzo pants—and I will probably not stop at a single pair. By the time I hit 80, I may wear nothing but palazzo pants.

And that’s not a bad thing to look forward to.

Till next time,
Carrie

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CROSBY MUNICIPAL UTILITY DISTRICT

NOTICE OF THE DISTRICT’S INTENTION TO HOLD AN ELECTION WITHOUT PROVIDING A VOTING STATION

Crosby Municipal Utility District (the “District”) hereby gives notice that it is the District’s intention to hold its May 4, 2024 reauthorization bond election without providing a voting station which meets the requirements for accessibility under 42 U.S.C. Section 15481(a)(3) on election day and during the period for early voting by personal appearance.

Any voter in the District may request the use of a voting station that meets the accessibility requirements for voting by a person with a disability by submitting a written request to the District at Crosby Municipal Utility District, PO Box 249, Crosby, TX 77532 or 103 W West Wahl St., Crosby, TX 77532 and/or at cmudoffice@crosbymud.org no later than March 20, 2024 which is the 45th day before election day.

/s/ Eddie Foster

Vice President, Board of Directors

DISTRITO MUNICIPAL DE SERVICIOS PÚBLICOS DE CROSBY

AVISO DE LA INTENCIÓN DEL DISTRITO DE CELEBRAR UNA ELECCIÓN SIN PROPORCIONAR UNA MESA DE VOTACIÓN

El Distrito Municipal de Servicios Públicos de Crosby (el “Distrito”) por la presente notifica que la intención del Distrito es celebrar su elección de bonos de reautorización el 4 de mayo de 2024 sin proporcionar una mesa de votación que cumpla con los requisitos de accesibilidad según 42 U.S.C. Sección 15481(a)(3) el día de las elecciones y durante el periodo de votación anticipada mediante comparecencia personal.

Cualquier votante en el Distrito puede solicitar el uso de una mesa de votación que cumpla con los requisitos de accesibilidad para votar por una persona con discapacidad presentando una solicitud por escrito al Distrito en Crosby Municipal Utility District, PO Box 249, Crosby, TX 77532 o 103. W West Wahl St., Crosby, TX 77532 y/o en cmudoffice@crosbymud.org a más tardar el 20 de marzo de 2024, que es el día 45 antes del día de las elecciones.

/f/ Eddie Foster

Vicepresidente, Junta Directiva

KHU VỰC TIỆN NGHỊ CÔNG CỘNG CROSBY

THÔNG BÁO VỀ VIỆC KHU VỰC DỰ ĐỊNH TỔ CHỨC BẦU CỬ MÀ KHÔNG CUNG CẤP MỘT TRẠM BẦU PHIẾU

Khu Vực Tiện Nghi Công Cộng Crosby (“Khu Vực”) xin thông báo là Khu Vực dự định tổ chức một cuộc bầu cử trái phiếu tái ủy quyền vào ngày 4 tháng Năm, 2024 mà không cung cấp một trạm bầu phiếu trong ngày bầu cử và trong thời gian dịch thân bầu sớm nhưng vẫn đáp ứng các yêu cầu về khả năng tiếp cận dựa theo 42 U.S.C. Đoạn 15481(a)(3).

Cử tri trong Khu Vực có thể yêu cầu được xử dụng một trạm bầu phiếu đáp ứng các yêu cầu về khả năng tiếp cận dành cho người khuyết tật bằng cách gửi một văn thư yêu cầu cho Khu Vực ở địa chỉ Crosby Municipal Utility District, PO Box 249, Crosby, TX 77532 hay địa chỉ 103 W West Wahl St., Crosby, TX 77532 và/hay qua địa chỉ email cmudoffice@crosbymud.org không trễ hơn ngày 20 tháng Ba, 2024 cũng là ngày thứ 45 trước ngày bầu cử.

