

Candidate Gracia for State
Rep. District 128, Page 2

New Lee College Campus in
Mont Belvieu, Page 3

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HIGHLANDS

CROSBY

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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2024

P.O. DRAWER 446, HIGHLANDS, TEXAS 77562

IN THE STARS

EVENTS

CF&R Mardi Gras Singo Bingo Feb. 23

Crosby Fair & Rodeo fundraiser. SINGO BINGO, Friday Feb. 23 at 6pm Dinner, 7pm Singo. Bonanza Ranch, 17696 Ramsey Road, Crosby. \$50 tickets.

Judge Bate's Teen Summit March 1

Free Event for Students 6th-12th grades. Conversations on issues that affect teens. Sat. March 1 from 10am to 2pm, Goose Creek Memorial High School. Speakers, Vendors, Free Lunch, Door Prizes. Questions, 713-274-0900.

Crosby Library Book Sale March 1-2

Friends of the Crosby Library will hold their Spring Book Sale on: Friday, March 1 - 1pm - 6pm Saturday, March 2 - 10am - 5pm. ****Take advantage of these specials**** Regular size Romance paperbacks - 4-\$1.00 Amish/Christian hardbacks - 2-\$1.00. **** Paperbacks = \$.50 Hardback = \$ 1.00 Children books priced as marked. All proceeds from the Book Sale benefit the library and support the Summer Reading programs. Questions - call the Library - 832-927-7790.

"Bras for a Cause" raises \$140k for Cancer

Annual event raises
Fun and Funds for
Cancer research

By David Taylor
Managing Editor

CROSBY – It was fun and even got raucous at times while the Crosby community turned out in big numbers to support the Bras For A Cause fundraiser. When all the glitter and confetti had settled, they had raised a whopping \$140,000 for cancer.

"This is our 13th year and despite internet problems and parking in the rain, everyone managed to get in and contribute to the cause," said BFAC president Beth King. "We can always count on Crosby people and those in surrounding areas to come out and support us big time."

From North Shore, Dayton, Crosby, and even from as far away as the state of Washington, more than 400 guests packed the American



Twenty brave men from the community and beyond were willing to wear bras and take cat calls from the audience to help raise money at Bras For The Cause. The fundraiser raises money to help fight against cancer.

Legion Hall for the annual gig.

The Crosby organization began in 2008 when Shirley Rodgers was executive assistant and secretary at the Crosby Fair and Rodeo. "She saw an idea called Tough Enough To Wear

Pink, a cowboy supported program for breast cancer awareness. On Saturday night at the rodeo, if you wore a pink shirt, they would donate money to breast cancer research or the American Cancer Society," said Debbie Holmelin.

They would raise additional funds raffling items and selling t-shirts.

Then the girls heard about Bras For A Cause where the guys dress up in bras and you auction them off.

"There really wasn't a

website for them so we decided to do our own," Holmelin said.

They began lining up celebrity models. The first year, most of the 20 models

Continued. See BRAS FOR A
CAUSE, Page 7

Revitalized Highlands Chamber holds GALA

The Highlands/Lynchburg Chamber of Commerce held a successful Awards Banquet last Thursday night, with about 100 guests and members enjoying the colorful Valentine decor and delicious food at the Monument Inn in Deer Park.

President Jim Wadzinski emceed the evening's events, and announced that the Chamber finances had improved, and the membership roll was approaching the goal of 50 members.

The keynote speaker was Precinct 2 official Nelson Espitia, who reviewed the accomplishments of the Precinct in the last few years,



Judge Joe Stephens swears in the Chamber Board and President Jim Wadzinski.

including many public works projects, drainage and road improvements, and economic development. The key message was "Re-
vive2 Thrive."

After Judge Joe Stephens swore in the new board, annual awards were presented by Wadzinski and secretary Reba Rachall. The prestigious Terry

Davis Award for community service was given to Randy Casey for his work with the Chamber; the Business/Organization Award went to the Highlands Rotary

Club, with 10 members present; the Constable Award went to Sgt. Amanda Watson; the Sheriff's Deputy Award went to Brenda Mahan; and the Firefighter of the Year to retiring Chief Harvey Little.

A special highlight of the evening was the attendance of previous Chamber executive Jessica Woods, now recovering from a serious health concern. She received a warm welcome from the Chamber guests.

The audience was reminded of a Golf tournament set for May 5.

Continued. See HIGHLANDS
CHAMBER BANQUET, Page 6

Early voting in Primary starts Feb. 20

HARRIS COUNTY – Harris County Clerk Teneshia Hudspeth has announced the start of Early Voting for the March 5 Joint Primary Elections, and her staff demonstrated what voters can expect to see at the polls at a Press Conference last Monday, February 19.

Early Voting in person runs from February 20 to March 1, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., except Sunday, February 25, noon to 7 p.m.

Harris County has countywide polling, which means voters can go to any of the 79 early vote centers across the county.

Voters will choose from either a Democrat or Re-

publican ballot of their choosing. In a runoff, they must vote in the same party. Ballots will be lengthy, because they include Presidential candidates, Senators, Congressmen, Judges, local county and city officials, constables and sheriff, precinct chairs, and propositions on the Republican ballot.

