

IMPORTANT ELECTION DATES
November 5, 2024 General and Special Elections

Visit the Harris County Clerk's Office Elections Department at HarrisVotes.com or call 713.755.6965 for more information.

- OCTOBER 21**
First day of early voting
- OCTOBER 25**
Ballot by mail application deadline
- NOVEMBER 1**
Last day of early voting
- NOVEMBER 5**
Election Day

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HIGHLANDS **CROSBY**

Star  **Courier**

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IN THE STARS

Early Voting underway in Important Election
National, State, and Local Races on the Ballot

Highlands Chamber BINGO Night Oct. 25
Highlands-Lynchburg Chamber HIS/HER BINGO & DINNER.
Friday, Oct. 25th 6:00pm Dinner 7:00pm Bingo. 6427 East Wallisville Road (Look for Balloons).
Tickets \$50, RSVP to allabout@highlands.org or Reba at 281-513-7267.

Fireworks Okayed Oct. 25-Nov. 1
County approves sale of fireworks for Diwali, Día de Los Muertos
By David Taylor
Managing Editor

Harris County Commissioners recently approved the eight-day calendar for selling fireworks for the celebration of Diwali, a major religious festival celebrated by Hindus, Jains and Sikhs. For Hindus, it symbolizes the triumph of good over evil, knowledge over ignorance and light over darkness. Setting off fireworks is a cherished part of the celebrations around the world.
"This was added to the fireworks legislation last legislature," said Sue Davis, spokesperson for Top Dog Fireworks. The fireworks were for the Diwali holiday, but Davis said they also added in the Día de Los Muertos since it falls on the last day of the holiday on Nov. 1.
"The Indian community would tell me they would go buy a bunch of fireworks on the Fourth of July, then store
Continued. See FIREWORKS SALE OKAYED, Page 5

HARRIS COUNTY – Early voting started on Monday of this week for the General and Special Elections. Voters the first day could cast their ballots from 7am to 7pm. This year many positions and bonds are on a lengthy ballot, but officials indicate that large numbers of voters are turning out, in excess of similar elections in previous years.
There are a number of highly contested races on both the national and local ballot positions, and polls indicate they are quite close. These include the U.S. President, with Republican Donald Trump facing Democrat Kamala Harris, and for State Sen-



Donald Trump Presidential Candidate
Kamala Harris Presidential Candidate
Tom Ramsey Pct 3 Commissioner
Ed Gonzalez HC Sheriff

ator incumbent Republican Ted Cruz is facing challenger Colin Allred.
Other closely watched races include District Attorney Sean Teare facing Dan Simmons, and for Sheriff incumbent Ed Gonzalez facing Republican Mike Knox.
Incumbent Congresswoman Sylvia Garcia is running against Republican Alan Garza. State Senator Carol Alvarado is facing challenger Republican Martha Fierro. State Representative Briscoe Cain is running against Democrat Chuck Crews.
In County offices, two county commissioners are up for reelection. Pct. 1 Commissioner Rodney Ellis faces Republican Gerry Vander-lyn, and Pct. 3 Commissioner Tom Ramsey faces Democrat Saleem Malik. For District Attorney Sean Teare faces Dan Simons, and for County Attorney incumbent Chris-

tian Menefee faces Republican Jacqueline Smith.
The Harris County Flood Control District is asking for approval of a 50% tax increase to pay for additional flood protection, and the Houston School District has two propositions on the ballot for Bonds. They are asking approval of \$3.960 billion for new school buildings, and \$440 million for upgrades to technology infrastructure.
Harris County voters have three main options for casting their ballots in the upcoming November
MORE ELECTION INFORMATION ON PAGE 2.

Crosby ISD Celebrates Community support: \$79k Grants Delivered to Teachers; Students Shine in Homecoming Parade

Hello East Harris County and Crosby ISD Families,
The Crosby Education Foundation and sponsors provided one of the highlights of the month of October! On October 10, CEF Board members, the Crosby High School Band, Cheerleaders, and Cougar Stars traveled from campus to campus delivering checks to teachers who were awarded innovative teaching grants. In all, CEF and sponsors delivered more than \$79,000 to teachers. We love to see this true community support filter from businesses and community organizations to teachers and, ultimately, to our students. Every penny is about investing in better learning opportunities for the children of Crosby / Barrett Station.



Paula Patterson
Crosby Superintendent

Separately, two teachers won grants courtesy of Marathon Oil. Ms. Lauren McCartney, from Crosby Elementary School, and Coach Jamie Helburg, from Barrett Elementary School, each won \$2500 worth of "Unconventional Thinking in Teaching" grants. Coach Hel-

burg will purchase balance bikes to help kindergarten students learn how to ride a bike, while Ms. McCartney will create a classroom library filled with fifth grade science and math books. Both sound great!
Speaking of community support, I had a wonderful time, along with students, principals, and administrators from our campuses, participating in the 38th annual Barrett Station Homecoming Parade. This annual tradition was delayed due to Hurricane Beryl in July, but that postponement didn't hinder the fun at all. The weather was beautiful for the parade on October 12! Dozens of students in the Barrett Station community had the chance to collect candy and see beauti-



Crosby ISD district and campus leaders were proud to be a part of the 38th annual Barrett Station Homecoming Parade on October 12. The parade, usually held in July, was postponed until October due to damage from Hurricane Beryl. The weather was great for the community parade.
ful floats on display. Barrett Station has some of the richest history in East Harris County, and the community is a vital and vibrant part of Crosby ISD. We love being a
part of the celebration!
This month, the district's reading incentive program,
Continued. See CROSBY SUPERINTENDENT, Page 6