/s/ Eddie Foster

Phó Chủ Tịch, Hội Đồng Quản Trị

克羅斯比市政公用事業區

關於該區打算在不提供投票站的情況下舉行選舉的通知

克羅斯比市政公用事業區（「區」）特此通知，該區打算在2024年5月4日舉行重新授權債券選舉，在選舉日當天和提前投票期間，由個人到場投票，但不提供符合42 USC 第15481(a)(3 條) 規定的無障礙要求的投票站。

該選區的任何選民均可在2024年3月20日（即選舉日前第45天）之前向選區提交書面申請，要求使用符合殘疾人投票無障礙要求的投票站，地址為Crosby Municipal Utility District, PO Box 249, Crosby, TX 77532 或 103 W West Wahl St., Crosby, TX 77532和/或發送電子郵件至cmudoffice@crosbymud.org。

/s/ 埃迪·福斯特

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Crosby ISD: Strengthening Safety and Celebrating Student Success,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Streets. On February 10, the Historical Society also hosted a community forum on future growth in our communities. I enjoyed sharing a snapshot of student enrollment in Crosby ISD as well as answering questions from community members.

Our students are shining each day this semester. Congratulations to the winner of the Crosby ISD Third Annual Spelling Bee. Matthew Rios, a fifth grader at Crosby Elementary School, correctly spelled “surplus” to win the district Spelling Bee. Matthew is now going to the Houston Regional Spelling Bee in March. Good luck! We know you’ll spell your heart out!

There’s nothing better than spending time with our students, and this month I had the chance to spend an entire day with Crosby Elementary School third grader, Peyton Johnson. She was deputized as Superintendent for the Day! She had an amazing day touring campuses, handing out trophies at the Spelling Bee, writing proclamations, chairing the Superintendent’s Cougar Council, and celebrating with her classmates. Peyton was the second Superintendent for the Day this school year, as part of fundraisers to benefit the Crosby Education Foundation.

Crosby High School senior, Israel Eagleton, performed beautifully before a crowd of hundreds at the Houston Area Alliance of

Black School Educators’ 37th Annual Teacher Awards and Recognition Ceremony in Houston. Israel sang “Lift Every Voice” as part of the Black History Month celebration. Another CHS senior, Colby Chapman, was honored as a 2024 scholarship recipient. We also cheered on HAABSE teachers of the year including: Jalen Harrison, Crosby High School; Sherese Guy, Crosby Elementary; Jo Green, Drew Elementary; Crystal Hammond, Newport Elementary; and Rolandra Flannel, Crosby Middle School. There’s icing on the cake, too! Mr. Harrison, Ms. Guy, and Ms. Flannel are all proud Crosby High School alumni who are educating students following in their footsteps.

Turning to athletics, basketball seasons are entering the crucial playoff period for high school student-athletes. We’ll announce the playoff games and results on our district social media platforms, but there’s nothing better than seeing our students compete in person. I hope to see you in the stands! Meantime this month, we cheered on seven student-athletes inking scholarship deals on National Signing Day. Congratulations to the following students: Olivia Lanham, Crowley’s Ridge College (softball); Ricardo Salazar, University of St. Thomas (soccer); the Langley Twins, East Texas Baptist University (football); Levi Fontenot and Brandt



Sheriff Ed Gonzalez speaks at task force meeting on policing.

Wright, Texas A&M Kingsville (football); and Kacee Evans, Texas Wesleyan (football). It’s wonderful to see the hard work, perseverance, and grit pay off for our graduating seniors.

This month marked the second edition of our staff development conference we affectionately call “Cougar Con.” Crosby ISD staff members have a menu of classes to choose from in order to target their personal or career growth. The best part is that most of the sessions are taught by fellow Crosby ISD employees. We have a wealth of knowledge in this school district, and we’re using that collective brain power to get better together each day. Lessons included content-based language instruction, polishing up classroom management skills, improving interactive notebook experiences for students, and so much more. I am so proud to see what our Curriculum and Instruction department has done with our commit-



Matthew Rios, winner of the Crosby ISD Spelling Bee. Matthew goes on to compete in the Houston Regional Spelling Bee in March

ment to lifelong learning and growing future learners. The shared expertise of many will be channeled into our students in the classrooms and enable our teachers to cultivate a rich educational environment.

We are Moving Forward! Go Coogs!



Crosby ISD teachers take deep dive into Content-Based Language Instruction.



Crosby ISD teachers took part in Cougar Con 2.0 on Friday, February 9. Cougar Con is a conference-style day of learning that allows staff members to choose which classes to attend.