Of special interest to area voters is State Representative Briscoe Cain running against Bianca Gracia in District 128. Other incumbents running unopposed are Senfronia Thompson, Carol Alvarado, and Sylvia Garcia on the Democratic slate.

Richard Cantu is run-

ning to retain his seat on the Harris County Department of Education board, but has an opponent in Josh Wallenstein.

Other high profile races include the Harris County District Attorney, with incumbent Kim Ogg facing challenger Sean Teare. Also of interest is a race for Sheriff, with incumbent Ed Gonzalez facing 3 challengers. County Attorney Christian Menefee has an opponent, Umeka Lewis.

For election information, visit www.HarrisVotes.com and connect on social media at @HarrisVotes for news and updates.

Trail Rides mark start of RodeoHouston

HOUSTON – A total of more than 2,000 cowboys and cowgirls are expected to participate in this year's 11 rodeo trail rides, some of which will travel 100-plus miles to Houston.

February marks the start of rodeo season in Houston, and as part of a beloved annual tradition later this month, thousands of cowboys and cowgirls will begin making their way to the city while riding horses and wagons in a scene straight out of the Old West.

Eleven trail rides associated with the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo will commence starting



NORTHEASTERN TRAIL RIDERS, Anthony Bruno Trail Boss, start from Cheeks, Texas and come through Northeast Houston on the way to Memorial Park and the Houston Rodeo Parade on Saturday, February 24th.

Feb. 16, the rodeo announced Thursday. A total of more than 2,000 trail riders are expected to par

Continued. See TRAIL RIDES
RODEOHOUSTON, Page 2



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GOOSE CREEK CISD NEWS

GCCISD Announces Elementary and Secondary Principals of the Year

Goose Creek CISD is proud to announce Tailis Oniwon as the Elementary Principal of the Year and Daniel Blanson as the Secondary Principal of the Year. Both individuals were nominated and chosen by their colleagues as superior instructional leaders that have succeeded in providing high-quality learning opportunities for students at their respective campuses.

Principal Tailis Oniwon, a dedicated educator with 12 years at GCCISD, including four as principal at Crockett Elementary. She holds a bachelor's degree from Texas Southern University and a master's from Sam Houston State University. She is a devoted wife and committed mother of four to Jaliyah (15), Tyrese (17), Mia (6), and Kai (1) and she shares her home with two poodles and a shih-tzu. Inspired by influential educators, she strives to be a positive influence for all students, fostering a love of learning, innovation, and community service. As she passionately believes, "The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character - that is the goal of true education." - Martin Luther King Jr.

Dr. Blanson is in his 19th year in public education. He spent 16 years in Aldine ISD and has been in GCCISD for the past 3 years as the proud principal of Horace Mann Junior. As principal, Dr. Blanson was able to increase the campus rating last year to a B rating. Dr. Blanson believes in fostering positive relationships, maximizing student achievement, and promoting community engagement. He holds a bach-



elor's and master's degree from Prairie View A&M University, and a Doctorate Degree from Houston Baptist University. Dr. Blanson is an equity-driven leader who advocates for every scholar, ev-

TI-YAY! GCCISD to Receive Over \$1.5 Million From State

Goose Creek CISD is excited to announce that over 160 teachers will receive over \$1.5 million in additional bonuses in recognition of their outstanding efforts in the classroom through the Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) initiative.

The Teacher Education Agency (TEA) created the Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) to provide additional funding for top-performing teachers. Eligible teachers can earn one of three levels of designation - Recognized, Exemplary, or Master. The purpose of TIA is to incentivize effective teachers to remain in the classroom and prioritize

Brooke Dockery, GCCISD's Associate Director of Compensation, began the lengthy process in the Fall of 2021. A committee comprised of campus leaders and central administration staff was formed to create a local designation system and determine the measures for designations, as well as identify eligible teaching groups. The proposal was submitted to TEA in the Spring of 2022, and the district collected student classroom growth and teacher observation data during the 2022-2023 school year. GCCISD submitted the data to TEA in the Fall of 2023 and

received notification last Friday that the data had been approved.

GCCISD is awaiting the next steps in notifying teachers who will be receiving a designation. Those who earn a designation will automatically receive bonuses for the next 5 years. The District also intends to expand eligible teaching groups in the future and recommend additional teachers for TIA designations using student growth and appraisal data.

Senator Middleton donates to GC CISD Army JROTC



Goose Creek CISD is pleased to announce a generous donation of \$10,000 to the Army JROTC program at Sterling High School from Senator D. Mays Middleton II. In addition to his monetary contributions, Senator Middleton also wrote letters of support to key decision-makers of the Army JROTC and the Moody Foundation grant.

Adrienne Sun, District Director for State Representative Briscoe Cain, was instrumental in GCCISD obtaining the Sterling High School Army JROTC pro-

gram grant from the Moody Foundation and the JROTC approval by the U.S. Army. She assisted GCCISD with these approvals through Cain's letters and his support communication, resulting in the Moody Foundation approving the JROTC grant, totaling \$310,475.00.

After a long-standing partnership with the Marines from 1977 to 2023, GCCISD began the new Army JROTC program in August 2023 with the help of Judy Dubose, a retired Army veteran and Class of

Strap In for Safety



In a dedicated effort to enhance road safety awareness and prevent tragic accidents, the Kailee Mills Foundation has recently contributed to the installation of “Buckle Up” signs at Goose Creek CISD high schools. The foundation, established in memory of Kailee Mills, aims to educate, and remind drivers and passengers alike about the critical importance of wearing seat belts.