Bonds, Flood Control tax increase on Ballot

By David Taylor
Managing Editor
The ballot on Nov. 5 will feature a school bond for Houston ISD, and a tax rate increase for the Harris County Flood Control District (HCFCD) that will affect everyone in the county.
Currently, the Flood Control District receives two cents (.02) for every \$100 value to fund the maintenance side of the District's unending work.
In an interview with Houston Public Media, Dr. Christina "Tina" Petersen, director for HCFCD, explained why there was a need to raise the tax rate.
"One of the things that

we have been working on this past summer is looking at the magnitude of the deferred maintenance problem that the Flood Control District has as well as what is the amount of funding that's needed to address that problem," she said. "What we've seen is over the last few years, the amount of assets that the District has taken on has more than doubled, meanwhile the investments to maintain those assets has remained flat."
Petersen said their work is divided two-fold into bonds and maintenance.
"Thanks to the support of the voters in 2018, we have a \$2.5 billion program that we have implemented which is now being

matched by \$2.7 billion dollars in funding from partnerships and grants. A total of \$5.2 billion worth of work that is currently underway," she described it.
At least one-third of those capital projects have been completed with the other two-thirds underway.
"During Hurricane Beryl, we saw very little structural damage so we know that the projects that we've been working on protected homes all over Harris County," she said in the interview.
The other side of the coin is maintenance, which is equally important she
Continued. See BONDS ON BALLOT, Page 2

Rotary replenishes the Highlands Food Pantry



The Rotary Club of Highlands recently secured a grant from Rotary District 5890 for Hurricane Beryl Relief, and the funds went to replenish the food pantry at First Baptist Church in Highlands. Pictured are Rotarians Ricky Garcia, Connie Russell, Jennifer King, Weston Cotten, and Sheila Parker with Melissa Harpster of the Food Pantry.

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Community Resource CREDIT UNION
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Bonds on Ballot,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

said, including mowing, repairs, and much more.

“That is why we are asking Harris County voters to approve a new adopted tax rate which is an increase of 1.581 cents per \$100 in property value. The impact to a homeowner would be approximately \$600 for an average homeowner of about \$380,000,” she explained.

Commissioners approved the tax rate vote in August.

During several town hall meetings, Petersen said she heard constituents concerns with ponding, channel sediment building up debris, and other challenges. She says the funding will help them address the concerns much quicker and help them keep up with the new assets they’ve obtained over the previous years with growth.

The 1.581 cent rate increase would be added to the current .02 cent rate. She also pointed out that because of recently declared disasters in Harris County, Commissioners Court is able to temporarily increase the overall Harris County tax rate by 8 percent to mitigate costs related to the disasters. This is fully separate from the Flood Control District’s funding needs.

HOUSTON ISD BOND

Houston ISD is asking voters to approve two propositions on a bond totaling \$4.4 billion, the largest in Texas history. Proposition A is the issuance of \$3,960,000,000 schoolhouse bonds by the District for new school buildings and renovation and expansion

of existing school buildings (including safety and security infrastructure for such school buildings), the purchase of necessary sites for school buildings and the imposition of taxes sufficient to pay the principal of and interest on the bonds and the costs of any credit agreements executed in connection with the bonds. Proposition B is the issuance of \$440,000,000 schoolhouse bonds by the District to address technology equipment and systems, technology infrastructure, instruction technology and the imposition of taxes sufficient to pay the principal of and interest on the bonds and the costs of any credit agreements executed in connection with the bonds.

Virtually every campus in the district receives security updates and some 80-plus campuses will receive some form of either rebuild or renovation.

The bond proposed by HISD will not increase the district’s debt tax rate, but an individual property owner’s tax bill can increase as a result of increasing property values over time.

Both Republican and Democrat parties have spoken out against the bond, but not all are against it.

“I get why people might want to go with the ‘no trust’ and that whole thing, and let’s use this vote as a way to defeat this. But that means we put off this bond for another couple of years, and I think for a lot of kids, we don’t have that time to wait,” said Dr. Bob Sanborn, the President and CEO of Children at Risk in an interview with FOX 26.

By David Taylor
Managing Editor

CROSBY – Following a report from Lockwood, Andrews, and Newnam (LAN) engineers to the Newport Municipal Utility District (MUD) that details considerably more damage to the aging water and sewer line in the Newport subdivision, at least two large ticket items will need to be addressed sooner than later to meet requirements from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) standards.

Margaret Chasteen, a Newport resident and board president, said the total cost of the repairs on the 40-year-plus system is \$110 million, the asking on the bond authorization request before voters on Nov. 5.

The District has little fudge room with the strict requirements monitored by TCEQ and addressing the problems is foremost.

“The new capital improvement plan (CIP) details the increased costs of the repairs that have gone up exponentially since the pandemic,” she said. It was unexpected since there was more damage than previously expected.

Chasteen explained the general assumption made by most contractors that composite materials and the time they have been in the ground could mean up to 30 percent repair and replacement in damaged water and sewer lines.

Newport’s original lines were initiated in the early 1970s placing them in the 50-year range.

“That has born out to be more along the lines of closer to 50 percent dam-

age and those costs added together will be huge,” she lamented.

The estimated maximum annual increase in the amount of additional taxes imposed on a single homestead with \$100,000 appraised value would be approximately \$40. As of August 15, 2024, the average value of a residence homestead in the District was estimated at \$247,273 meaning the maximum annual increase in taxes would be \$99.

“What we’ll do as a board, and we’re all businesspeople, is work to spread out the costs of the bond. We won’t be building the surface water treatment plant, the wastewater treatment plant, and redo half of the sewer lines in one year. That would tremendously spike the costs of the tax if we sold that many bonds at one time,” she said.

Instead, she said they might look at the water treatment plant first while they also work on water and sewer lines.

Before selling the bonds, the district is required to specifically identify the problem, get it engineered for cost, then seek approval from TCEQ before they can begin selling the bonds.

Some of the current costs were put off from the 2020 bond and with inflation, will cost the district considerably more.

According to Chasteen,

the surface water treatment plant now costs almost double from the original amount in the 2020 CIP because of rising construction costs since the pandemic.

“That’s also because we have two wells included that have to be replaced and added filters for the plant,” she said.

The water distribution system once tabbed at \$7.9 million will now cost \$10 million.

The sanitary sewer system which includes the bridge relocation was about \$7 million, and including the bridge is now approximately \$12 million.

The lift stations and the force mains costs have risen from \$1.1 million to \$1.5 million.

