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Houston Methodist Baytown Annual Mammogram, Page 8

HIGHLANDS

CROSBY

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GREETINGS FROM GUANGZHOU, CHINA  
See Page 6 for a report from our Foreign Correspondent

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THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2024

P.O. DRAWER 446, HIGHLANDS, TEXAS 77562

## IN THE STARS

### Sacred Heart Church Czech Festival Oct. 6th

Join your neighbors to enjoy a day of Games, Raffle, BBQ, and Auction. It's the Annual Sacred Heart Church CZECH FESTIVAL, Sunday October 6th at the Crosby Fairgrounds. Don't miss it!

### Highlands/Lynchburg Chamber Lunch Oct. 10

October Luncheon Thursday Oct. 10 at 12pm, San Jacinto Community Center, Highlands..

Speaker will be Nicolas Rada of Pct. 3, speaking about Flock Cameras, which read license plates for Public Safety and law enforcement.

RSVP to [highlandslynchburgchamber@outlook.com](mailto:highlandslynchburgchamber@outlook.com).

### Crosby/Huffman Chamber Lunch Oct. 17th

October Luncheon and Board Elections, Thursday Oct. 17 from 11:30am. At Crosby Church, 5725 US90, Crosby.

Come to a special luncheon as we come together to shape the future of our chamber with the 2024 Board Elections.

Agenda:  
-Board Elections  
-Networking  
-Chamber Updates  
Tickets on the website: [crosbyhuffmanc.org](http://crosbyhuffmanc.org).  
NOTE: CASINO NIGHT CANCELLED.

# Crosby opens History Museum

Crosby Historical Society opens long-awaited museum

By David Taylor  
Managing editor

Almost one year to the day last year, the northeast Harris County community of Crosby celebrated its bicentennial. On Saturday, they stepped back into that rich history with the long-awaited opening of its celebrated history with the opening of the Crosby Area Museum of History (CAMOH) located at 5712 Pecan Street.

For years, the small group plugged along working to establish an area that would pay tribute to their beloved community and their dream became a reality.



Historical Society president Donna Davenport, and Crosby/Huffman Chamber Director Tom Richard were among the many members of the community that participated in the Opening of the new History Museum.

"We never thought we would get here, but we have," said Crosby Historical Society president Donna Davenport. "I'm so proud of this museum and it has really been a labor of love."

More than 120 residents signed in to the museum registry on Saturday, exceeding the expectations of the Society leadership.

The vision for a space that would honor the heritage of the Irish, Swedes,

Czechs, and other nationalities that would become the melting pot called Crosby, was from familiar pioneers.

Irishman Humphrey Jackson built a log cabin on Jackson Bayou near its

confluence with the San Jacinto River, according to Crosby historian Jody Fuchs.

Establishing the colony had challenges.

"Humphrey was one of the original 'Old 300' settlers of Stephen F. Austin's first Anglo colony in Texas. However, Humphrey faced tremendous challenges in his dream to build a new settlement in what would be East Harris County," Fuchs said. The area was also brewing with trouble since it was occupied by the Akokisa and Karankawa Indians, who often cannibalized their enemies, according to Fuchs.

It was more recent leaders for the community that provided the impetus to

Continued. See CROSBY HISTORY MUSEUM OPENS, Page 2

## THEA review of latest Waste Pits proposal finds remedy "Insufficient"

THEA Tells EPA Latest San Jacinto River Plan

Inconsistent And Insufficient

By Jackie Young Medcalf



THEA has reviewed the proposed plan to clean up the Northern Pit of the San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund Site and warned the EPA that it contains a number of problems. This proposal was developed by the two companies responsible for the site and was supposed to outline its final plan to re-

move tons of contaminated material from the remaining pit. However, our review found a number of places where the plan doesn't meet the EPA's requirements and contains sections that are vague and lack necessary details. The EPA will consider the plan and comments in

deciding whether to allow the responsible party companies to continue to lead the cleanup or to remove them and take the project over.

The following summary of the THEA letter to EPA indicates the type and extent of problems found in

the review:

THEA is writing to provide our comments on the 100% Remedial Design for the San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund Site (San Jacinto Site). The comments reflected in this letter and in our design review are rooted in genuine community input, local knowledge, THEA's expertise, and our experience engaging with this Superfund process for over a decade.

THEA holds the position that the 100% design package, as prepared by

the Responsible Parties (RPs), does not meet the standards expected of a complete remedial design plan. We believe this design package fails to completely address the concerns outlined by the EPA in the agency's 2024 Notification of Serious Deficiency.

There are numerous inconsistencies within the document, along with plans that defer critical specifications and procedures to the remedial con-

Continued. See WASTE PITS, Page 7

## GOOSE CREEK SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE Growth and Civic Engagement

### Celebrating Growth and Civic Engagement in Goose Creek CISD

We are officially 24,000 students strong! The fact that our parents and community trust Goose Creek CISD to educate their children is a testament to the strength and appeal of our schools, as well as our commitment to providing a quality education. Our students are the heart of Goose Creek, and every new student represents an opportunity to shape a brighter future for us all.

Our progress would not be possible without the dedication of our community, particularly those who have actively participated in GC2035, Goose Talks, and other steering and advisory committees. These public forums have been instrumental in providing district administrators with valuable feedback helping shape



Goose Creek CISD Superintendent Randal O'Brien

our decisions. Your input has guided many of our current initiatives, as well as every component within our strategic plan and is currently shaping our long-range facilities planning efforts. We are incredibly grateful to our business partners, educational colleagues and essentially everyone who has taken the time to join in these discussions and contribute to the overall

betterment of our schools.

As we celebrate these achievements, it's important to remember another critical way in which you can make a difference: by exercising your right to vote. Our board of trustees has adopted a resolution prioritizing the value of deciding who our elected officials will be, through committing to vote. The deadline to register to vote in the upcoming November elections is October 7. Voting is one of the most powerful ways we can influence the direction of our community and our schools. It is both a right and a privilege that allows each of us to have a true voice in choosing leaders who will advocate for the educational needs and interests of our students and families.

Continued. See Goose Creek Superintendent, Page 7

## HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH HONOREE – (2nd of a series) Celebrating Sylvia Garcia

By Allan Jamail

Houston, TX ~ September 23, 2024 is the second week of Hispanic Heritage Month to be observed until October 15th.

**What is Hispanic Heritage Month?** According to the Hispanic Heritage Month official website, it is observed: "by celebrating the histories, cultures, and contributions of American citizens whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central and South America." For generations, Latinx have contributed to the food, music, business, science, and culture that we know as American, and the 30 days that make up Hispanic Heritage Month each fall is just one opportunity to showcase these achievements.

My honoree this week is Congresswoman Sylvia R. Garcia whom I've known for about 45 years and watched her grow into becoming one of the nation's most influential congressional representatives'.

Just as her parents believed in her future, Congresswoman Garcia believes the children of Texas can




U.S. Congresswoman Sylvia R. Garcia

do anything. Garcia has dedicated her life to her community and to public service. As a social worker and legal aid lawyer early in her professional career, she protected our community's most vulnerable, old and young, and ensured no one was forgotten.

Congresswoman Sylvia R. Garcia is a native of Palito Blanco, a South Texas farming com


CONTINUED. See HISPANIC HERITAGE HONOREE, Page 7

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 **WESTON G. COTTEN**  
HERITAGE, Page 7  
Attorney at Law  
O. 281/421-4050  
F. 281/533-6032  
[weston@westoncotten.com](mailto:weston@westoncotten.com)

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FOOTBALL SEASON WEEK 5: Diggs faces old team when Bills come to town: Reeling Cowboys face stern test in Pittsburgh

Texas' two professional football teams had a rough go of it two weeks ago as both teams suffered defeats.

The Texans were dominated on both sides of the ball in their 34-7 loss at Minnesota, while the Cowboys were run over and through by Baltimore enroute to a 28-25 loss at home, in a game that wasn't as close as the final score indicated.

The Texans offensive line had a rough day, which was bad news for QB C.J. Stroud. That unit allowed Stroud to be sacked five times and had numerous illegal procedure and holding calls that stalled out drives.

The Cowboys defense once again was shredded at home as Ravens running back Derrick Henry, who many expected would sign with Dallas in the offseason, ran over and through the Pokes for 151 yards and two touchdowns. Dallas trailed 28-6 entering the fourth quarter and scored 19 points in the final stanza to make the score respectable.

Things don't get any easier for either team this week as the Texans host the hot Buffalo Bills, while the Cowboys head to Pittsburgh to take on a Steelers team that won its first three games behind a defense that allowed just 26 points through the first three weeks of the season. Dallas and Pittsburgh will meet on Sunday Night Football.