Kailee Mills, a vibrant and promising young woman, lost her life in a car accident on October 28, 2017, when she removed her seat belt to slide over in the backseat and take a selfie with

her friend. Her family, devastated by the loss, transformed their grief into action by founding the Kailee Mills Foundation. As stated on their website, the Mills family chose to honor their daughter by focusing their energy on something positive: raise awareness about the importance of seat belt use.

Foundation believes that through increased visibility and education, they can contribute to a culture of safety and reduce the number of preventable accidents on the road.

As Goose Creek CISD comes together to support initiatives like the installation of "Buckle Up" signs, they contribute not only to honoring Kailee's memory but also to creating a safer, more responsible society. It is through efforts like these that community members are reminded to take responsibility for their safety and the safety of those around them by simply buckling up every time they get into a vehicle.

Vote Bianca Gracia Texas Representative HD 128

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2024 Primary Election

Early Voting
February 20 - March 1

Election Day
March 5

www.BiancaForTexas.com



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Barbers Hill Dayton Press

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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2024

MONT BELVIEU, TEXAS 77580

ON THE HILL

Dayton Native Performs Helicopter Maintenance Aboard U.S.S William P. Lawrence



U.S. Navy sailors serve and protect from around the globe, and every sailor got their start somewhere. 240118-N-CD319-1106 SOUTH CHINA SEA (Jan. 18, 2024) Aviation Machinist's Mate 3rd Class Logan Snapp, from Dayton, Texas, performs a routine maintenance check on an MH-60R Sea Hawk Helicopter, assigned to the "Blue Hawks" of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM 78), aboard Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS William P. Lawrence (DDG 110). Lawrence is assigned to Carrier Strike Group ONE and deployed to U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations in support of a free and open Indo-Pacific. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Tristan Cookson)

Beach City Native Serves on the Flight Deck Aboard USS Princeton



240208-N-PV401-1131 PHILIPPINE SEA (Feb. 8, 2024) U.S. Navy sailors serve and protect from around the globe, and every sailor got their start somewhere. Naval Aircrewman (Helicopter) 2nd Class Zac Crane, from Beach City, Texas, conducts a patient assessment on a simulated casualty on the flight deck aboard Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Princeton (CG 59). Princeton is assigned to Carrier Strike Group ONE and deployed to the U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations in support of a free and open Indo-Pacific. (U.S. Navy Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Elizabeth Grubbs)

State Okays Plan for New Lee College Branch Campus with Barbers Hill ISD

By David Taylor
Managing editor

After almost nine years of planning, a unanimous vote on Jan. 25 by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board okays a Barbers Hill ISD and Lee College proposal to establish a branch campus in Mont Belvieu.

"This unanimous vote of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to allow our community to vote on a Barbers Hill branch college campus is the culmination of years of extensive dialogue and planning," Barbers Hill Superintendent Dr. Greg Poole said. "The Barbers Hill branch campus will provide a long-term positive impact for students and community."

With the state's okay to proceed, the Barbers Hill ISD school board had to vote to call a branch campus election by Feb. 16. The board voted unanimously at their Feb. 2 board meeting to place the measure to establish a branch campus on the May 4 ballot.

The proposal will include the construction of a 60,000 square foot building by Barbers Hill ISD with a capacity of 1,000 students at the cost of \$30 million. It also includes a



maintenance tax election at a rate of five percent on each \$100 valuation of all taxable property.

To earn consideration, a petition from the district's voter registrar certifying the signatures of registered voters who live in the Barbers Hill district had to sign a petition requesting the measure be put on the ballot and 1,008 signed the required petition exceeding the five percent requirement of 990 signatures.

According to the district, the Barbers Hill ISD

tax rate will not increase because of the college plan's passage.

While the effort seeking to establish a college campus in Mont Belvieu began as early as 2015, it expanded in earnest with the establishment of a steering committee that included Chairwoman Sandra Duree, Barbers Hill deputy superintendent; Vice Chairman Benny May, Barbers Hill trustee; Secretary Macie Schubert, West Chambers County Chamber of Commerce president and CEO;

George Barrera, Barbers Hill trustee; Eric Davis, Barbers Hill trustee; Jimmy Sylvia, Chambers County judge; Brian Winingham, Mont Belvieu city manager; Daryl Fontenot, Lee College regent; Gilbert Santana, Lee College regent; and Brad Widener, Lone Star NGL at Energy Transfer vice president of operations. Dr. Villanueva and Dr. Poole were non-voting members of the committee.

Their first meeting was on Oct. 12, 2022, and the last one on Nov. 30, 2022. In between, they were treated to tours of other college campuses, focus groups, surveys, consultations with architects and negotiations between the two entities.

According to the district, responses to online surveys and focus groups were overwhelmingly favorable and supportive of the branch campus.

Chambers County commissioners joined Mont Belvieu council members in passing a resolution in support of the college plan.

The steering committee also appointed three subcommittees—a programming subcommittee to develop courses, programs, degrees, and services to be offered at the branch campus; a finance subcommit-

tee to develop a financial plan supporting the branch campus; and an architect subcommittee to develop plans for the facility that will house the branch campus.