“The biggie is the wastewater treatment plant, which was at \$9.8 million in 2020, without the berm, is now about \$38 million,” she said. Those costs she said are not only construction increases, but also for new regulations since Harvey that they must meet.

“With current regulations from Harris County, they want us to build the berm up 6- to 8-feet taller than it is right now,” she said. “That would add millions of dollars to the cost. Last year, with the new maps, we were able to show that it was not in the flood plain and hopefully, once it’s approved, we can save that money.”

Chasteen said the Dis-

trict has sought other avenues to help offset the costs including a \$2 million grant from Congressman Dan Crenshaw’s office and seeking lower interest rates and financing through the Texas Water Development Board that would also save the district additional funds.

Early Voting by personal appearance begins on Monday, Oct. 21 – Friday, Nov. 1. The last day to apply for a ballot by mail is Friday, Oct. 25. Election day is Nov. 5 and polls are open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. There are 88 polling locations throughout Harris County and voters can use any of them to cast their vote. Harris County has the reputation for long ballots so be prepared before entering the voting booth by

visiting HarrisVotes.com to familiarize yourself with your ballot. Don’t forget to bring some form of personal identification. That can include a Texas driver license, Texas personal identification card, Texas handgun license, U.S. Military ID with photo, Texas election ID certificate, U.S. Passport, or U.S. citizenship certificate with photo.

For those relying on public transportation, METRO will offer voters free rides to and from the polling locations. Voters will disclose to their bus driver if they’re coming from a voting location or going to one.

Early Voting underway,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

5 General and Special Elections: Vote by Mail, Early Voting, or Election Day voting.

VOTE BY MAIL

Eligible voters can apply to vote by mail if they meet one of the following criteria:

- 65 years of age or older on Election Day
- Sick or disabled
- Expecting to give birth within three weeks before or after Election Day
- Absent from the county during Early Voting and on Election Day
- Confined in jail but otherwise eligible to vote

The Elections Department must receive applications for a mail-in ballot by October 25. Voters can return their mail ballot by mail or in person (only available on Election Day).

--Ballots mailed from within the U.S. must be post-

marked by 7 PM on November 5 and received by 5 PM on November 6.

--Alternatively, voters can deliver their ballot in person on Election Day, November 5, from 7 AM to 7 PM at 1001 Preston St, Houston, TX 77002. Voters must bring a valid photo ID and deliver their ballot.

EARLY VOTING

From October 21 to November 1, Harris County will open more than 80 vote centers for Early Voting. The Countywide Polling Place Program allows voters to cast their ballot at any location. Early Voting hours are:

- Mon., Oct. 21 - Sat., Oct. 26 7 AM - 7 PM
- Sun., Oct. 27 12 PM - 7 PM
- Mon., Oct. 28 - Wed., Oct. 30 7 AM - 8 PM
- Thurs., Oct. 31 7 AM - 9 PM

• Fri., Nov. 1 7 AM - 7 PM

ELECTION DAY

On November 5, 700 vote centers will be open from 7 AM to 7 PM. As with Early Voting, voters can cast their ballot at any vote center in the county. To vote in person, voters must present one of the seven acceptable forms of photo ID:

- Texas Driver License
- Texas Personal Identification Card
- Texas Handgun License
- U.S. Military ID with Photo
- Texas Election ID Certificate
- U.S. Passport (book or card)
- U.S. Citizenship Certificate with Photo

Voters can find their nearest polling location and print a personalized sample ballot at HarrisVotes.com.

Voters set to cast votes in school board elections

By David Taylor
Managing Editor

Four area districts will hold board of trustee elections. Most districts hold elections each year with different positions rotating on and off periodically. Most board members serve their district for four year terms. Here’s a list of the candidates and a little bit of biographical information.

Channelview

Position 1—**Keith Liggett** lives at 16530 Oak Lane and has worked as a safety manager at his job. He has lived in the district all his life. Liggett is a former board member.

Position 1—**Shumona Collins** refused to list her address and listed her occupation as an educator. She has lived in the district for 25-plus years.

Position 2—**Robert Byron Hay, III** lives at 842 Cario Street and lists his occupation as business owner. He has lived in the district for three years and 5 months.

Position 2—**Hector Martinez** refused to list his address and listed his occupation as a realtor. He has lived in the district for 41 years, and six months.

Position 3—**Tammy Hall** lives at 15613 Elgin and works as an operations manager at her job. She has lived in the district for the last 45 years.

Position 3—**Alex Ybarra** refused to list his address and listed his occupation as a welder. He has lived in the district for the last 21 years.

Crosby

Position 2—**Kea Lynn Lewis** lives at 17006 Coaming Court and serves as a peace officer. She has lived in the Crosby area for the last 7 years. She is unopposed in the election.

At-Large Seat 6—**Phillip Chapman** lives at 18805 Kubin Road and is a construction project manager. Chapman has lived in Crosby for the last 20-plus years. Chapman is unopposed in the election.

Position 7—**Stacey Paine** lives at 2911 Skimmer Way and serves as an assistant principal. She has lived in the district for 22 years and 8 months.

Position 7—**Andrew Heitz** lives at 20211 Nightbird Trail and works as a procurement manager. He has lived in the district for the last 11 years, and 8 months.

Position 7—**Jennifer Roach** lives at 1503 Running Bear Trail and works as an educator. She has lived in the district for the last 5 years, and 8 months.

Huffman

Position 4—**Luke Hight** lives at 1815 White Feather Trail and is employed in insurance. Hight has lived in the district for the last 14-plus years.

Position 4—**Andy Jung** lives at 28004 Calvin Road and works as a business analyst. He has lived in the district all of his life.

Position 4—**Patrick Terry** lives at 935 Cobalt Crest Lane and works as a procurement specialist. He has lived in the district all of his life.

Position 5—**Sam Pier** lives at 27166 Fairway Crossings Drive and works as the owner of Lake Houston Brewery. He has lived in the district for the last 15 years.

Position 5—**Vernon Reed** lives at 11243 FM 1960 E #23 and is retired. He has lived in the district for the last 11 years.