Texans wide receiver Stefon Diggs will be going up against his former team when the Bills visit NRG Stadium on Sunday at noon. Diggs spent four productive years with Josh Allen and Buffalo, but was traded in the offseason to the Texans. Some say he wore out his welcome in Buffalo, while others contend it was time for him to move on. The Texans were more than happy to have the steady receiver to add one more weapon for Stroud.

Other top games this weekend in the NFL have Tampa Bay visiting Atlanta on Thursday Night Football in a key early-season NFC South tilt, while the improving Jets visit Minnesota on Sunday. Baltimore hopes the Dallas win was the springboard it needed to get on a run after losing their first two games at home. The Ravens will visit the Bengals, who lost their first three games (two at home) and can't afford another loss this early in the season if they hope to contend for a playoff spot.

Week 5 concludes on Monday Night Football with the Saints visiting the Chiefs.

On the college schedule, No. 24-ranked Texas A&M hosts No. 11-ranked Missouri in a key SEC game for both teams, while Iowa visits No. 3-ranked Ohio State. No. 4-ranked Tennessee has a tough road test at high-scoring Arkansas.

District 14-6A play enters its second week with Nimitz taking on Aldine, MacArthur taking on Eisenhower and Davis visiting Spring.

Before we take a look at this weekend's games, let's, unfortunately, review last week's record. After a blazing start to the season, we hit a brick wall with a 5-7 week, which brought the season record to a respectable 31-17 (66%).

Now, onto this weekend's games.

NCAA

Missouri at Texas A&M - Missouri will bring a 4-0 record into Kyle Field on Saturday when it takes on the Aggies for an 11 a.m. kickoff on ABC. Two weeks ago, Missouri escaped lowly Vanderbilt, 30-27 in double overtime, while the Ags struggled at home with Bowling Green and pulled out a 26-20 win. The A&M defense will have its hands full against a loaded Mizzu offense, led by QB Brady Cook (936 yards, 4 TDs), and wide receivers Theo Wease Jr. (26 receptions, 257 yards, and top NFL draft pick Luther Burden III (18 receptions, 247 yards, 4 TDs). The Aggies have some weapons of their own on offense with two solid QBs in Marcel Reed (422 passing yards, 4 TDs/217 rushing yards, 1 TD) and Conner Weigman (225 yards, 2 TDs). A&M can also run the ball effectively with Le'Von Moss (354 yards, 3 TDs). I think the Aggie defense will make a play or two late to pull off the upset and have Aggie fans smiling when they leave Kyle Field. My pick, A&M 33, Missouri 29

Iowa at Ohio State - The No. 3-ranked Buckeyes host a tough Iowa team on Saturday. Iowa has a strong running game led by Kaleb Johnson (685 yards, 9 TDs), so the Buckeyes will need



to slow him down and turn their attention to QB Cade McNamara (588 yards, 3 TDs). OSU is once again loaded on offense led by QB Will Howard (795 yards, 6 TDs), running backs Quinshon Judkins (336 yards, 5 TDs) and TreVeyon Henderson (267 yards, 4 TDs) and big-play wideouts Jeremiah Smith (14 receptions, 281 yards, 4 TDS) and Emeka Egbuka (14 receptions, 266 yards, 1 TD). Look for Ohio State to let the rest of the Big 10 know things will run through Columbus this year and not Ann Arbor. My pick, Ohio State 38, Iowa 13

Tennessee at Arkansas - The No. 4-ranked Vols have another tough road outing when they take on an Arkansas team that has a lot of offensive weapons. Two weeks ago, Tennessee won a tough road game at Oklahoma, 25-15. QB Nico Iamaleava (892 yards, 7 TDs) has a lot of weapons on offense, led by running back Dylan Sampson (449 yards, 10 TDS) and wide receivers Dont'e Thompson (7 receptions, 242 yards, 3 TDs) and Bru McCoy (12 receptions, 200 yards). The Hogs can get it done on offense as well led by dual threat QB Taylor Green (957 passing yards, 4 TDs/325 rushing yards, 4 TDs) and running back Ja'Quinden Jackson (472 yards, 8 TDs). I think the Hogs hang around in this one, but look for the Vols defense to be the difference maker late. My pick, Tennessee 31, Arkansas 23

NFL

Tampa Bay at Atlanta - Week 5 begins with Thursday Night Football as the Bucs visit the Falcons in an important NFC South contest for both teams. Two weeks ago, the Bucs dropped a 26-7 decision at home to a Denver team that lost its first two games of the season, while the Falcons, dropped a tough one at home to KC, 22-17. TB needs QB Baker Mayfield (637 yards, 6 TDs) to play as he did in the Buc's first two games. Look for wide receivers Chris Godwin (21 receptions, 253 yards, 3 TDs) and Mike Evans (10 receptions, 120 yards, 2 TDs) to attack a banged up NO secondary. The Falcons need QB Kirk Cousins (626 yards, 4 TDs) to pick up his game, along with running back Bijan Robinson (196 yards, 1 TD). Wide receiver Drake London (14 receptions, 136 yards, 2 TDs) and Darnell Mooney (12 receptions, 169 yards, 1 TD) are off to decent starts. Look for Cousins to get things going on Thursday night against the Bucs. My pick, Atlanta 26, Tampa Bay, 23

New York Jets at Minnesota - Aaron Rodgers and the Jets visit the surprising Vikings on Sunday in what should be an interesting game. Two weeks ago, the Jets looked good on both sides of the ball in their 24-3 throttling of New England. Rodgers (624 yards, 5 TDs) tossed two TD passes, while the defense came up with nine sacks. Rodgers has some nice weapons in running back Breece Hall (170 rushing yards, 2 TDs/16 receptions, 120 yards, 1 TD) and wide receiver Garrett Wilson (15 receptions, 150 yards, 1 TD). The Vikings have been one of the NFL's pleasant surprises, winning their first three games behind journey man QB Sam Darnold (657 yards, 8 TDs), running back Aaron Jones (228 yards, 2 TDs) and big-play wide receiver Justin Jefferson (14 receptions, 273 yards, 3 TDs). The Vikes also have a stout defense as evidenced by their 16 sacks and six take aways. Look for the Minnesota defense to be the difference maker on Sunday. My pick, Minnesota 24, New York Jets 18

Baltimore at Cincinnati - It's only Week 5, but the Bengals could be looking at a lost season if they lose at home to Baltimore this Sunday. The Bengals lost their first three games, two at home to New England and Washington, while Baltimore got on the winning side two weeks ago with a dominant win over Dallas. Cincinnati QB Joe Burrow (746 yards, 5 TDs) and wide receiver Ja'Marr Chase (16 receptions, 215 yards, 2 TDs) are doing their job, but the defense has been an issue. The

Ravens will give that unit a steady dose of QB Lamar Jackson (702 passing yards, 3 TDs/254 rushing yards, 1 TD), running back Derrick Henry (281 yards, 4 TDs) and wide receiver Zay Flowers (16 receptions, 148 yards, 1 TD). Look for Baltimore's defense to pick up its game and make it another tough day for Bengal fans. My pick, Baltimore 26, Cincinnati 23

Buffalo at Houston - Josh Allen (634 passing yards, 7 TDs/85 rushing yards, 2 TDs) brings the high-powered Bills into NRG Stadium to take on the Texans. Allen has a lot of weapons on offense in running back James Cook (188 yards, 4 total TDs) and wide receiver Khalil Shakir (14 receptions, 168 yards, 2 TDs) and a defense that has recorded 11 sacks in its first three games. The Houston offensive line must do a better job of protecting Stroud (709 yards, 4 TDs), or he could be in for another long day like he went through two weeks ago at Minnesota. The Texans hope to have running back Joe Mixon (184 yards, 1 TD) back for this game, which would be huge for the offense. Look for wideouts Nico Collins (18 receptions, 338 yards, 1 TD) and Diggs (20 receptions, 164 yards, 2 TDs) to be focused for this one, especially Diggs who would like nothing more than to stick it to his former team. My pick, Houston 31, Buffalo 28

Dallas at Pittsburgh - This one could get ugly if the Cowboys don't fix a porous defense and find a running game. Dallas does not have a running back who has rushed for 100 yards on the season yet, let alone in a game. The lack of a running game could be costly against a Steeler defense that had nine sacks in its first three games. Look for the Pittsburgh defense to go after Dallas QB Dak Prescott (851 yards, 4 TDs/2 interceptions) and his go-to guy CeeDee Lamb (13 receptions, 218 yards, 1 TD) and turn things over to Justin Fields (518 yards, 2 TDs), Najee Harris (209 yards) and George Pickens (13 receptions, 171 yards). If the Dallas defense does not play the run better, Harris and Fields could run wild on Sunday Night Football. Looks like it will be another long Sunday for Cowboy fans. My pick, Pittsburgh 23, Dallas 16

New Orleans at Kansas City - Week 5 concludes with Monday Night Football as the Saints visit the Chiefs. New Orleans was the talk of the league after opening the season with two impressive wins, but they came back to earth two weeks ago with a 15-12 home loss to the Eagles. QB Derek Carr (585 yards, 6 TDs), running back Alvin Kamara (285 rushing yards, 4 TDs/10 receptions, 132 yards, 1 TD) and wideout Chris Olave (12 receptions, 178 yards, 1 TD) will get tested by a very good KC defense. It's the KC offense that needs to get going. QB Patrick Mahomes (659 yards, 5 TDs) needs more help from tight end Travis Kelce (8 receptions, just 69 yards in first three games). Mahomes has had success hooking up with wide receiver Rashee Rice (24 receptions, 288 yards, 2 TDs) and the Chiefs may have found a new star in rookie running back Carson Steele (99 yards). Look for the KC offense to get rolling on MNF. My pick, Kansas City 31, New Orleans 18

In Highlands and Crosby Everyone reads the STAR-COURIER. Your Hometown Newspaper.