Programs to be offered include offering AAS degrees in Respiratory Therapy and Sonography and a certificate in Pharmacy Technology. Vocational programs leading to employment in skilled and semi-skilled occupations include certificates in Sterile Processing Technology and Drone Operator. All freshman and sophomore state-mandated core curriculum would also be offered.

Continuing adult education programs, high school equivalency programs, and English as a Second Language courses would also be on the list.

According to a district release, "The new campus would provide a complete array of student services to ensure the Barbers Hill community receives the same level of amenities found at the main Lee College campus in Baytown."

District spokesperson David Bloom said, "Currently, there are 10 branch colleges in Texas and even fewer that are directly tied to a school district."

Champion of Education: GCCISD Superintendent Randal O'Brien Wins Prestigious Award

Congratulations to Dr. Randal O'Brien, Superintendent of Schools for Goose Creek CISD, for being honored as a 2024 Sam Houston State University (SHSU) Distinguished Educator of the Year. The Distinguished Educator of the Year award recognizes and honors alumni educators who have made a significant contribution to the field of education. Nominees must be an alumnus



DR. RANDAL O'BRIEN

of SHSU's College of Education and have demonstrated expertise or outstanding service in the classroom, school, district, and/or community.

Dr. O'Brien has served as superintendent of Goose Creek CISD for the past nine years. He was named the acting superintendent during the August 7, 2014 Board meeting and was confirmed superintendent later that year; becoming

the 15th superintendent in the 100-year history of the district.

Dr. O'Brien holds a bachelor's degree in business management from East Texas Baptist University, where he played basketball and tennis on scholarship; a master's of education in administration from Sam Houston State University and a doctorate in educational leadership from Lamar University. His experi-

ence includes more than 30 years in education; serving as a CTE teacher/coordinator, assistant principal, campus principal, district administrator, and, for more than a dozen years; superintendent of schools.

Dr. O'Brien will be honored at this year's ceremony on March 2 at the Lowman Student Center White Ballroom in Huntsville, Texas.

History is Not Only in the Past

Lee College History Day Competition

By Norma Martinez

This past weekend marked the culmination of the Lee College Regional History Day Competition. This year's event, with the theme of "Turning Points in History," showcased historical papers, websites, documentaries, performances, and exhibit projects where young historians presented their research and projects.

Participants delved into various historical topics, offering insightful perspectives and engaging narratives. The day celebrated the students' dedication to historical inquiry and fostered a sense of community and intellectual curiosity.

Students buzzed with excitement throughout Lee College as junior school and high school attendees explored exhibits and interacted with the present-

ers. Judges, educators, and parents alike were impressed by the depth of knowledge and creativity demonstrated by the students.

Those students placing first or second in the junior division categories were: Ananya Sood- EF Green, Ainsley Benoit- Cedar Bayou (Documentary), Ava Flood- Cedar Bayou (Exhibit), Maahi Singh- EF Green & Ava Westbay- Gentry (Paper), Jacob Mejia- EF Green (Performance), Arya Patel & Gabriella Martinez- EF Green (Website), Kenzie & Kollin Pinkerton- Gentry, Lucas Melcher & Micah Williams- EF Green (Group Documentary), Yashvir Singh Gill, Gabriel Ramirez, Jonathan Lewis, Annali Ramirez- EF Green, Austin Thomas & Brycen Gardiner- Baytown Junior (Group Exhibit), Cara Keiser, Lea Diaz, Amelia Breault- Gentry, Crisette Gardner, Chloe Allen, Mellony Blakeslee, & Serena Lanham- EF Green (Group Perfor-



Jonathan Lewis, Gabriel Ramirez, Annali Ramirez, Yashvir Gill, students from EF Green Junior School won first place on their history project titled "From Sea to Shining Sea: The Transcontinental Railroad Redefines the Face of a Nation". (Photos by Carrie Pryor-Newman)



The Goose Creek CISD students that will represent the district at the state history competition.

mance), and Anay Gupta & Manavendra Chouhan, Theertha Nair & Arpitha Sunilkumar- EF Green (Group Website).

Those students placing first or second in the senior division categories were: Ravleen Kaur Gill-GCM, Emmery Ripke- Sterling (Documentary), Rachel Currie- IMPACT (Exhibit), Freddy de la Rosa- Sterling (Paper), Hanna Coker- Sterling (Website), Gianni Del Rio & Jody Valerie Go Hiong, Joshua Camtugan, Noah Caban, & Alexa Banda- IMPACT (Group Documentary), Axel Moreno, Salvador, Bejar, Destiney Ramos, & Mateo Ortegon, Logan Ochoa & Giovanni Paz- GCM (Group Exhibit), and Karly Esquivel, Leighton Briggs, and Ace Ellis- Sterling, Shakuntala Bhowmick & Laila Cardona- IMPACT (Website).

These 51 GCCISD students are advancing to the state competition on April 20, 2024, at the University of Texas at Austin.