Position 6—**Layla Karasek** lives at 227 Lago Trace Drive and is employed as an office manager. She has lived in the district for almost 14 years.

Position 6—**Joey Taylor** lives at 1002 Commons Waterway Dr. and owns his own business. He has lived in the district for the last 3 years, and 3 months.

Position 6—**Josh Dowies** lives at 92a Meyer Rd. and owns his own business. He has lived in the district for the last 31 years.

Position 7—**Julia Sullivan** lives on 2214 Hickory Manor Dr. and is an insurance agent. She has lived in the district for the last 42 years.

Position 7—**Amanda McGee** lives at 339 High Point Crossing and serves in education publishing. She has lived in the district for the last 9-plus years.

Sheldon

- Position 1—Candace Randall
- Position 1—Waldo Gaviña
- Position 2—Latricia Archie
- Position 3—Kevin D. Gaines
- Position 3—Darius Provost-Evans

Candidate forms for Sheldon ISD trustees were unavailable online, however, candidates participated in a School Board Candidate Forum on October 14. The recording is available at <https://www.facebook.com/SheldonISD/videos/1337528500961386>.

It's a Fact... Kids Love Dogs



Come watch and meet beautiful purebred dogs at the Cypress Creek Kennel Club Dog Show!

November 8, 9 & 10, 2024 Spectators welcome...there is no charge!

Talk to exhibitors, handlers and breeders Learn what dog shows are all about!

Saturday Lunch break

Pros will teach kids how to show their dog. Sign up at the club table

Sunday Lunch break

25 youngsters ages 5 – 9 will get to show a registered dog to an AKC Licensed judge. Sign up at the club table

Don't have a Pure Breed dog... we will find one!

Crosby Fairgrounds 14900 FM 2100 Crosby, TX for more information contact Cypresscreekkennelclub@gmail.com

Barbers Hill Press

Dayton

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THURSDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2024

MONT BELVIEU, TEXAS 77580

ON THE HILL

Chambers County Issue Burn Ban Due to Extreme Fire Risk

Effective immediately, Chambers County has issued a burn ban in response to the dangerously dry conditions and heightened fire threat. This decision follows a prolonged lack of rainfall, with weather forecasts offering little hope of relief. The persistent windy, dry conditions have pushed the Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI) to an average of 628, as determined by the Texas A&M Forest Service.

Key Factors Leading to the Burn Ban:
Extended Drought: Chambers County has not received significant rainfall for an extended period, increasing fire danger.

Increased Fire Activity: Local fire departments have seen a sharp rise in grass and brush fires, placing strain on resources.

Severe Risk of Wildfires: Current conditions create the potential for large, dangerous, and fast-moving wildfires, posing a serious threat to lives and property.

These precautions are necessary to protect the community from the risk of catastrophic wildfires. Chambers County officials urge everyone to comply with the burn ban and remain vigilant as these conditions persist.

Contact Chambers County Emergency Services with questions at 409-267-2445.

Jones Public Library



Memorials:

In Memory of:

Harbour, Clint Alfred: The 48 Laws of Power given by The Don Peoples Family

Hester, Alex Daniel: Heartstopper, Bah-Koo given by A Friend

Lewis, Lester (Bubba): The 24th Hour, Three Inch Teeth, Judgement

Prey given by Theo Smith

Mifflin, Milton: Why a Son Needs a Dad, Dad & Daughter Forever Bond,

Grandpa Fix-It, How to Babysit a Grandpa given by Angie & Paul Doskocil

Sullivan, Nelli: Just in Case You Ever Wonder, Countries of the World given by David & LeeAnn Douglas

Early Voting Began in Chambers County; Convenient Locations and Flexible Hours for Voters

It's time to cast your ballot early in Chambers County! Starting last Monday, October 26, voters can now take advantage of early voting opportunities, with polling stations officially open today. Whether you're eager to cast your ballot or need flexibility in your schedule, the county offers several convenient locations and flexible hours to ensure that all eligible voters can participate ahead of the upcoming election.

With various polling places strategically located throughout the county, voters can choose to cast their ballots near their homes or even close to their workplaces, making it easier than ever to fit voting into a busy day.

For those seeking more information or needing assistance, Chambers County Clerk Heather H. Hawthorne is available to answer any questions. Voters can visit the Chambers County Clerk's website or contact the office directly for further details.

Early Voting Dates:

- Oct. 21 - Oct. 25: 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- Oct. 26: 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Oct. 27: 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Oct. 28 - Nov. 1: 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Early Voting Locations:

- Chambers County Health & Wellness Center
- 102 Airport Rd, Anahuac, TX
- Mark Huddleston Community Building
- 924 SH 124, Winnie, TX
- BH ISD Community Election Center
- 9650 Eagle Drive, Entrance 32, Mont Belvieu, TX
- West Side Complex
- 8138 FM 3246, Baytown, TX
- JP 6 Courtroom
- 7711 Hwy 146, Baytown, TX
- Chambers County Clerk's Office (Limited Voting)
- 404 Washington Ave, Anahuac, TX

EARLY VOTING IN CHAMBERS COUNTY

EARLY VOTING DATES

- Oct. 21 through Oct. 25 | 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- Oct. 26 | 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Oct. 27 | 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Oct. 28 through Nov. 1 | 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

EARLY VOTING LOCATIONS

- Chambers County Health & Wellness Center | 102 Airport Rd, Anahuac, TX
- Mark Huddleston Comm. Building | 924 SH 124, Winnie, TX
- BH ISD Community Election Center | 9650 Eagle Drive, Entrance 32, Mont Belvieu, TX
- West Side Complex | 8138 FM 3246, Baytown, TX
- JP 6 Courtroom | 7711 Hwy 146, Baytown, TX
- (Limited Voting) Chambers County Clerk's Office | 404 Washington Ave, Anahuac, TX

HEATHER H. HAWTHORNE
CHAMBERS COUNTY CLERK

United Way's Community Impact Grant Cycle Now Open

Baytown, Texas (October 15, 2024) United Way of Greater Baytown Area and Chambers County (UWGBACC) announces the opening of the 2025 - 2026 Community Impact grant cycle. Local human service nonprofit organizations are encouraged to submit a Letter of Intent to apply before November 30, 2023 to be considered for funding. Interested organizations should visit www.unitedwaygbacc.org/funded-partners, to learn more about eligibility to become a funded partner and the application process.