Crosby opens History Museum,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

preserve the history that molded the town into what it has become today.

"There are some special people looking down on us right now who wanted this museum to come to fruition: My Dad, Edwin B. Swanson who always wanted the museum to be in the old Crosby State Bank Building downtown, our past chairman of the Crosby Historical Society, Klaus Duda who collected items in hopes of a museum, Buddy Hare and Bill Murff, other past chairmen of the CHS, Joe Keating, and Edith Fae Cook Cole and Donna Heinlein, Dr. James Gracey. Hey guys, we did it for you!" Davenport shouted.

The fulfillment for Saturday's dream came closer when Dr. Keith Moore and then Dr. Scott Davis pushed the Society into a 99-year lease.

"In 2022, we paid the lease off," Davenport said, securing the site for at least the next biennial celebration.

With the \$1 per year lease of the property that was the former site of the Crosby ISD headquarters, the museum moved a step closer to opening.

Davenport spoke about her own personal connection with the community.

"I am a fourth generation Crosbian. My great grandparents were Swedish and when they heard there was land to farm in Crosby, they came quickly and re-rooted here. This is why I'm so passionate about this museum," she added.

Before the museum could open, there had to be generations of families to donate to the museum.

"This isn't an antique store," Davenport said. "Every item had to come from a family connected to Crosby and the item had to have a story behind it. Two days ago, I took in another artifact because of the history the object had. Vernon Hord gave us a crossbow saw owned by John Strokas who used it to build the first bridge across Gum Gulley Road on FM 2100," she told the crowd gathered at the ribbon cutting. The crossbow has yet to be mounted, but currently leans on the wall by the saloon.

Davenport thanked current board members including Jody Fuchs, Susan Armstrong, Judy Cul-



Crosby Historical Society president Donna Davenport gave the Welcoming Remarks to the crowd at the Grand Opening.



Crosby ISD School Superintendent Paula Patterson spoke about the history of high school sports in Crosby. See BELOW for a photo of the special room with Sports Memorabilia.

breath, Pam Blaha, Karen Blomstrom, Nathan Duda, Ella Guaqueta, Randy Kubin, Billy McKinney, Mark Moreau, Kenneth Prasek, Mark Stasney, Jenny Prasek, and Sue Fitzgerald.

She also praised the display crew including Jenny Prasek, Mark Moreau, Randy Kubin, Lynda Kubin, Kenneth Prasek, Pam Davenport Blaha, Penny Adams, Dee Ann and Ric Rook, Laura Richard, Wilma Hearn, Joyce Prescott, Ella Wright, Jacob Blomstrom, and Sue Fitzgerald.

She honored one special board member.

"Jody Fuchs headed up the interior renovation along with Mark Moreau and Kenneth Prasek. We would not be here today without his tireless efforts to put in walls, flooring, lighting and some beautiful displays. I don't think he is here today so when

you see him on the streets, be sure to tell him how much you appreciate his dedication to get this museum put together for us," she said.

With that, Davenport thanked the sponsors, the Newport Garden Club who put in the front flower bed, and Tessa Kogut of Baytown who painted the town's first outside mural art.

To sign up to be a member of the historical society costs \$10 annually or a gift of \$300 for a life-time membership. All donations are tax deductible since they're a 501(c)(3) charity.

The hours of operation are Saturdays, except when a holiday falls on a Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Also, residents can make an appointment for other times by calling Donna Davenport at 281-731-7010.



Various rooms in the Museum have themes, and this one is about Sports in the Crosby area with a large display of Sports Memorabilia.



An Outdoor Mural, with images of Crosby's History, was painted by Tessa Kogut.



# Barbers Hill Press

## Dayton

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

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THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2024

MONT BELVIEU, TEXAS 77580

### ON THE HILL

Mont Belvieu Fire Dept and Parks & Recreation "BREAST CANCER WALK-A-THON"



Breast Cancer Walk-A-Thon

Lace up your best walking shoes because the Mont Belvieu Fire Department and Parks & Recreation have teamed up together to host another Walk-A-Thon!!

This Saturday October 5, we're not only hosting our regular Market, but also coming together as a community to support the Breast Cancer Walk-A-Thon happening that same morning!

Many of the amazing vendors will be donating a portion of their proceeds to help local community members in their fight against cancer. So come by the market, shop local, and show your support! Together, we can make a difference.

Proceeds will benefit a local fund to help assist local patients with financial needs while undergoing cancer treatments. & Participants will have 3 hours to walk or run around the City Park Amphitheater at 0.25 miles per lap beginning at 8:00 a.m. that morning, and participants will receive a free, pink event shirt while they last.

**PLEDGE INFO**  
People can choose to sponsor you per lap or make a flat donation amount. Your efforts make a difference! Sign up online at: <https://app.99pledges.com/fund/MBWalkathon24/addme>

Get your family, friends, neighbors & coworkers involved and walk together to keep each other motivated!

Don't want to walk-a-thon? That's okay; you can make a direct donation at <https://app.99pledges.com/fund/MBWalkathon24/donate>

**DONATIONS**  
All donations can be made online through our online donation page: <https://app.99pledges.com/fund/MBWalkathon24>, and 100% of the funds brought in will be donated.

**VENDORS**  
We'll have informational booth with local health-care providers, vendors selling lots of pink merch, gifts & snacks, games & entertainment for kids, and more! If you would like to reach out to us and apply to be a vendor at this event, visit [www.montbelvieu.net/vendors](http://www.montbelvieu.net/vendors)

## Liberty County Marshal Terminated after Arrest for alleged Theft, Corruption, and Evidence Tampering

**LIBERTY COUNTY** – Liberty County officials voted to terminate their fire marshal after he and two other people in his office were arrested on charges of theft, official oppression and tampering with evidence.

Bill Hergemueller faces multiple charges, including official oppression, tampering with physical evidence with intent to impair, and theft of property valued between \$750 and \$2,500.

Along with being charged with stealing materials from a truck after its driver was killed in a crash, the now-former fire marshal is accused of using his position to bully towing service workers into sending him payments and performing fire inspections without proper licensing.

The vote for Hergemueller's dismissal happened during a special-called meeting in Liberty County Commissioner's Court Friday.

"The events that have unfolded this week present us with an opportunity to develop and adopt a more stringent review process for appointed officials," Liberty County Pct. 2 Commissioner Greg Arthur said during Friday's meeting. "Moving forward, this court will do what is necessary to ensure that every person appointed to that position in Liberty County is qualified under the law."

Hergemueller was last appointed to fire marshal



Officials from the Liberty County Fire Marshal's Office who were arrested on charges including tampering with evidence and theft.

in Sept. of 2022. The position requires appointment every two years, meaning that he was coming up for renewal for the office. The county's attorney's office advised the commissioner's court to non-renew Hergemueller to the office of fire marshal.

The former fire marshal was arrested along with assistants Nat Holcomb and Jesse McGraw, who were all booked into the Liberty County Jail following an investigation into their actions while on duty, according to Liberty County judicial records.

More information surrounding the arrests

Holcomb is charged with tampering with a government record (defraud/harm) and theft of property valued between \$750 and \$2,500 (enhanced). McGraw, another assistant fire marshal, also fac-

es charges of tampering with a government record (defraud/harm) and tampering with physical evidence with intent to impair.

All three of the men have since been released from jail according to court records.

According to court documents, Hergemueller is accused of using his capacity of fire marshal to gain early access to hazmat scenes. He doesn't make it known he is on scene for hazmat containment but instead uses his capacity as fire marshal to bully owners of towing services on the scene, the documents say.

The documents allege Hergemueller tells the owners of the towing services he will send them an invoice for hazmat services, makes them aware he runs Liberty County and

thanks them for their business. This leads the owners to believe they must pay the invoice in order to continue to work within the county and protect the livelihood of their employees, the documents say. The owners have paid Hergemueller and his company several thousand dollars over time, according to the documents.