★

OPINION

Harris County Judge
Lina Hidalgo



Stricter Gun Control Regulations needed

Judge Lina Hidalgo Calls for Stricter Gun Safety Regulations in Wake of Lakewood Church Shooting

Harris County, TX, February 16, 2024, Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo issued the following statement in response to the shooting at Lakewood Church on Sunday:


“All of us in Harris County are hurting from the shooting at Lakewood Church. Part of our response to what is now just the latest tragedy like this, which is not unique, is looking at how we can prevent an unstable person from accessing a gun. The majority of guns used to commit crimes in Texas are purchased legally. The Lakewood shooter used an AR-15 that she was able to purchase legally, despite her criminal record and a history of violent behavior.

Texas has a history of responding to mass shootings by loosening gun laws rather than strengthening them. This is demonstrably not the way to reduce gun violence. With state laws tying our hands, we can only do so much at the local level. I am calling on our state leaders to do what is beyond obvious and pass stricter regulations on purchasing guns in Texas, including a red flag law,” said Judge Lina Hidalgo.

###

Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo is Harris County’s chief executive and Director of the Harris County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management. Judge Hidalgo, alongside four county precinct commissioners, oversees a budget of approximately \$5 billion that funds services and institutions for the third-largest county in the nation, home to nearly 5 million people. For more information about Harris County and the Office of the County Judge, please visit: cjo.harriscountytexas.gov.

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



Home Country
with Slim Randles

Morning exercise. The easy way

Doc was just getting up to leave the philosophy counter as Herb walked in. Herb was grinning and flexing muscles and had the look of eagles in his eyes. We stared.

“Herb,” said Doc. “You know, you can overdo a good thing.”

“Why Doc ... whatever do you mean?”

“I realize that getting more exercise is your resolution for the new year, but a man your age ... you need to pace yourself a little, that’s all. Don’t try to get in shape all at once.”

“Why Doc, I’ve never felt better in my life. Hey, you were so right to get me on this exercise kick. I’ve been meaning to thank you. It’s just what I’ve been needing. What would you think about my playing some football in the spring? I mean, it’s just touch football, but I miss the ol’ razz-matazz, you know?”

Doc shook his head sadly and walked out. Herb started laughing and sat down with us and flipped his cup over for his morning eye opener.

“What was that all about, Herb?” Dud asked.

“A little joke I’m playing on Doc, that’s all,” Herb said. “You remember how Doc has been on my case to get more exercise and slim down some? Well, there was only one way to shut him up, so I started running. I bought a sweat suit and started running. I run past his house each morning. Then, about an hour later, I run past his house the other direction, huffing and puffing and looking at my watch.”

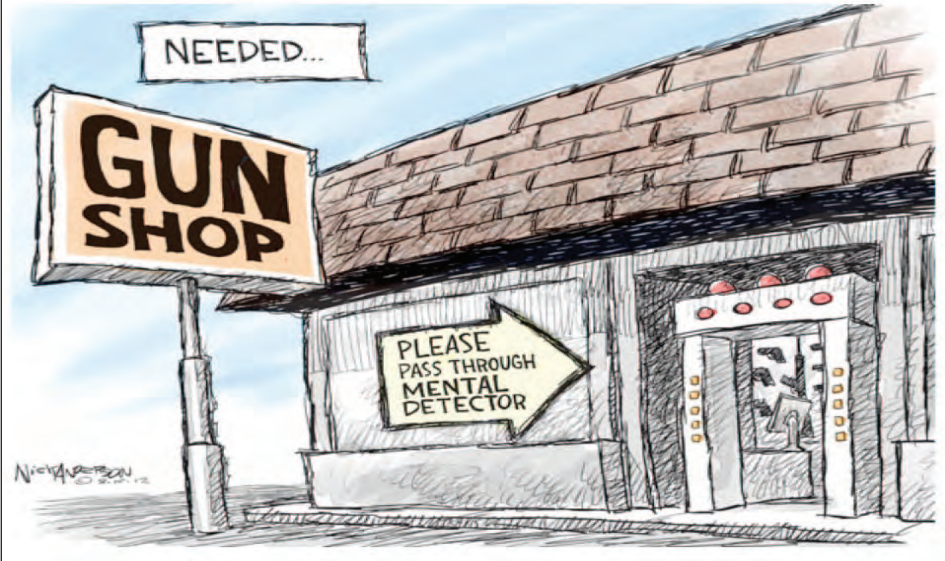
“An hour? You run for an hour each morning?”

“Of course not,” Herb said, laughing. “I run past Doc’s house then walk the block to the library. An hour later, I run past Doc’s house and then walk two blocks home.”

We stared at him.

“What?” he said. “You know Doc’s going to worry about me one way or the other. I just thought I’d change it up a bit.”


Brought to you by Saddle Up: A Cowboy Guide to Writing by Slim Randles. Now available as a Kindle book on Amazon.com.



★

STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

By Gary Borders



Pitch Made for New Power Plants

Lt. Gov Dan Patrick joined with the world’s largest investment firm to pitch investors on building natural gas power plants in Texas at a summit held last week in Houston.

Patrick and BlackRock CEO Larry Fink shared the stage as they attempted to persuade investors to take advantage of \$10 billion in incentives and bonuses provided by the state after voters approved a constitutional amendment last November, kut.org reported.

“We estimate in this room there’s \$2.2 trillion,” Fink told the crowd. “We only have to put \$10 billion to work, so can we get it done? Can we start raising hands?”