United Way of Greater Baytown Area and Chambers County has support-



ed organizations in this community for more than 78 years, partnering with local partners to bring vital resources to residents in need. United Way currently partners with 15 local agencies through 19 programs that bring vital resources to the Baytown area and throughout Chambers County. The territory of United Way

spans 11 zip code areas, from east Harris County, throughout Chambers County, bringing a variety of needs and available resources to our community. "The Community Impact Grant program creates solutions to the most pressing needs in our community," says Community Engagement Director Kaci Pena. "It also

gives our community a voice. Every investment made through United Way is invested into local programs by donors and volunteers who live and work here, keeping your dollars in our community. Programs like this are essential to ensuring there is help when our community needs it most."

Local human service nonprofit organizations are encouraged to review the funding requirements for the Community Impact Grant funding program. Interested applicants must attend one orientation to be considered for funding. Orientations will be held on Friday, October 18 at

12:00 pm, October 23 at 12:00 pm, or October 29 at 9:00 am. To find all funding requirements and to register for orientation, at www.unitedwaygbacc.org/community-impact-grant.

If you would like more information about the grant process and becoming a funded partner please call 281-424-5922 or email admin@unitedwaygbacc.org. Join a movement of community members say "I am United for my community, I am United for You" through the 2024 Community Campaign by visiting www.unitedwaygbacc.org/Give.

Quick-Thinking Officers Foil Bank Juggling Attempt in Shopping Center: Suspects Arrested Minutes After Crime

MONT BELVIEU- On Wednesday Oct 4 in the afternoon MBPD Patrol units responded to a shopping center located in the 9500 block of SH 146 in reference to a Burglary of a Motor Vehicle in progress.

Witnesses reported that a white Toyota RAV4 had pulled into the parking lot and parked near the victim's car. The suspect in the passenger seat then exited wearing a face mask and proceeded to break out the drivers-side window of the victim's vehicle and enter it briefly before getting back into the white RAV4 being driven by another suspect.

They were last seen leaving southbound on SH 146 towards IH-10. These great witnesses got a detailed description of the suspect vehicle as well as the license plate number.

Through quick response and on-scene investigation by MBPD officers



BANK JUGGING ARRESTS

it was quickly determined that this was likely a bank juggling incident since the victim had just left a local financial institution and the bank envelope he walked out with was the only item stolen from the victim's vehicle.

The suspect vehicle description and license plate were immediately broadcast to other MBPD units as well as Baytown Police

Department and Chambers County Sheriffs Office. Within just a few minutes of that broadcast, an alert Baytown PD patrol sergeant spotted the suspect vehicle parked at a financial institution in the 6000 block of Garth Road. Both suspects were detained and subsequently taken into custody by Mont Belvieu PD, charged with Burglary of a Motor

Vehicle and Unlawful Use of a Criminal Instrument. Both were booked into the Chambers County Jail.

MBPD Mug Photos below: (Left) 18-year old Ed-dric Williams of Houston TX and (right) 18-year old Jerome Williams of Houston TX

Baytown PD was on the spot with great eyes, solid police work and inter-agency teamwork as al-

ways. Thankfully in this case, the "bank envelope" that the victim had carried to his car from the bank was filled with only papers and blank check registers so there was no significant cash loss as with many bank juggling crimes.

Mont Belvieu PD reminds everyone to always lock their vehicles and never leave cash or other valuables inside. Be watchful and when leaving banking institutions and be observant for anyone following you. Bank juggling suspects typically park at or near banks and watch for people who exit a bank carrying envelopes or bank bags, then follow you to your next destination where they then break into the vehicle.

And always remember to report suspicious activity immediately to your local law enforcement.

OPINION PAGE

Sylvia R. Garcia
CONGRESSWOMAN | TX-29



PASSPORT FAIR:
You're Invited: Apply for your Passport with us on November 16th!

We are excited to announce that we will be hosting a **Passport Fair** with the U.S. Department of State. This is a fantastic opportunity for individuals to apply for a passport or learn about the new online passport renewal process!

Date: Saturday, November 16th Time: 11:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Location: Magnolia Multi-Service Center 7037 Capitol St, Houston, TX 77011

What to Expect:

- Passport agents will be on-site to accept applications.
- Learn about the new online passport renewal process.
- Get personalized assistance with your passport application.
- Learn about important updates on **passport processing times**: The State Department's Bureau of Consular Affairs has recently announced a reduction in processing times! Routine service now takes just 4-6 weeks, down from the previous 6-8 weeks.

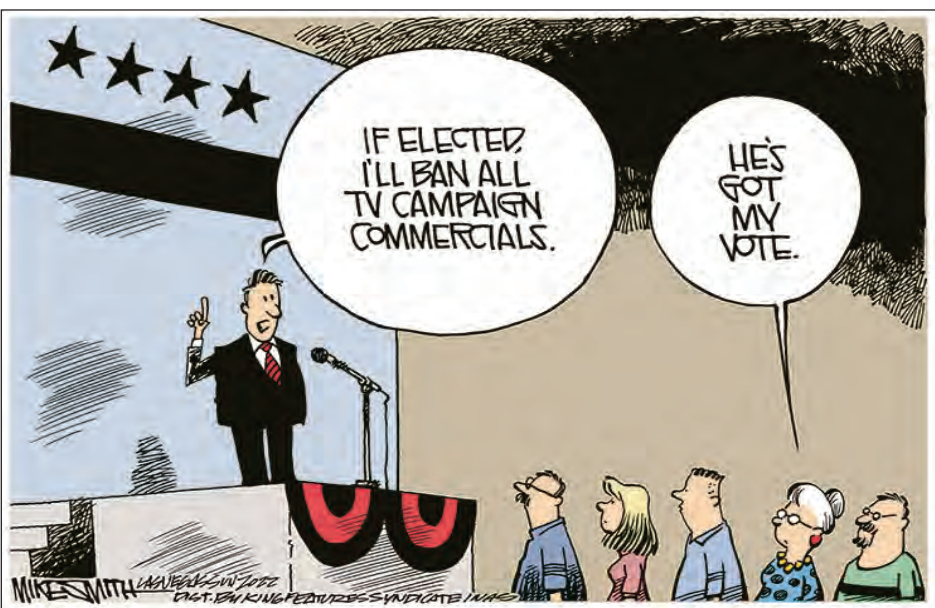
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What You Need to Bring: If you're a **first-time passport applicant**, please be sure to bring the following items to your appointment:

- 1. Completed DS-11 application:** Visit [Travel.state.gov/applyinperson](https://travel.state.gov/applyinperson) to download and fill out your application in advance.
 - 2. Proof of U.S. Citizenship:** Bring your original U.S. birth certificate or Naturalization Certificate, plus a photocopy.
 - 3. Passport Photo:** (2x2 inches, taken within the last 6 months)
 - 4. Valid Photo ID:** (Driver's License, State or Military ID) and a photocopy of the front and back.
 - 5. Payment:** Fees may vary, check [Travel.state.gov/applyinperson](https://travel.state.gov/applyinperson) for details.
- For Minors (15 and Under):** The child and both parents must be present, with each parent providing valid photo IDs and photocopies of the front and back (Driver's License, State or Military ID).

Secure Your Appointment! To reserve your spot, please sign up here. We're here to help you every step of the way. For any questions, feel free to contact my office at **832-325-3150**. For more information, please visit Travel.state.gov. We look forward to seeing you there!

Sincerely,
Sylvia R. Garcia Member of Congress



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS
By Gary Borders



Early Voting Begins This Week

Early voting for the Nov. 5 general election begins Monday, Oct. 21 and ends on Nov. 1. Texas voters will be choosing from a full slate of candidates, from president to U.S. senator to various county positions.

The deadline to register to vote was Oct. 7. Voters are reminded to bring one of seven approved forms of photo IDs to the polls. Among the options are a Texas driver's license, U.S. passport, or handgun license. A complete list of acceptable IDs can be found at vote.texas.gov. Voters can also make sure they are registered by going to that site.

A recent Texas Standard story notes that under a little-known Texas elections law, convicted felons in prison are eligible to register and vote if they are actively appealing their convictions. It is unknown, however, how many of the 134,000 people currently held in state prisons actually register and vote, since the state doesn't track that data.

"Nobody's asking to do this because they have no idea that they can," Jennifer Toon of the Lioness Justice Impacted Women's Alliance, a nonprofit for incarcerated women.

Under state law, a conviction is not considered "final" as long as it is under appeal. Convicted felons who never appealed their case, or who lost their appeal, are not eligible to vote.

SURGE IN SCHOOL THREATS PROMPTS DOZENS OF ARRESTS

At least 40 Texas students were arrested in September in connection with making threats against schools, The Dallas Morning News reported. The surge came after a 14-year-old fatally shot two fellow students and two teachers at Georgia's Apalachee High School. Those arrested face an assortment of charges ranging from generating a false alarm to making terroristic threats, or threatening to use a firearm.

"My concern is these threats are going to desensitize people," said Shane Wallace, director of the Texas Association of School Resource Officers. "It's an abundance every day. The one that's not reported may be the one."

While most of the threats turn out to be non-credible, law enforcement officials are



obligated to investigate every threat, some of which turn out to be legitimate. For example, a 12-year-old student was arrested Sept. 10 in Bexar County after allegedly threatening to shoot another student. When his home was searched, deputies seized a pistol, ammunition and body armor. The child was charged with making a terroristic threat.

Dallas ISD Police Chief Albert Martinez said his officers were devoting nearly all of their time dealing with reported threats made by students.

\$50 MILLION ALLOCATED FOR DEBRIS REMOVAL AFTER STORMS

Gov. Greg Abbott and other state leaders have approved \$50 million in emergency funding to help communities in Southeast Texas with debris removal after Hurricane Beryl in June and a derecho storm in May, the Houston Chronicle reported.

While Abbott cited a shortage and delay of funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, that agency said it has enough funds to meet recovery needs—even though two more major hurricanes have struck the United States since then.

"FEMA has the necessary resources to meet the immediate needs associated with Hurricane Helene and other disasters," a statement from the Department of Homeland Security said.

Beryl left behind approximately 4.1 million cubic yards of debris, enough to fill Houston's NRG stadium, the Chronicle reported. That figure only includes storm debris such as broken and scattered vegetation. It does not include debris from damaged homes, buildings and roads.

Comptroller Glen Hegar

supported the funding move because it will provide quicker assistance where needed.

"In the aftermath of storms like these, questions about funding can lead to significant delays in recovery efforts and timelines," he said. "These delays can have disastrous long-term ramifications for local and regional economies."

ALLRED OUTRAISES CRUZ IN THIRD QUARTER

Democratic challenger U.S. Rep. Colin Allred, D-Dallas, raised \$30.3 million during this year's third quarter, far outpacing incumbent U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz in their high-profile matchup, according to The Tribune. Cruz raised \$21 million during the same time period.

The two have collectively raised at least \$132 million since the race began, far outpacing the amount raised in Cruz's successful reelection campaign in 2018, when he beat challenger Beto O'Rourke by less than 3 percentage points.

Polls indicate a tight race, with Allred trailing slightly but within the margin of error.

HIGH COURT TO HEAR NUCLEAR WASTE CHALLENGE

The U.S. Supreme Court has agreed to hear a challenge to plans to store nuclear waste in West Texas, according to U.S. News & World Report. That comes after the state appealed a decision by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to grant a license to a private company to store spent nuclear fuel at a dump in Andrews County.

The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals previously found that the NRC has exceeded its authority under federal law. Abbott has said that Texas "will not become America's nuclear waste dumping ground."