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Time Capsule buried to remember Crosby Bicentennial Celebration

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

two markers honoring deceased superintendents Dr. H. L. Barber and Kenton Langston Pate, Sr. There is also another time capsule placed by the elementary school students led by Principal Jane Eaton in 1986. Students were learning about timelines and time capsules at the time. That marker is set to be open in 2036.

Kubin's own family migrated from Lipa in the Czech Republic to Crosby around 1900 and was happy to chair the committee placing the marker.

"My grandmother had a brother in America serving as a priest in Webster, Massachusetts," he said, "and he encouraged them to come to America." They didn't like the weather and eventually moved to Crosby where they bought 150 acres, some of which Kubin lives on now.

After welcoming the participants, Kubin called on Crosby ISD Superintendent Paula Patterson.

"I love that our kindergartners are here. My hope is that all of them are still here in 50 years and come back and bring their own grandchildren here and talk about how they sat around the tree here as they put the time capsule into the ground," said Crosby ISD Superintendent Paula Patterson.

Committee members Jody Fuchs, Mark Moreau and Kubin worked on digging and creating the hole for the time capsule a couple of months earlier. They were joined by member Pam Blaha. A large PVC pipe for holding the capsule, donated by Billy Bostick of Pioneer Plumbing, was inserted with a cap to



Students from Crosby Kindergarten Center across the street from the Crosby Museum of History attended the time capsule ceremony on Thursday, Feb. 1, 2024. They are joined by Superintendent Paula Patterson and Principal Herlinda Minor.



Crosby Historical Society member and chairman of the time capsule committee Randy Kubin gets an assist from Crosby Kindergarten Center student Elliot Sutterfield who placed the time capsule into the ground.

screw on that would seal the 20-inch capsule.

Kubin asked for a volunteer from the students, and he was assisted by 6-year-old Elliot Sutterfield from Pamela Broussard's kindergarten class.

"I want to talk to you," Davenport said to the children. "You are our future. In 50 years, you will be 55 years old. Some of you will still live in Crosby and you will come to this site for a celebration to unearth this time capsule and show off the contents to your friends and another generation," she said.

Then Davenport, a retired teacher from Crosby, gave the children a homework assignment.

"Each one of you will receive a bicentennial celebration button to wear home. I want you to tell your mom, dad, grandma, grandpa, aunt, uncle or whomever is at home with you today that you attended a time capsule celebra-

tion and I'll be here in 50 years to see this time capsule opened."

Then she taught the students the word bicentennial.

"In 50 years, you'll have to say a much harder word, and it's semi quincentennial," she said.

The historical items chosen by the committee and community to place into the capsule were a United States flag; Crosby Bicentennial Celebration button; a Covid test; Texas Legislative Handbook; New Testament Bible; iPhone 10; a list of the Crosby Historical Society board members; a flyer from the Time Capsule ceremony itself; a list of the Crosby Bicentennial Celebration committee members; a program from the Crosby High School Commencement Ceremony and list of seniors from the Class of 2023; a copy of the Constitution of the United States of America; a 2023 Jovita Idar D mint worth \$1.29; a list of the Crosby ISD board of trustees, district administration, principals, and assistant principals; 2023 coins including quarters, dimes, nickels, and pennies; a photo of the Bicentennial Quilt, "Stars Over Crosby" pieced by Pamela Broussard's kindergarten class; and quilted by Kathy Bryant, and a list of a the ladies who worked on the quilt for the Crosby Bicentennial Celebration; a menu from Charming Café; and a Bicentennial Edition of the Star-Courier Newspaper and four other papers leading up to and following the Crosby Bicentennial Celebration.

The time capsule was donated by Kubin, and the marker was given by Bella Dion, managing partner of Sterling-White Funeral Home and Cemetery.

"It's amazing to live in a community like this who has such rich history and to have community members that are interested in chronicling that history is important," Patterson said.

Charges dismissed against boater charged in fatal wreck

HOUSTON – Prosecutors have dismissed 2019 charges against a man once accused of killing a friend and seriously injuring his girlfriend during a boating crash along the San Jacinto River in east Harris County.

Galan Ruiz, 46, was charged with felony murder and intoxicated assault with a vehicle, causing serious bodily injury, in connection with the June 30 river crash. Luis Gonzalez, 33, vanished in the water, and search crews found his body two days later.