On one occasion, when one of the owners stopped paying the invoices, the documents allege a week later, Hergemueller and a deputy fire marshal showed up to the tow yard and conducted a fire inspection, instilling fear of the power Hergemueller held.

The documents allege Hergemueller and Holcomb stole products from the trailer of an 18-wheeler which was involved in a crash on US 59 in Decem-

ber 2022. In that incident, they are also accused of siphoning diesel from the 18-wheeler and pouring it into a 55-gallon drum for personal use.

In another incident, the documents say Hergemueller and Holcomb responded to a fatal crash on FM 787 in October 2023 where a box truck collided head on with another vehicle. The driver of the box truck was killed in the crash. In this incident, the two are accused of taking an aluminum ramp belonging to the owner of the box truck. They also are accused of taking the vehicle's bumper cover and two rims.

All three of the men also did not have the proper licenses to perform fire inspections, approve plans and permits or to perform fire investigations, according to the court records.

When questioned about this, the court records say Hergemueller admitted to siphoning diesel from the truck and keeping it for personal use. He also reportedly admitted to taking the aluminum ramp as well as allowing his fire marshal employees to perform fire investigations despite them not having the proper state licenses.

The documents say Holcomb also admitted to the thefts as well as not having the proper licenses. McGraw also admitted to not having the proper licenses to perform fire inspections or investigations, the documents say.

### THOUGHTS FROM HILLSIDE CHURCH

By Dr. Mark Trice



## Be on the Alert

Horses: People who don't work with them generally have no idea just how fragile they can be. They're big. They're strong. They appear to be invincible. Most who see cowboys riding, cutting, and working with their horses have no idea what goes into their care. They can't see the hours spent checking for injuries or how closely we watch their feed. They're not around when we go into action at the first signs of colic. They don't know the pain of watching our faithful companions and working partners suffer.

People often see Christians in much the same way. A strong man of God who isn't afraid to stand up for his faith may be criticized or admired, depending on who's watching. Seldom do the watchers consider what made him into the man he is today and, even more importantly, what keeps him where he is spiritually.

Just like a horse can founder, a man can flounder if he's not constantly monitoring his spiritual condition. The man who turns a blind eye to the state of his walk with God is ignoring the most important thing of all and he's setting himself up for a fall. Whether you are young in the Lord or a spiritual old-timer, consistently guarding your walk is a necessity. We've been reminded of this as we've watched some highly respected ministers fall in recent years.

Which brings me to another point. As the owner of the horse, we don't jump to the conclusion that we must put it down when it founders. Instead, we do our very best to restore it to health. We may be willing to do any amount of work, pay any price to avoid losing it. And it's just a horse. God feels much more strongly about the man who has fallen, and so should we. II Peter 3:9 reminds us that God doesn't want anyone to go to Hell. We shouldn't want that either. It's not for us to write off the fallen man, but rather to pray for him. Besides, if we honestly judge ourselves first, understanding how much we need grace, it's harder to give up on him.

Matthew 7:3 makes it clear: "And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye?" We need to regularly judge our own hearts, ensuring that we stay right with God. At the same time, yes, we need to lift up our brothers and sisters in Christ as we all fight through the last days of this spiritual war we're in.

Because, as we can see more and more clearly every day, we are undeniably in the middle of a spiritual war. Ephesians 6:10-18 isn't just fancy words Paul wrote to encourage those in the church at Ephesus. This passage is a command, and it applies to us today perhaps even more than it applied to them. The devil knows his time is short and he is pulling no punches. The deceivers Matthew talks about in 24:24 are very real and walking beside us daily. As he said, if it were possible the enemy would deceive even the elect.

Stay strong, Church. Keep your eyes open and your armor on. Time is almost up.

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OPINION PAGE

**OPINION**  
By **BILL KING**



### Harris County has Raised Property Taxes by nearly 30% in the last two years

It has been widely reported by the local media that Harris County Commissioners' Court increased taxes by 8% at their meeting on September 19.

However, the County's public tax notices clearly show that for the increase for the average homeowner will be at least 15% and may be as high as 19%. While this increase is jaw-dropping, it is made even more egregious because it comes on the heels of a nearly 12% increase last year, making the increase over the last two years 29.5%. These increases will result in the County and its related entities receiving nearly \$900 million more in tax revenue than just two years ago. To say this increase is unprecedented is a gross understatement. I suspect this is the largest two-year tax increase in the history of the State of Texas.

*The Tax Setting Process*

First, it is important to remember that your tax bill is a function of two factors: the tax rate and the taxable appraised value of your property. If either of those goes up or down, so will your tax bill.

When elected officials set their tax rates in the fall of each year, the appraisal district has provided them with an estimate for the likely increase in the appraised values for that year. That estimated increase in the appraised value for the average taxpayer's home is included in the required tax notices. So, when elected officials set tax rates for the year, they know what the likely effect will be on their residents' tax bills.

Officials like to talk about tax rates but ignore appraised values, which for many years have been steadily moving higher. This allows elected officials to claim that they are holding taxes steady or, in this case, mislead taxpayers that an increase is not as dramatic as it actually is.

*The 2024 Tax Increases*

The **Commissioners' Court** sets the tax rates for the Harris County along with the Harris County Flood Control District, the Harris County Hospital District and the Port Authority. Because these are separate legal entities, they must publish separate public notices regarding their tax rates.

So, let's look at what happened at each of these entities in the tax setting process over the last two years.

In both of these tax years, the Harris County Appraisal District (HCAD) notified Commissioners' Court in advance of setting the tax rate, that appraised values would be increasing. The projected increase in 2023 was 9.3% and 4.48% in 2024. So, Commissioners knew that even if they did not increase the tax rate at all, property owners' tax bills would still go up by those amounts.

Here are the tax rates set by Commissioners' Court this year and the effect they had on the average homeowner according to the official public tax notices.<sup>2</sup>

For the County, the Commissioners' Court approved an increase in the tax rate of just over 10%. When the 10% tax rate increase is combined with the 4.48% valuation increase, the result is that the average homeowner's County tax bill will increase by 15%.

*(Note: All of the tables included in this post are screenshots taken from the public tax rate notices the County is required to publish. Each screenshot has a hyperlink to the corresponding notice in which it appeared.)*

For the Harris County Hospital District, the Commissioners' Court approved a 13.98% tax rate increase. When the 13.98% tax rate increase is combined with the 4.48% valuation increase, the result is that the average homeowner's Hospital District tax bill will increase by 19.09%.

For the Port Authority, the Commissioners' Court approved a 7.14% increase in the tax rate. When the 7.14% tax rate increase is combined with the 4.48% valuation increase, the result is that the average homeowner's Port Authority tax bill will increase by 11.96%.

In addition, the Commissioners' Court has also asked voters to approve a massive 65% increase in the property taxes for the Flood Control District.

**If voters approve the increase for the Flood Control District, the total tax bill for all four entities for the average homeowner will jump from \$1,159 last year to \$1,379 this year, a 19% increase.**

*The 2023 Tax Increase*

As I mentioned previously, this increase comes on top of another large increase in the tax bills last year. However, the math last year was different.

Last year, there were small increases in the tax rates for the County and the Flood Control District with small offsetting reductions in the tax rates for the Hospital District and the Port Authority. But HCAD projected at the time that the value of the average home would increase by 9.3%. As a result, the Commissioners' Court knew that if they held the tax rate close to even, taxpayers would be paying about 9% more. **The end result was an overall 9.7% increase last year.**

**When added together, the taxes for the average homeowner will increase in just two years by 29.5% (\$1062 to \$1,379).**

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, from the beginning of 2023 through the first quarter of 2024 (their last published data), average wages for Harris County were only up by 3.9%. So, Harris County taxes over the last two years have grown more than the rate seven times higher than Harris County's residents' wages.

The increase in Harris County taxes is **five times the rate of inflation for our region** over the last two years.