The state of New Mexico is closely watching the case, since it is fighting plans to build a similar facility just across the line from the proposed site in Andrews County. Approximately 100,000 tons of spent fuel, some of dating back to the 1980s, is stockpiled at current and former nuclear plants while the legal battles ensue. A proposal to build a national storage facility at Yucca Mountain in Nevada has been abandoned because of widespread opposition in that state.

MONARCH MIGRATION NOT LOOKING PROMISING

Millions of monarch butterflies are making their way through Texas to their winter vacation site in Mexico, but conservationists say the migration this year features far fewer than hoped, kut.org reported. The butterflies started the spring in Mexico with the second-smallest population ever recorded. Poor weather conditions in the upper Midwest, where many of the beautiful creatures spend summers, hurt monarch reproduction before the southern migration.

"It's not looking as promising as we had hoped," said Kristen Baum, director of the nonprofit research group Monarch Watch.

Researchers won't know the full picture until butterfly census takers head to the mountain forests of Central Mexico this winter. That is where the monarchs spend the cooler months.

THE POSTSCRIPT
By Carrie Classon

A Little Noise



The men who have been making the terrible noise are still at it.

The construction on our building began in the early spring, before my husband, Peter, and I returned from Mexico. When we arrived, scaffolding had been set up all around the building and blue plastic had been taped over our windows to protect them from flying debris. Our balcony was unusable, and the driveway was blocked off, filled with piles of bricks.

And every morning at 8:00 exactly, they began to jackhammer out the bricks.

The project entailed removing rows of bricks from every side and every story of the building because water was getting in. Some sort of magic was performed beneath them (I am not an engineer, in case you were wondering) and new bricks were put in place. The loudest and longest part of this project was the removal of the bricks, but there was also grinding down of edges once the new ones were in, and some pressure washing and, throughout it all and at every stage, a tremendous amount of noise.

The building leaked. There wasn't much we could do.

I decided early on that I could not vacate to a coffee shop every time I needed to write. I don't like wearing earplugs, and I'm not sure they would have done much good. Instead, I wrote through the noise. If I had to talk to Peter, I would go to the room he was in and stand close to him, because inter-room hollering was no longer possible (which might have been one small ancillary benefit of the façade repair).

They were all guys, and they were all quite large. Hammering out bricks and replacing them with more bricks while on a narrow platform high in the air is serious work. These guys did it five days a week from 8 in the morning until 4 in the afternoon, taking only a half-hour off for lunch.

I always said "hello." They always apologized for all the noise—as if there was anything they could do about it. Sometimes I would thank them for the wake-up call. They always laughed and thanked me for being a good sport.

"We should get them snacks to thank them for their hard work," Peter said.

Peter believes every hard-working person deserves snacks. It is one of the many things I love about him. So I went to the bakery, and I bought a bunch of bars—brownies and lemon bars and Rice Krispies bars and pumpkin—and Peter and I delivered them one day when they took their short lunch break.

"I want a souvenir!" I told the foreman.

"What kind of souvenir?" he asked.

"I want a brick!"

"We've got bricks everywhere!" He laughed.

"Yes, but I want a signed brick. I want your autographs."

"Why would you want that?" he asked.

"I want it to remember this summer of noise!"

They all laughed, and just when we were getting ready to return to Mexico (which we usually think of as the noisier of our two homes), Peter said, "There's something for you outside the door."

And, of course, it was my brick, with everyone's name written on it. I was so pleased.

It reminds me of those hard-working guys outside my window, hanging off the side of the building day after day. It reminds me that, whatever hard work I think I am doing, there are much harder jobs out there. Sitting at my computer, putting up with a little noise, it reminds me that I have it pretty good.

Till next time,
Carrie

top ten

MOST VISITED Countries of 2024

1. France	117.1 million
2. Poland	88.5 million
3. Mexico	51.1 million
4. United States	45 million
5. Thailand	39.9 million
6. Italy	38.4 million
7. Czech Republic	37.2 million
8. Spain	36.4 million
9. Canada	32.4 million
10. Hungary	31.6 million

Source: World Population Review



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FOOTBALL SEASON WEEK 8: No. 14 Aggies host No. 8 LSU: Texans host Indy in AFC South battle

Things are getting interesting in college and pro football as we enter the closing weeks of October.

In the college game, a number of teams are in contention for one of the 12 berths in the College Football Playoffs (CFP). No. 1-ranked Texas looked every bit as the nation's top team with a dominating 34-3 over arch rival Oklahoma two weeks ago in the Cotton Bowl.

In College Station, first-year head coach Mike Elko has his Aggies rolling and they will get another chance to enhance their CFP resume on Saturday when they host No. 8-ranked LSU in what should be a donnybrook of a game.

No. 1-ranked Texas has a tough road test at upset minded Vanderbilt. The Commodores pulled off the upset of the year on Oct. 5 when they upset then No. 1-ranked Alabama, 40-35.

No. 12 Notre Dame also has a tough test this weekend when they take on No. 25-ranked Navy (5-0 entering their Oct. 19 game against Charlotte) at MetLife Stadium in New Jersey (home of the Giants and Jets).

In the NFL, the Texans can begin to separate themselves from the rest of the AFC South when they host the Colts looking to sweep Indianapolis and move to 3-0 in the division with just 3 division games left to play.

Week 8 begins with Minnesota visiting the Rams on Thursday Night Football. The woeful Cowboys visit San Francisco to take on the 49ers on Sunday Night Football.

Other interesting games in Week 8 have the Bills making a cross-country trip to take on Seattle, while Philadelphia visits a Cincinnati team that is looking to get on a run.

In District 14-6A action, Eisenhower and Nimitz go at it in a key game for both team's playoff chances.

Before we take a look at this week's games, let's review last week's results. A 7-5 week brought the season record to 57-27 (68%).

Now, onto this weekend's games.

NCAA

Missouri at Alabama - No. 19 Missouri and their high-powered offense visit Tuscaloosa to face No. 7-ranked Alabama in a key SEC game for both squads.