Ruiz was hospitalized after the crash and ultimately lost a leg, said his defense attorney, J. Julio Vela.

The deadly crash and other drownings around that time fueled stern warnings from law enforcement that boaters and motorists should not drink and drive during the Fourth of July weekend.

The charges against Ruiz were dismissed Dec. 5, with prosecutors citing "insufficient evidence of defendant's guilt" as their reason in court records.

The case was set for trial last February and later in May, but those proceedings were postponed, court records show. In the months that followed, prosecutors continued to seek records related to the crash, including toxicology testing.

The Harris County District Attorney's Office defended tough prosecution of alcohol-related cases but acknowledged it did not have evidence to win the case against Ruiz.

"We believe in evidence-based prosecution, and based on our evaluation of the evidence, we did not believe a successful prosecution was possible in this case," said prosecutor Lauren Bard, head of the Vehicular Crimes Division.

Ruiz's defense attorney identified issues with the

case, including a possible mechanical problem with the boat, that may have led to the dismissal. A crash reconstruction expert told Vela that the boat's motor did not fit the vessel and that it may have malfunctioned, causing a so-called circle of death boating phenomena after hitting strong wakes.

Gonzalez was flung from the boat as the uncontrolled spinning continued, Vela said.

Only one of the two blood draws taken from Ruiz showed signs of alcohol, he said.

"Because of the backlog, it wasn't until the eve of trial that the state took a real good look at the case," Vela said. "Had the decision been made years ago, it could have spared a lot of heartache."

The lawyer said his client lost his job in auto repair after his arrest.

Former prosecutor Sean Teare, who is running against District Attorney Kim Ogg, touted the 2019 charges while previously leading the Vehicular Crimes Division in Ogg's office at the time they were filed.

Surveillance footage showed Ruiz losing control of the vessel and crashing into a retaining wall, Teare said in 2019. Residents in nearby homes at Sandbridge Court and Rio Villa Drive rescued Ruiz and his girlfriend from the water. Beer cans were found in the crashed boat, Teare said.

Teare, while no longer involved in the case, said the investigation into Ruiz helped prosecutors in his division understand the results of field sobriety tests on water, as opposed to land.

He recalled the case as one that "should be tried" when he oversaw the Vehicular Crimes Division but noted that new evidence since his departure in February could have changed that.

Citizens receive Active Shooter Training,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

church as requested," Hooper said.

The training is required now for every peace officer in the state through the Texas State University ALERRT Center—Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training.

McDonald said the former acronym of Run, Hide, Fight has changed to Avoid, Deny, Defend or (ADD) and was developed by ALERRT in 2004 and offered a strategy to victims a proven plan for surviving an active shooter event.

"That Run, Hide, Fight slogan has changed now," he told the audience. "The new training is Avoid, Deny, Defend and makes more sense in survival," he said.

Throughout the night, the team provided background history and prevalence statistics of active shooter events, explained some of the positive and negative civilian response options, and the need for planning ahead when visiting a place citizens have never been before.

"Most of the time, the attacker generally has no profile," McDonald said.

Many, he told the audience, have an Avenger type mindset. In other words, a person seeking revenge for an offense or wrong done to them or their people; often taking it out on an innocent group of people in revenge for someone else.

"Their risk factors include a history of violence, exposure to violence, substance abuse or dependence, mental illness, and a history of suicidality," Hooper explained.

He also said they may also have a history of stalking, harassing, or threatening behavior, negative



Sgt. Landon McDonald of Pct. 3 Constable Sherman Eagleton's office talks to a crowded San Jacinto Community Center crowd on active shooter training. CRASE prepares citizens in the event they find themselves in a mass shooter event.



Sgt. Louis Hooper of Pct. 4 Constable Mark Herman's office explains the new acronym A.D.D. to Highlands residents.

family dynamics and support system, isolation or instability, where others are concerned.

The numbers are daunting.

The latest FBI numbers show 520 mass shooting incidents in the last year that numbers were reported. To qualify as a mass shooting event, more than three have to be killed, according to Hooper.

More than 47 percent of the attacks occur at a business, while 24 percent are outdoors, 13 percent at schools, and about 14 percent qualify under 'other'.