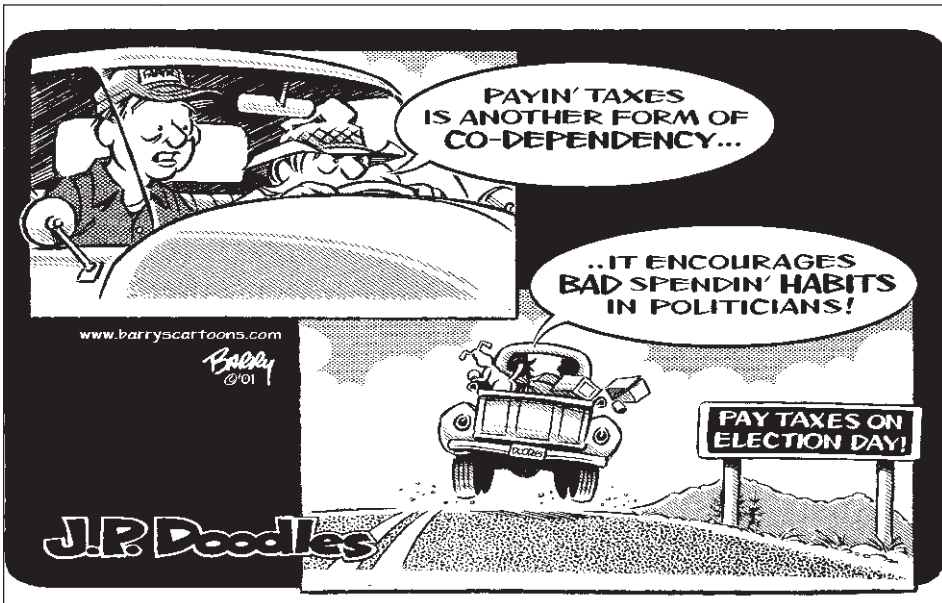
Of course, homeowners are only one piece of the property tax pie. The increases in the total tax levy by the County provides a more macro view of the magnitude of the increases over the last two years. Again, according to the County's tax notices, **the total levy for all four entities has gone from slightly under \$3.1 billion in 2022 to nearly \$4 billion for this year, a staggering 28.7% increase in the overall tax burden on the County in just two years.** Frankly, I have never heard of a property tax increase even close to this magnitude before.

And keep in mind that is on top of **historic increases** in the amount that County has siphoned from the Harris County Toll Road Authority.

This tax increase will be felt by every person and business across the county. The cost of everything will be higher as result of it and that will be on top of the current inflation we are already dealing with.

I am not sure when, or perhaps, if ever, these elected officials will come to comprehend that people do not have to live here. Ultimately, they will vote with their feet. Indeed, they have already begun to do so. In the last decade, Harris County's net domestic migration has been a **negative 200,000**. I suspect these massive tax increases will send more running for the exits.

**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.



**STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS**  
By **Gary Borders**



### Voter Registration Deadline Nears for November Election

Eligible Texans planning to vote in the November general election have until Oct. 7 to register, Texas Secretary of State Jane Nelson reminds folks. The registration deadline applies to both early and election day voting.

"Texans have just a few short weeks left to register to vote, and I want to ensure all eligible Texans who want to make their voices heard are registered and prepared to do so," Nelson said.

Instructions on how to register to vote and how to update existing voter registrations can be found at [VoteTexas.org](http://VoteTexas.org). To be eligible to vote, you must be a U.S. citizen, a resident of the county where you register and at least 18 years old on Election Day.

Texas officials say they have scrubbed voter rolls of more than 1 million voters deemed ineligible. The routine process culls people who have moved out of state or are dead. Voters can ensure they are registered by going to the My Voter Portal on the secretary of state's website, <https://teamrv-mvp.sos.texas.gov/MVP/mvp.do>

Early voting begins on Oct. 21 and ends Nov. 1. The last day to apply for a ballot by mail is Oct. 25. Election Day is Nov. 5.

#### VENEZUELAN GANG DESIGNATED TERRORIST ORGANIZATION

Gov. Greg Abbott and state officials have labeled the Venezuelan gang Tren de Aragua as a "foreign terrorist organization," the Austin American-Statesman reported.

The gang originated in Venezuela's prison system a decade ago and first operated from the state of Aragua, from which it derives its name. Its criminal activities include drug trafficking, human smuggling, kidnapping, extortion and illegal mining, according to the report. State officials believe the gang is operating in Texas.

"Our goal is to defend Texas from the growing threat of the gang," Abbott said. "We will not let them use Texas as a base of operations to terrorize our citizens."



Abbott has said El Paso is a locus of illegal activity by members of Tren de Aragua. A law passed in 2023 to target smugglers of undocumented immigrants will be used against gang members, he said.

#### JUDGE TOSSES PAXTON SUIT AGAINST BEXAR COUNTY

A state district judge last week threw out a lawsuit filed by Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton against Bexar County's plan to mail voter registration forms to country residents, The Texas Tribune reported. Since the forms have already been mailed, District Judge Antonia Artega ruled the case was moot.

Paxton sued the county to attempt to block the mailing of the forms. He asserted that the efforts in Bexar County, as well as in Harris and Travis counties, are a violation of state law and risk adding non-citizens to voter rolls. Bexar county commissioners called the claims misleading and unfounded.

A similar suit against Travis County has been moved to federal court, where county officials are also challenging Paxton's efforts to stop voter registration efforts. In addition, Jolt, a nonprofit that is pushing for increased Latino participation in the electoral process, has sued Paxton after being targeted in a separate investigation into its registration efforts.

#### PROJECT 2025 DATA SHOWS LITTLE EVIDENCE OF VOTER FRAUD

Data compiled by the Heritage Foundation, architect of the controversial Project

2025, indicates noncitizen voting in Texas is not a widespread problem, the Texas Newsroom reported.

A database maintained since 2017 houses state data since 2005. Only three instances of noncitizens casting ballots have been found since 2012, the database indicates.

The Heritage Foundation has recently sounded alarm bells about potential noncitizen voting in the upcoming general election. The American Immigration Council cited the foundation's own data as proof that noncitizen voting is not a widespread problem.

"The lessons to take from Heritage's own database are that noncitizen voting is not a serious problem and that to the extent rare cases occur, they would be best addressed by better training government workers to recognize immigration documents and follow procedure," wrote Aaron Reichlin-Melnick, a senior fellow at the council.

#### PUC URGED TO MORE CLOSELY VET PLANT LOAN APPLICANTS

The Public Utility Commission has drawn criticism after initially approving a power plant project in the Rio Grande Valley for a company whose CEO was convicted of embezzlement seven years earlier.

The application has since been canceled, the Texas Standard reported. Earlier this month, the Senate Finance Committee grilled agency leaders, who are tasked with approving loans out of a \$5 billion fund approved by lawmakers to boost the state's power grid.

"The role of your organization has changed dramatically," state Sen. Paul Bettencourt, R-Houston, told PUC Chair Thomas Gleeson. "We're expecting more from you. You're not just a [electricity] rate organization anymore."

Gleeson said the PUC would review its processes and has penalized Deloitte, the firm hired to administer the Texas Energy Fund, by cutting its contract by 10%. The agency is under pressure to finish loaning the \$5 billion by the end of 2025, according to the legislation.

#### TIME FOR FLU, COVID-19 VACCINES

Autumn has officially arrived, which means it's the season to consider booster shots for the flu, COVID-19 and other immunizations, such as shingles or pneumonia. The Statesman reported healthcare providers say it's OK to get both the flu and COVID-19 shots at the same time, but people should first check with their healthcare provider.

The federal Food and Drug Administration has approved three updated COVID-19 boosters, and the agency urges people of all ages to get vaccinated. The vaccines typically become effective in two weeks, healthcare authorities say. Most insurance plans cover the cost of the vaccines.

**THE POSTSCRIPT**  
By **Carrie Classon**

### The Way of Cats



My husband, Peter, had never had a cat before we adopted Felix, and Felix is taking full advantage of this.

Peter didn't know, for instance, that cats require tuna, right out of the can, every night at precisely 8:30 p.m.—until Felix informed him. Peter did not know that he was not permitted to be late, nor was he allowed to run out of tuna. Felix has a firm no-substitutions policy. Peter now understands this.

Peter didn't know the kinds of games that cats like to play, so Felix had to train him from scratch. This has been a lot of work for Felix, but he is patient, and Peter is a remarkably good student—for starting his training at such an advanced age.

Felix started Peter out with relatively easy games at first. There was the Towel Over the Head game, which is quite simple once you get the hang of it. All Peter had to do was throw a towel over Felix's head and stomp around the floor in front of him so Felix could chase Peter by sound from underneath the towel. The towel serves as a handicap for Felix because, obviously, catching Peter without a towel over his head would be far too easy and not much of a game.

After Towel Over the Head was mastered, Peter moved on to more challenging games. He played Around the House With a Mouse, where Felix has Peter run around with a mouse on a string. But that grew old quickly because Peter is far too slow. They tried Hide and Seek, but that also became tedious because Peter was loud as well as slow, and it was not reasonable to think he could ever outsmart Felix.

Then Peter graduated to Cat in a Box and a Stick, and I have to say, this is where Peter really began to excel as a student. Felix got inside a box and Peter poked the rubber end of a hiking pole into the open top while Felix grabbed onto the end of the stick. This game sounds deceptively simple, but you must have a light touch with the stick and not punch Felix in the stomach too hard while still moving the stick quickly and coming up with unexpected moves. I tried to play this game once, and Felix jumped out of the box and looked at me with disappointment. I clearly did not understand the rudiments of the game. Felix waited for Peter to play again.