While Patrick remained optimistic the plan would attract investors interested in building new power plants, others aren’t so sure.

Ed Hirs, an energy economist at the University of Houston, told kut.org that the way the Texas power market is structured won’t necessarily provide a steady return to power plant operators.

“If you’ve got \$2 trillion worth of investors and they’re looking for a deal ... they wouldn’t have had this summit; there would already be power plants being built,” he said. “All of these guys are sharks. They’re not going to miss an opportunity to make a profit.”

New law increases sentences for human smugglers

A state law that increases the minimum sentence from two years to 10 years for people convicted of smuggling immigrants or harboring them illegally went into

TEXAS PRESS ASSOCIATION



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS
By Gary Borders

effect last wee.

The Texas Tribune reported SB4 was one of three immigration-related bills signed into law late last year. Other measures provide state money for construction of barriers along the Texas-Mexico border and make it a state crime to illegally cross the border from Mexico.

The latter measure is being challenged in court by the U.S. Department of Justice, El Paso County and immigrant rights groups.

“This increase in policing and increased criminalization is going to further exacerbate the overcrowding of our jails,” said David Stout, an El Paso County commissioner.

Ten counties exceed tougher soot standards

Tougher rules aimed at reducing particulate matter in the air went into effect last week, reducing the amount of what is commonly called soot permitted in the air from 12 to 9 micrograms per cubic meter annually.

It is the first change in the limits since 2012. The soot can cause lung and throat irritation, aggravate asthma and cause other ailments, the Tribune reported.

According to data from the Environmental

★

THE POSTSCRIPT

By Carrie Classon

Donuts in the Middle of the Day



While a person may buy a cake here in Mexico seven days a week from early morning to late at night, getting any other kind of dessert is more challenging.

There is a bakery I walk by every day. Everything is fresh and in bins. Customers pick up a metal tray and tongs and select what they want, then bring it up to the counter. The tray is returned to the pile. The tongs are hung neatly with the other tongs. It is a great system, except that the tray holds a lot of baked goods—probably more than I should eat on any given day.

But a problem has occurred.

I meet with a wonderful group of writers on a rooftop, and they have been kind enough to agree to read the first half of my new book. The first half (slightly more than half, actually) is 149 pages, so this is a generous thing for them to do. I want to bring treats, naturally. I thought apple empanadas would be best, as they are my favorite. But the meeting is at 2 in the afternoon, and the empanadas only appear at 2, promptly at 2, and never one minute before.

“I don’t suppose I could pick any up at 1?” I asked the nice girl at the counter.

She shook her head sadly. No. They were only available at 2.

“What do you have that I could buy at 1?” I inquired.

She pointed to the bread. Somehow, showing up at the meeting with a bag of dinner rolls was not what I was imagining.

“What about donuts?” I asked. The girl’s eyes widened as if I was really asking far too many questions, and she referred me to a baker standing in the back.

I explained to the baker (to the best of my ability) that I had a meeting at 2 and I would love to bring “sweets” to the meeting. The meeting, I added, was with Americans. (There will also be several Canadians, but I decided not to complicate things.) I could tell he sensed the problem. This man looked as if he’d been baking things long enough to have heard of the eccentricities of Americans.

“So, no empanadas before 2?” I wanted to confirm.

No, he shook his head sadly. That could not be done.

“Cookies?”

They come out later yet.

“Donuts?” He seemed to find this amusing. Donuts are never available before 5.

“Maybe you could buy empanadas the day before?” he suggested.

“Would they still be hard?” I asked (because I couldn’t remember how to say “soft”).

“They would be soft by the next day,” he admitted. I was stymied.

I asked Pepe at my hotel, “Why do you eat donuts at night?”

“Oh! They are good with hot chocolate or coffee after dinner. When do you eat them?”

“Usually in the morning,” I told him, feeling a little foolish as I admitted it.

“In the morning?”

“Yes.”

I could tell Pepe was filing this away as yet another inexplicable thing he had learned about gringos while working at the hotel.

The meeting is next week, and I still do not have a good solution. I will probably take the baker’s advice and buy empanadas a day early. They will be a little “suave,” as he said, but they will still be delicious. And, as long as I’m buying things a day ahead, I may throw in some donuts.

We’ll sit there on the roof, a bunch of happy idiots, eating donuts in the middle of the day.

Till next time,
Carrie



1. **Argyle**
(PG-13) Henry Cavill, Bryce Dallas Howard
2. **Lisa Frankenstein**
(PG-13) Kathryn Newton, Liza Soberano
3. **The Beekeeper**
(R) Jason Statham, Emmy Raver-Lampman
4. **Wonka**
(PG) Timothee Chalamet, Gustave Die
5. **Migration**
(PG) Kumail Nanjiani, Elizabeth Banks
6. **The Chosen: \$4E1**
(NR) Shahar Isaac, Paras Patel
7. **Anyone But You**
(R) Sydney Sweeney, Glen Powell
8. **Mean Girls**
(PG-13) Angourie Rice, Renee Rapp
9. **American Fiction**
(R) Jeffrey Wright, Tracee Ellis Ross
10. **Poor Things**
(R) Emma Stone, Mark Ruffalo

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Amber Waves



The Spats



Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

	3				2	1		
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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: ♦♦