At least 61 percent of the time, there is no connection to the attacker versus his victims.

The team listed three different stages of disaster response.

"Denial is when you hear gunshots but pass it off as fireworks or a car backfiring," Hooper said. "You're not going to always hear fireworks in the off-season and cars don't have a rapid backfire. If you hear it, go to the next step which is deliberation."

In deliberation, McDonald asked citizens to remain calm and assess

their surroundings.

"A lot of times, when you hear gunfire like in a mall, you want to start running but are you running away from the threat or into it?" he asked. "Just that short second of calming yourself and listening and observing might save your life," he reminded the crowd.

He also asked that everyone script and practice how they're going to get out of a situation.

"Thinking ahead can provide you an out or at least a better chance of survival," he said.

In one of the club fires where there was a mass casualty event, 31 people died in the entrance to the club because everyone was trying to get out of the same exit instead of observing and leaving through others.

"When you walk into a place of business, always observe where the exits are and know in your mind how you're going to get to them in a hurry to escape the threat," he said. One of the mantras of most cops is never to sit with their back to the entrance.

A decisive moment is when you have to make a

life-altering decision.

"Sometimes you may have to fight," they said. Put yourself in a position where you have the best chance to survive.

At Virginia Tech, some of the students lay on the ground pretending to be dead before the shooter even walked into the room. The shooter saw them, shot them in the back and killed them. Eleven students died in that one room alone.

In a room next door, the professor and a student held the door while the other students escaped out the window. No students died in that room.

"That old mantra, 'if you see something, say something' is still important. Call law enforcement. We can check it out and if it's nothing, we go back to patrolling," Hooper said.

When law enforcement arrives, follow commands, show them the palms of your hands above your head, and don't move.

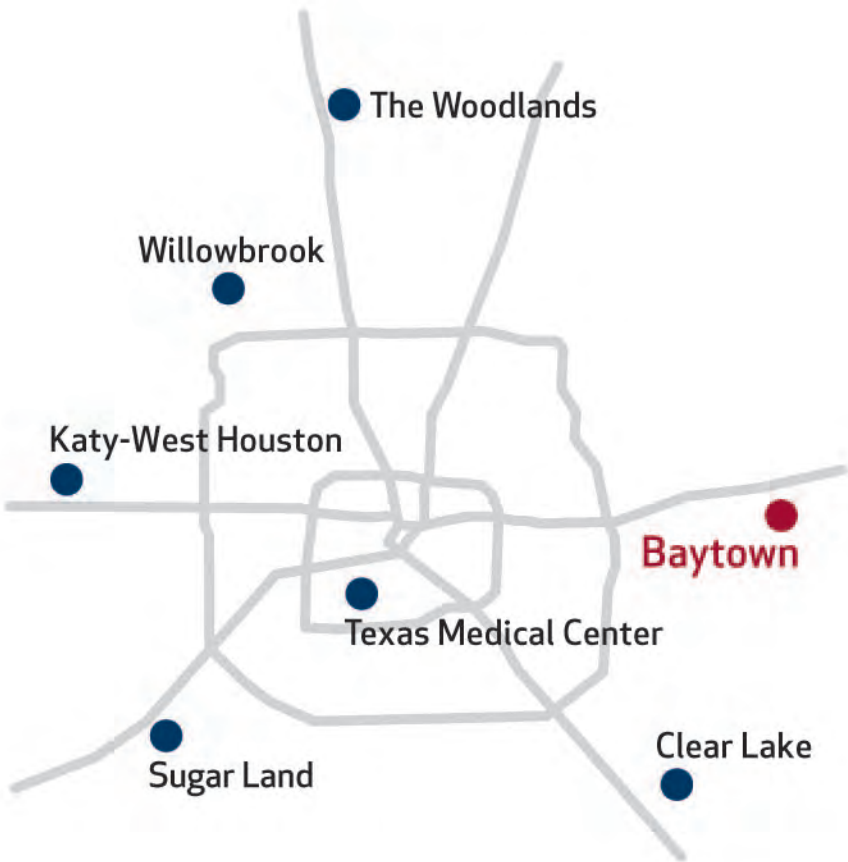
McDonald and Hooper invited the community to call them if they wanted a training class at their business, school, or church.



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