Then we had a larger-than-usual Amazon delivery and Felix got a bigger box. That's when things got more interesting because Peter had the brilliant idea of cutting a small window in the box and revising the game to Cat in a Box With a Hole and a Stick, and this proved to be even better. Peter laughed himself silly, and Felix played to exhaustion. Peter then cut several more holes in the box, so it became Cat in a Box With Several Holes and a Stick. Felix's paws were poking out of several windows at once, and Peter left for his bike ride later and later because of the extended rounds required to play this game properly.

"You never had a cat before?" I asked Peter.

"Never! I knew nothing about cats," he insisted.

"Well, you are an expert now."

It's surprising, really. Peter is a natural with cats. But they say when the student is ready, the teacher will appear. Peter was ready and Felix appeared, ready to mentor Peter in the way of cats.

Till next time,  
Carrie

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Supplemental Form 50-304 (Rev. 3-2016)

### Water District Notice of Public Hearing on Tax Rate

The NEWPORT MUNICIPAL UTILITY DISTRICT will hold a public hearing on a proposed tax rate for the tax year 2024 on Thursday, October 17, 2024, at 4:30 p.m., at 16401 Country Club Drive, Community Room (next to Fitness Room), Crosby, TX 77532. Your individual taxes may increase at a greater or lesser rate, or even decrease, depending on the tax rate that is adopted and on the change in the taxable value of your property in relation to the change in taxable value of all other property. The change in the taxable value of your property in relation to the change in the taxable value of all other property determines the distribution of the tax burden among all property owners.

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

**FOR** the proposal: Deborah Florus, Earl B. Boykin, R. Gary Hasse, Margarett Chasteen

**AGAINST** the proposal: None

**PRESENT** and not voting: None

**ABSENT:** DeLonne L. Johnson

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

	Last Year	This Year
Total tax rate (per \$100 of value)	\$0.60230 /\$100 Adopted	\$0.62260 /\$100 Proposed
Difference in rates per \$100 of value		\$0.02030 /\$100
Percentage increase/decrease in rates(+/-)		3.37%
Average appraised residence homestead value	\$249,041.00	\$260,179.00
General homestead exemptions available <small>(excluding 65 years of age or older or disabled person's exemptions)</small>	\$0.00	\$0.00
Average residence homestead taxable value	\$249,041.00	\$260,179.00
Tax on average residence homestead	\$1,499.97	\$1,619.87
Annual increase/decrease in taxes if proposed tax rate is adopted (+/-) and percentage of increase (+/-)		\$119.90 7.99%

#### NOTICE OF TAXPAYERS' RIGHT TO ELECTION TO REDUCE TAX RATE

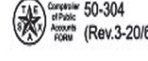
If the district adopts a combined debt service, operation and maintenance, and contract tax rate that would result in the taxes on the average residence homestead increasing by more than 8 percent, the qualified voters of the district by petition may require that an election be held to determine whether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

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

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

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

The Property Tax Assistance Division at the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts provides property tax information and resources for taxpayers, local taxing entities, appraisal districts and appraisal review boards. For more information, visit our website: [comptroller.texas.gov/taxes/property-tax](https://comptroller.texas.gov/taxes/property-tax)



Supplemental Form 50-304 (Rev. 3-2016)

### Water District Notice of Public Hearing on Tax Rate

The HARRIS COUNTY MUNICIPAL UTILITY DISTRICT NO. 213-A will hold a public hearing on a proposed tax rate for the tax year 2024 on Wednesday, October 23, 2024 at 12:00 pm at the Home2 Suites Hotel, 7512 Garth Rd, Baytown, TX 77521. Your individual taxes may increase at a greater or lesser rate, or even decrease, depending on the tax rate that is adopted and on the change in the taxable value of your property in relation to the change in taxable value of all other property. The change in the taxable value of your property in relation to the change in the taxable value of all other property determines the distribution of the tax burden among all property owners.

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

**FOR** the proposal: Jacob Saour, W. Fritz Maxwell, Alexander Soler, James Coursey

**AGAINST** the proposal: None

**PRESENT** and not voting: None

**ABSENT:** James R Bowles

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

	Last Year	This Year
Total tax rate (per \$100 of value)	\$1.43000 /\$100 Adopted	\$1.41000 /\$100 Proposed
Difference in rates per \$100 of value		-\$0.02000 /\$100
Percentage increase/decrease in rates (+/-)		-1.40%
Average appraised residence homestead value	\$283,774.00	\$269,128.00
General homestead exemptions available <small>(excluding 65 years of age or older or disabled person's exemptions)</small>	\$0.00	\$0.00
Average residence homestead taxable value	\$283,774.00	\$269,128.00
Tax on average residence homestead	\$4,057.97	\$3,794.70
Annual increase/decrease in taxes if proposed tax rate is adopted (+/-) and percentage of increase (+/-)		-\$263.26 -6.49%

#### NOTICE OF TAXPAYERS' RIGHT TO ELECTION TO REDUCE TAX RATE

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

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

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

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Supplemental Form 50-304 (Rev. 3-2016)

### Water District Notice of Public Hearing on Tax Rate

The NEWPORT MUNICIPAL UTILITY DISTRICT DEFINED AREA NO. 1 will hold a public hearing on a proposed tax rate for the tax year 2024 on Thursday, October 17, 2024, at 4:30 p.m., at 16401 Country Club Drive, Community Room (next to Fitness Room), Crosby, TX. Your individual taxes may increase at a greater or lesser rate, or even decrease, depending on the tax rate that is adopted and on the change in the taxable value of your property in relation to the change in taxable value of all other property. The change in the taxable value of your property in relation to the change in the taxable value of all other property determines the distribution of the tax burden among all property owners.

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

**FOR** the proposal: Margarett Chasteen, Deborah Florus, Earl B. Boykin, R. Gary Hasse

**AGAINST** the proposal: None

**PRESENT** and not voting: None

**ABSENT:** DeLonne L. Johnson

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

	Last Year	This Year
Total tax rate (per \$100 of value)	\$1.40000 /\$100 Adopted	\$1.40000 /\$100 Proposed
Difference in rates per \$100 of value		\$0.00000 /\$100
Percentage increase/decrease in rates(+/-)		00.00%
Average appraised residence homestead value	\$0.00	\$287,474.00
General homestead exemptions available <small>(excluding 65 years of age or older or disabled person's exemptions)</small>	\$0.00	\$0.00
Average residence homestead taxable value	\$0.00	\$287,474.00
Tax on average residence homestead	\$0.00	\$4,024.64
Annual increase/decrease in taxes if proposed tax rate is adopted (+/-) and percentage of increase (+/-)		\$4,024.64 N/A%

#### NOTICE OF TAXPAYERS' RIGHT TO ELECTION TO REDUCE TAX RATE

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

There were no residential homesteads on January 1, 2023, therefore the tax that would have been imposed on a residential homestead is \$0.00. Due to this the tax election rate is not applicable for 2024 tax year.

The Defined Area No. 1 tax rate above includes the Newport MUD tax rate \$0.62260.

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

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

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### Water District Notice of Public Hearing on Tax Rate

The NEWPORT MUNICIPAL UTILITY DISTRICT DEFINED AREA NO. 2 will hold a public hearing on a proposed tax rate for the tax year 2024 on Thursday, October 17, 2024, at 4:30 p.m., at 16401 Country Club Drive, Community Room (next to Fitness Room), Crosby, Texas 77532. Your individual taxes may increase at a greater or lesser rate, or even decrease, depending on the tax rate that is adopted and on the change in the taxable value of your property in relation to the change in taxable value of all other property. The change in the taxable value of your property in relation to the change in the taxable value of all other property determines the distribution of the tax burden among all property owners.

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

**FOR** the proposal: Margarett Chasteen, Deborah Florus, Earl B. Boykin, R. Gary Hasse

**AGAINST** the proposal: None

**PRESENT** and not voting: None

**ABSENT:** DeLonne L. Johnson

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

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

#### NOTICE OF TAXPAYERS' RIGHT TO ELECTION TO REDUCE TAX RATE

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

There were no residential homesteads on either January 1, 2023, or January 1, 2024, therefore the tax that would have been imposed on a residential homestead is \$0.00. Due to this the tax election rate is not applicable for 2024 tax year.

The Defined Area No. 2 tax rate above includes the Newport MUD tax rate \$0.62260.

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

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

The Property Tax Assistance Division at the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts provides property tax information and resources for taxpayers, local taxing entities, appraisal districts and appraisal review boards. For more information, visit our website: [comptroller.texas.gov/taxes/property-tax](https://comptroller.texas.gov/taxes/property-tax)



# GREETINGS FROM GUANGZHOU

By Kristan Hoffman & Family



**Greetings from Guangzhou**  
By Kristan Hoffman and family

Ni hao! That means "hello," from southeast China!

On August 1, our little family of four relocated from Ohio all the way across the globe to Guangzhou. We will be living here for the next three years, due to my husband's work.