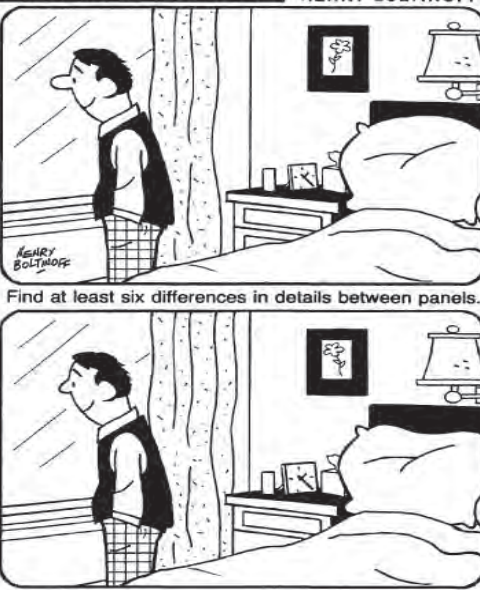
♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging

♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.

February 19, 2024 Posting Date
King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Pep singer Adams
4 "Get Here" singer Adams
9 Opposite of "post-"
12 Equal (Pref.)
13 Jeremy of "Entourage"
14 Corn serving
15 Prepaid convenience for cell users
17 Texter's "Enough!"
18 Common verb
19 Spiritualist
21 Oliver Twist, for one
24 Cabinet dept. head
25 "Norma —"
26 Snake's warning
28 Mexican snacks
31 Actor Richard
33 UFO crew
35 Commanded
36 Enticed
38 Rep.'s rival
40 "Diamonds" singer
41 Goatee's spot
43 "O Pioneers!" author
45 Long recliner
47 Magic, on scoreboards
48 "A spider!"

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57				58				59		

- 49 Cell user's practical joke
54 Conk out
55 Dodge
56 Classic car
57 Hosp. areas
58 Opposite of most
59 Watch chain
7 Semesters
8 "Still ..."
9 Fund for minor expenses
10 Male of "Bohemian Rhapsody"
11 Guitarist Clapton
16 "Unh-unh"
20 Wound cover
21 Pitcher Hershiser
22 Pasta sauce brand
23 Fruity baked goods
27 Norm (Abbr.)
29 Garfield's pal
30 Blacken
32 Classic soda brand
34 Extra helpings
37 Put to rest
39 Grocery store
42 Audacity
44 Patient's need, briefly
45 Give up
46 Estate recipient
50 Bond rating
51 Canine cry
52 Zodiac feline
53 Arced tennis shot

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5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
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Answer

Weekly SUDOKU

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Solution time: 22 mins.

Answers

King Crossword



1. GEOGRAPHY: What is the capital of Canada?
2. ANIMAL KINGDOM: What was the first animal to be cloned?
3. LITERATURE: In the children's book series "The Bobbsey Twins," what are the names of the two sets of twins?
4. CHEMISTRY: What is the symbol for the chemical element platinum?
5. MUSIC: What is the title of Elvis Presley's first commercial single?
6. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: What is the first U.S. national park?
7. MEDICAL: What is a common name for xerosis?
8. FOOD & DRINK: What is a sommelier?
9. U.S. PRESIDENTS: Who was the first president to visit all 50 states?
10. HISTORY: What were the principal powers of the Axis in WWII?

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Trail Riders RodeoHouston,

Highlands Chamber Banquet,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ticipate, and they'll come from rural locations throughout the Southeast Texas region while making overnight stops and traveling more than 100 miles in some cases – with Goliad, the site of an 1836 battle between the Republic of Texas and Mexico, being

the most far-flung starting point. This year's rodeo is scheduled for Feb. 27-March 17 at NRG Park. The trail riders will gather Feb. 23 at Memorial Park, where an awards ceremony will be held at 5

p.m. The trail ride tradition dates to 1952, when four men traveled from Brenham on horseback to promote the Houston Rodeo, which first was held in 1931. --HPM

Trail Boss: Anthony Bruno

ByJonathan Bruce KTRK
February 24, 2023

ABC13 caught up with trail boss Anthony Bruno live from the trail to talk about the journey and the significance of the historically Black trail ride.

HOUSTON, Texas — Fifty-five riders, 19 wagons, and 111 miles over six days make up the only historically Black trail ride of the Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo.

ABC13 caught up with Northeastern Trail Ride trail boss Anthony Bruno live on the trail as the caravan made its way to Memorial Park in Houston on Friday to commemorate the rodeo as part of the 71-year history of the famous trail rides.

“For us to be able to do this every year, it’s an honor and a privilege. We live a millionaire’s dream,” Bruno said from inside a Northeastern wagon as the ride set out on its final stretch of a six-day journey.



Anthony Bruno
Trail Boss Northeastern Trail Ride

Ten trail rides got underway on Sunday to participate in the event's signature annual tradition.



Trail Boss Anthony Bruno in the saddle.



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"Bras for a Cause" raises over \$140,000 to Fight Cancer,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

were directors from the fair and rodeo. They served food, paraded the models individually, and then brought them back one by one to auction off their bra.

Holmelin understands the sting of a cancer diagnosis after her husband Victor died with male breast cancer. He survived for 17 years with a healthy life after his diagnosis.

Much of the money raised at the fundraiser goes to Pink Heals, or the Breast Care Center Fund, or for lung cancer screenings at Houston Methodist Baytown Hospital.

"Those help individuals who need assistance, particularly with co-pays or other financial needs to get the help that they need," Holmelin said.

Money is also donated to the Candlelighters Childhood Cancer Family Alliance.

"Much of that money is used to assist families who have to pay out of pocket thousands of dollars on parking, meals, and groceries while their child is undergoing treatment," she said.

According to King, the latest numbers show 67 children in Crosby and surrounding areas diagnosed with cancer.

"We also help pay for children to go to Camp Cliff along with their families while they're going through treatment," she said.

Last year, BFAC Crosby also adopted six families for Christmas.

The first year they began Bras For A Cause they raised \$30,000. Now, the bidding for some of the bras start around \$2,000 and bring in considerably more. Santa Claus made an appearance and auctioned off his bra for more than \$13,000.

"They've gotten more creative and funnier with the bras, and it has helped raise the amount of funds," King said.

The first year, one of the models, the president of the rodeo Russell Rogers, only wore red solo cups so they've come a long way since the early days.

Models walk the catwalk encouraging bill stuffing and all money raised on the floor during their walk is donated to the organization.

Then they come back out individually while their bra is being auctioned off and that's when the big money begins to flow.

"Before tonight, we had donated more than \$1.5 million to our charities," King said.

They've been recognized by the Methodist system with a brick on their donor wall that has listed those who have given more than a million dollars.

The organization goes through the Crosby Fair and Rodeo to utilize their non-profit status to be able to give tax deductions to big donors.

"We owe a lot to the models and their bra-makers for their hard work. They are our real heroes," Holmelin said.

Models this year included David Mendez, Adam Notgrass, Kevin Pipes, Andrew Tarpinion, Jason McWhorter, Mike Stamper, Robby Scott, Chris Nolden, Chris Baird, Mikey Jarrell, Jakie Sims, Dr. Nirav Naik, Clayton Johnson, Steve Eudy, Matt Crumpler, JR Humphries, Matthew Whitworth, Quentin Klaus, Jeremy Strang, and James Blaha.



Bras For The Cause board members presented a check to Houston Methodist Baytown Hospital for their work with Pink Heals, the Breast Care Center Fund, and for their help with lung cancer screenings.



A third check was presented to the Candlelighter's organization for their assistance with thousands of dollars of out-of-pocket expenses for parking, meals, and groceries while their child is undergoing treatment for cancer.



Mike Stamper from Sterling-White Funeral Home dressed as Boot Skootin Boogie at the event to help raise breast cancer awareness and money for the fight.



A second check was presented to Kelly Price of Joseph's Warriors organization. They give goody bags at Christmas and blankets at Texas Children's Hospital and MD Anderson for children going through cancer treatments.

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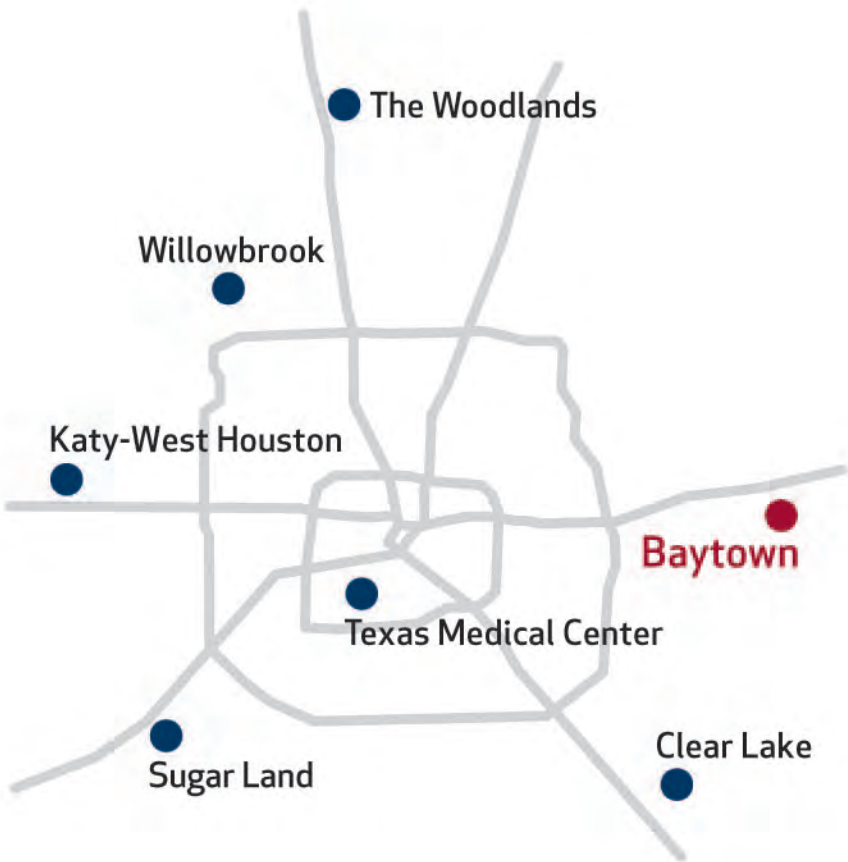
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