Before this assignment I knew basically nothing about Guangzhou (which can be pronounced like "Gwong Joe"). But after four months of fast-tracked preparations and moving, I now know a lot more, and I keep learning new things every day!

The climate here is similar to Houston's: hot,

muggy, and buggy. To work up a good sweat, you need only to step outside your door. That's because the city is located about an hour's drive from the coast, and along the same latitude as the middle of Mexico.

For roughly 2,000 years, Guangzhou has been an important port and trading hub, even anchoring the infamous Silk Road. Together with the nearby cities of Hong Kong, Macau, and Shenzhen, it makes up the largest urban area in the world. Roughly 86 million people! 27 million of those belong to greater Guangzhou.

Hearing those numbers, I expected the city to feel crowded and noisy, but our neighborhood is not at all. We live in Zhujiang New Town, which was designed by the local government to serve as a new cultural and commercial center. The area features gleaming skyscrapers and high-rise apartments, as well as ancient city gates and historical buildings, all bordered by generous sidewalks, and lush with flowers and greenery. Many consulates and corporate offices are located here, which creates a very foreigner-friendly environment.

Even within our "expat bubble," many aspects of living in China are wildly different from the United States. First and foremost, the language. Mandarin is the official language of China, although here in Guangzhou, the Cantonese dialect is also widely spoken. My kids and I know some Mandarin, because my mom is from Taiwan, but still the learning curve has been steep. My hope is that by the time we leave in a few years, we can be conversationally fluent.

Another big difference is that nearly everything in China is done by app. Whether you are paying your utility bills or ordering takeout, riding the subway or hailing a Didi (their version of Uber), you need only your phone. Cash is technically usable, but in reality, almost all payments are processed via QR codes within China's most famous app, WeChat.

On the one hand, this hyper-digitalization is super convenient; on the other, it's a bit tricky when you are unable to read the local language. Thankfully nowadays there are apps for that too! We can take photos or screenshots of the Chinese characters, then run them through translators.



Anyway, after a few weeks, we are mostly settled in, but still learning our way around our new home city. We are also very much looking forward to exploring other cities and countries on this side of the world while it's more convenient. These three years could be the greatest adventure our family will ever have together!

**Iris's Insights:**

I love China but... Cincinnati will always be my home. I miss being closer to my family and my friends. China is an amazing place to be, because of the art, the food, the shops — just to name a few. And my school is amazing too. But it will never replace the old! And I hope my friends will notice how much I miss them.

So there are ups and downs to living abroad but... it's really cool.

**Reed's Report:**

P.E. is my favorite class because I play games with my friends.



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Notice of Public Sale of property to satisfy landlord's lien. Sale to be held at STEVE'S STORAGE, LLC at 5625 Hwy 90, Crosby, TX 77532 on October 19, 2024 at 10:00 a.m. Items sold as-is to highest CASH bidder. Property contents of JONATHAN C MARIN, JESSICA MARTIN, AND DOUGLAS G BROWN: Furniture, tools, etc. 38-21

**NOTICE OF SALE**  
Notice is hereby given pursuant to Chapter 59 of the Texas Property Code that CROSBY BOAT, RV & MINI STORAGE, located at 15118A FM 2100, Crosby Texas 77532, will hold an online sale from October 7<sup>th</sup> to October 14<sup>th</sup> until 10:00 o'clock a.m., at the following link <http://wbauctioncrosby.hibid.com/auction/current> to sell for cash only the contents of Unit H-23, Kyle Skelton in order to satisfy a Landlord's Lien. The property to be sold is Washer, Dryer, a push Lawnmower, Toys, Furniture and etc..... 37-2T

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**NOTICE TO BIDDERS**  
Sealed Bids, in duplicate, for the Wastewater Treatment Plant No. 1 Contact Basin Expansion located in Harris County, Texas will be received c/o Cobb, Fendley and Associates, Inc., 4424 W Sam Houston Parkway N, Suite 600, Houston, Texas 77041 until 2:00 P.M., local time, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, and then publicly opened and read. A NON-MANDATORY PRE-BID CONFERENCE WILL BE HELD AT COBB, FENDLEY AND ASSOCIATES, INC., 4424 W SAM HOUSTON PARKWAY N, SUITE 600, HOUSTON, TEXAS 77041 ON OCTOBER 15, 2024 AT 2:00 P.M. LOCAL TIME. Each bid must be accompanied by a bid guarantee in the form of a certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond payable to Harris County Municipal Utility District No. 50 in the amount of five (5%) percent of the bid. Complete bidding documents are available at [www.civcastusa.com](http://www.civcastusa.com). 38-21

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# Goose Creek Superintendent,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

I urge all Goose Creek residents to participate in this democratic process. When you vote, you are not just selecting candidates; you are shaping the future of public education in our community. I encourage you to consider which candidates truly support our schools and are committed to advancing the needs of our students. Public education is at a critical juncture, and the leaders we elect will play a pivotal role in shaping policies that affect our classrooms, resources, and the quality of education we can provide. Our public schools once held a place of prominence and respect within our nation, before orchestrated politically motivated narratives were cast to erode the public's confidence, in order to promote entrepreneurial efforts which may lack the fidelity by which our public

schools were founded upon. We strive to ensure the right for all students to receive a high-quality education that will teach them to think critically, become goal oriented, live a life with integrity and passion, all while aspiring to become contributing members of our society. Who knows which graduate may become your heart or brain surgeon, or maybe your cancer champion. Or... just maybe a great neighbor who looks out for you and checks your mail or repairs your fence, or simply loves your pet too. We do our very best as educators, but I must admit that we are interdependent upon you as families and citizens to support us through teaching character by your example, by serving as role models and inspiring our youth to become all they may be-

come. This is the partnership I envision will lead us all to experience a brighter future.

Thank you once again for your ongoing dedication and involvement and most of all, for visibly sharing your pride in our community. Together, I truly believe that we have built a district with a strong foundation that thrives upon community engagement and the collaborative efforts of so many caring people. Let's continue this journey of growth, ensuring that every student in Goose Creek CISD receives the support and opportunities they deserve. Your voice matters—in our schools, in our community, and at the ballot box.

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

# Hispanic Heritage Congresswoman Sylvia Garcia,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



Congresswoman Sylvia R. Garcia on her early life as a native of Palito Blanco, a South Texas farming community.

The eighth of ten children, Congresswoman Garcia saw her parents struggle to raise her and her siblings. Congresswoman Garcia's parents taught her that with hard work and a good education she could accomplish anything. As a result of these lessons, Congresswoman Garcia dedicated herself to success at school. She earned a scholarship to Texas Woman's University in Denton, where she graduated with a degree in social work and political science. Congresswoman Garcia then received her Doctor of Jurisprudence from Thurgood Marshall School of Law at Texas Southern University in Houston, working several jobs to pay for her tuition.

Garcia continued her public service career by serving as Director and Presiding Judge of the Houston Municipal System for an unprecedented five terms under two mayors.

In 1998, she was elected Houston's City Controller, the second highest elected official in Houston city government and its chief financial officer. She quickly earned a reputation as the taxpayers' watchdog, fighting to protect the pocketbooks of working families and ensuring the City was transparent and accountable.

After two terms as Controller, Congresswoman Garcia broke barriers in Harris County, when she was elected to the Harris County Commissioner's Court. The first Hispanic and first woman to be elected in her own right to the office, she continued her advocacy for working families and made certain Harris County took care of its most defenseless, all while making certain Harris County led the way for new jobs and economic development.

Congresswoman Garcia was sworn in to the Texas State Senate on March 11, 2013, representing Senate District 6. She became the seventh woman and the third Hispanic woman to serve in the upper chambers after winning a special runoff election for the seat of the late Senator Mario Gallegos.

Over three terms in the Texas Senate, Congresswoman Garcia has been a fighter for her district and advocated for veterans, immigrant rights, women's health and access to healthcare. She has passed numerous bills including the Relationship Privacy Act which outlaws revenge pornography, the Truckers Against Trafficking Bill, which requires human trafficking training for commercial drivers, and the School Bus Safety Act, which requires school buses in Texas to have seat-belts.

In 2018, Congresswoman Garcia decided to take her fight to Washington. She ran to represent her community, country and family in Congress. On January 3, 2019 she was inaugurated to represent Texas Congressional District 29. She became the first Hispanic member of the Houston Congressional Delegation and one of the first two Latinas to represent the State of Texas in the U.S. Congress.

Congresswoman Garcia serves as the Vice Ranking

Member of the House Financial Services Committee. During her first year in Congress, she played a critical role in the impeachment investigation against Donald Trump. On January 15, 2020, she was selected as one of seven impeachment managers tasked with making the case to the American people and the Senate for the removal of Donald Trump as President of the United States.

She is the first Hispanic and one of the first three women to ever serve as an impeachment manager in a presidential impeachment trial.

The most recent achievement Garcia made was in August when she was named/appointed Chief Deputy Whip in the U.S. House of Representatives. This new role puts her in a position to help Democrats organize members before big important votes. She'll work as go-between top leaders and rank-and-file members.

Congresswoman Garcia has been named "Humanitarian of the Year" by the National Conference of Communities and Justice and chosen as one of "Houston's 25 Power People" by Inside Houston magazine. She has been awarded the Hispanic Scouting Distinguished Citizen Award from the Sam Houston Area Boy Scouts of America, the Mexican American Legal Defense & Education Fund Matt Garcia Public Service Award and the Houston GLBT Political Caucus Eleanor Tinsley Award.

Active in the Houston community, Congresswoman Garcia has served on more than 25 community boards and commissions, including the San Jacinto Girl Scouts, the Houston Hispanic Forum, the American Leadership Forum, Battleship Texas and the Museum of Fine Arts - Houston.

# THEA: Waste Pits proposal is "Insufficient",

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

tractor. In our opinion, this renders the design incomplete and unprepared for contractor bidding or successful remedial action.

Through our review of the extensive 100% design documentation, several key themes emerged that require immediate attention.

1. Inconsistencies with the Record of Decision (ROD): Certain aspects of the design do not satisfy the requirements established in the ROD, including the Remedial Action Objectives (RAOs). Specifically, while Monitored Natural Recovery (MNR) was selected for the Sand Separation Area (SSA) in the ROD, increased concentrations of dioxins were discovered during the design investigation. It is common practice, and was observed at the Northern Impoundment, for plans to adjust to encompass additional contamination found during the design investigations. Additionally at the SSA, a mix of erosional and depositional environments were identified post-ROD.

Therefore, the plan should be adjusted to reflect these findings, particularly in relation to RAO #4, which mandates the reduction of exposure to dioxins by remediating affected media to appropriate cleanup levels. Further inconsistencies of concern are related (but not limited) to sampling and the seasonal excavation approach. The seasonal excavation approach is not supported by the local communities and defies the 27 month timeline in the 2017 ROD.

2. Contaminants of Concern (COCs):

There are significant concerns regarding the concentrations of dioxins, the adequacy of sampling, and the presence of PCBs at the Site. These issues must be thoroughly addressed to ensure the protection of the health of the community and the environment.

3. Worker and Community Safety:

The design raises concerns for the safety of site workers and the surrounding communities. These include potential risks associated with transportation, pollution, and the release of contaminants during remedial activities. Specific, enforceable safety measures must be included in the design to mitigate these risks.

4. Determination Ahead of Remedial Action (RA): Considerable details are

being left to the remedial contractor to decide, which should be determined now to ensure consistency and thoroughness in the RA. This includes, but is not limited to, the design and implementation of measurement systems, sampling procedures, and data handling protocols. Such elements should not be left open to interpretation during the RA.

5. Integrity Concerns:

We have serious concerns about the integrity of the project and its components during the RA, particularly in light of the site's exposure to severe weather conditions and its location within a tidally influenced river. Local residents are immensely concerned about the barrier wall (BMP) designed to an elevation below major storms experienced locally.

The San Jacinto Site is at one of the most dynamic sections of the river and it is imperative that worst case storm and flood scenarios are fully considered.

6. Biddability Issues:

The design, as it stands, appears unready for construction bids. The lack of detail and the deferral of significant decisions to the remedial contractor create uncertainty that could negatively impact the bidding process and the overall success of the remediation.

7. Additional Information Needed:

Several sections of the design lack sufficient content or leave critical questions unanswered. Two specific topics raised by community members were the Texas Department of Transportation bridge replacement and water management in flood/high-water scenarios.

8. Compliance and Accountability:

The design must include clear "checks and balanc-

es" to ensure compliance with EPA standards throughout the RA process. Includes concerns and needs for consultation/approval from EPA and necessary testing.

During our review, we noted the RPs' use of Lavaca Bay as a comparison site for the SSA MNR.

However, Lavaca Bay's monitoring protocol, while effective for that site, may not be suitable for the SSA. Lavaca Bay has been closed to the public since 1988, whereas the SSA is located in a river subject to barge traffic, tidal influences, and flooding, which could contribute to greater dispersion of contaminants. Additionally, the RAOs for the San Jacinto Site focus on the remediation of affected media, while the RAOs for Lavaca Bay are primarily concerned with reducing surface sediment mercury levels. Given these differences, the plan for the SSA should be reevaluated and adjusted accordingly.

The San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund Site has made considerable progress through the Superfund process over the past decade. Our communities are eager for this progress to continue, as the risk to public health and the environment remains as long as the San Jacinto Site is present in the river. We strongly urge the EPA to address these critical issues to ensure a safe and complete remediation of the San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund Site.

Thank you for your attention to these matters. We look forward to your response and to a continued effort to protect the health of our communities and the environment.

Sincerely,  
Jackie Medcalf  
THEA Founder | CEO  
Executive Director



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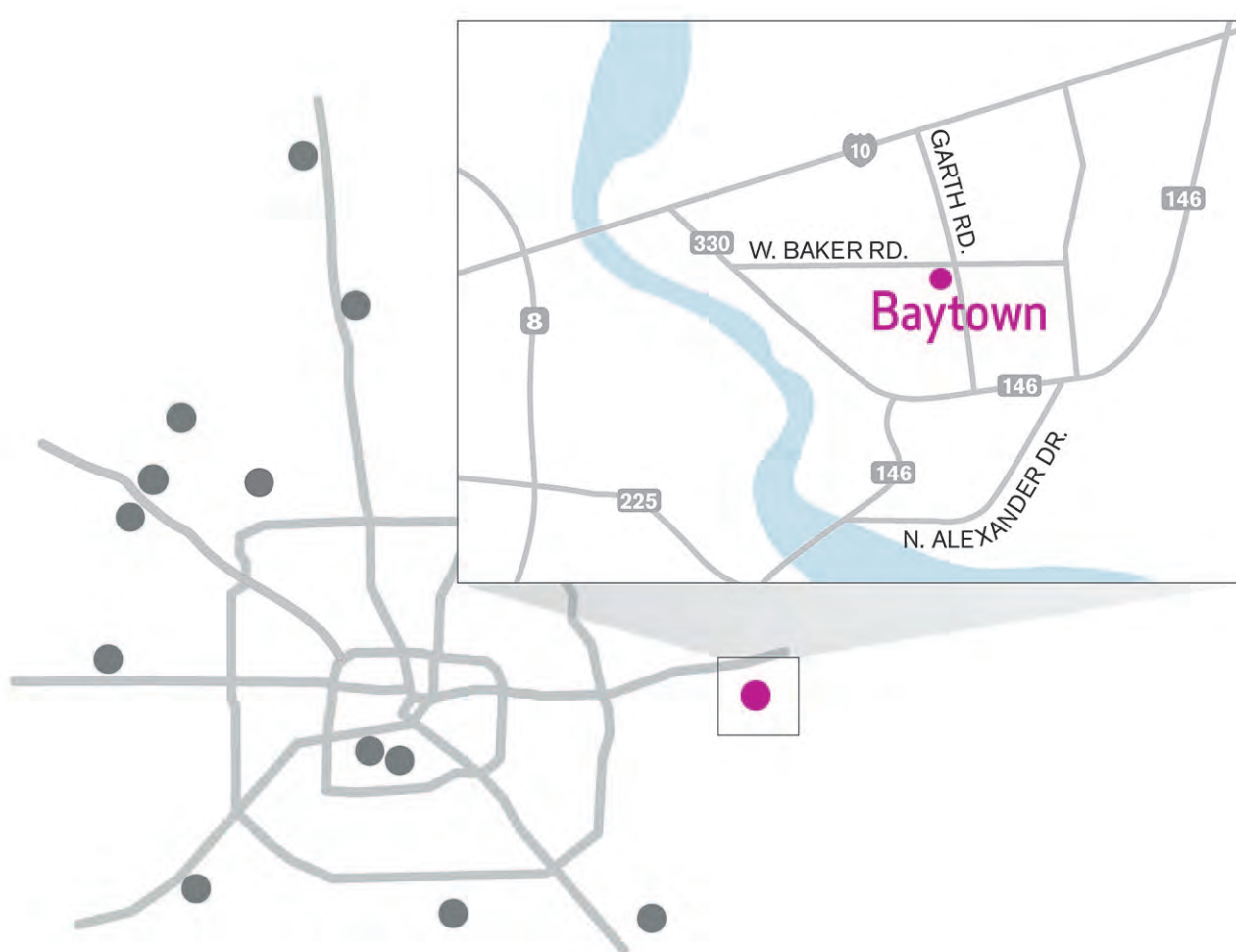


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