KEENEY'S KORNER By MIKE KEENEY

TD). Mizzu has a solid QB in Brady Cook (1,351 yards, 7 TDs) as well. The Crimson Tide has perhaps the best dual threat QB in the country in Jalen Milroe (1483 passing yards, 12 TDs/319 rushing yards, 11 TDs) and two solid wideouts in true freshman Ryan Williams (23 receptions, 576 yards, 6 TDs) and Germie Bernard (20 receptions, 309 yards, 2 TDs).

Notre Dame vs. Navy - No. 12 Notre Dame takes on No. 25 Navy on Saturday at MetLife Stadium in The Meadowlands.

Navy is one of the best stories of the 2024 college season, jumping out to a 5-0 start (they should be 6-0 when they face the Irish considering they faced a so-so Charlotte team last Saturday).

LSU at Texas A&M - No. 9 LSU heads to College Station to take on No. 14 Texas A&M in an important SEC game for both teams. Two weeks ago, the Tigers upset Ole Miss, 29-26 in overtime, while the Aggies enjoyed the week off.

Texas at Vanderbilt - The No. 1 Texas Longhorns head to Nashville to take on this season's darlings, the Vanderbilt Commodores.

NFL Minnesota at Los Angeles Rams - Week 8 begins with Thursday Night Football as the surprise team of the 2024 season, the Minnesota Vikings, head to LA to take on the struggling Rams.

NFL

Minnesota at Los Angeles Rams - Week 8 begins with Thursday Night Football as the surprise team of the 2024 season, the Minnesota Vikings, head to LA to take on the struggling Rams.

(1,111 yards, 11 TDs) a key piece of the Vikes offense. Minnesota also has a strong running game led by Aaron Jones (356 yards, 2 TDs) and one of the best wide receivers in Justin Jefferson (26 receptions, 450 yards, 4 TDs).

Indianapolis at Houston - The Texans will look for a sweep of the Colts when Indy visits NRG Stadium on Sunday. Houston opened the season with a road win over the Colts and the offense got a huge boost two weeks ago with the return of starting running back Joe Mixon (286 yards, 3 total TDs).

Buffalo at Seattle - The Bills make the cross-country trek to take on a Seattle team that is in bad need of a big win. Two weeks ago, the Seahawks lost at home to the 49ers for their third straight loss, while the Bills picked up a nice road win over the Jets.

Philadelphia at Cincinnati - The Eagles head to Cincinnati to take on a Bengals team that knows it needs to get on a roll if it hopes to get back in the AFC playoff race. The Eagles have struggled at times behind QB Jalen Hurts (1,194 passing yards, 6 TDs/196 rushing yards, 2 TDs), but have a strong runner in Saquon Barkley (482 yards, 4 TDs).

Dallas at San Francisco - Maybe playing on the road will help the Cowboys get out of their funk, but from what they've shown in their first six games, I don't think so.

Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation form for Highlands Star-Crosby Courier, dated Oct 1, 2024.

Table showing circulation data for Highlands Star-Crosby Courier, including total number of copies, paid distribution, and free or nominal rate distribution.

Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation form for United States Postal Service, dated Oct 1, 2024.

Fireworks Sale OKayed

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

them, which is completely legal, and shoot them off during Diwali in the fall," she said. "I would just cringe at the thought of those fireworks sitting in 100-degree temperatures over the summer and the risk it brought to homeowners."

go-around." The fireworks sales begin on Friday, October 25 and stores open at 10 a.m. and will run through Nov. 1. The following day is Dia de Los Muertos.

Davis reminded everyone that Harris County is under a burn ban. "That makes it even more important that fireworks safety rules be observed, including always shooting fireworks on open, level ground; not aiming at buildings or vegetation and, especially, disposing of fireworks by dousing them with water and putting them in garbage cans away from buildings.

SCORES & SCHEDULES WEEK 8. Includes last week's scores, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday schedules for various games.

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by Freddy Groves

Proposed: grants for veteran legal assistance

It's only been proposed at this point, but it's a great idea: The Department of Veterans Affairs is considering handing out grant money to those who can help veterans change their discharge status, ask for a review of records for the purpose of making corrections and give legal help when it comes to accessing VA programs.

In the last decade, 57,000 veterans with the wrong discharge status were granted eligibility for benefits. The new proposed program will add the legal help that might be necessary to get through the steps with a military service discharge review board, a board that changes or corrects military records or a determination of characterization of service.

To read the fine print on the proposal, go to the Federal Register at www.federalregister.gov and search for the Oct. 2, 2024, file titled "Legal Services for Veterans-Legal Assistance for Access to VA Programs Grant Program."

If you were in the Reserves, you might or might not be eligible for the legal assistance. To read the specific definitions, scroll down the page noted above to section 81.15 Eligible Individuals.

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Crosby ISD Awards \$79k in Teacher Grants, Students Excel in Parade and UIL Band Contest,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"Pages for Pizza" rolled out to all our elementary schools. First and second graders and their parents had a chance to see how the children could earn free pizza from Marco's Pizza in Crosby. We've set ambitious goals of 360 pages for first graders and 720 pages for second graders to earn a free pizza. Who's ready to read?!

Congratulations to the Crosby High School Band for a spectacular performance at the UIL Region 33 Marching Band Contest. The Big Red Machine saluted each branch of the military during their wonderful production at Planet Ford Stadium in Spring ISD. The band received all Division 1 Ratings and will next perform at the state military marching band contest at Baylor University in Waco on October 30. Go, Cougars!

We wrapped up Hispanic Heritage Month with a big win by a fourth grader from Barrett Elementary School. Jayden Bucio was named the best accordion player during the Baytown Grito Fest. Jayden played his heart out, and he has a huge future in music!

Kudos to the Child Nutrition Services teams at Barrett Elementary School and Crosby Elementary School. They received perfect 100 scores on recent inspections by the Harris County Department of Health. These inspections cover many important criteria, including food storage, temperature, cleanliness of facility, proper food handling, and overall safety. Great job, cafeteria teams!



Headed to State! The Crosby High School Band will compete in the state military marching band contest later this month in Waco. The Big Red Machine scored all Division 1 Ratings at the UIL Regional Marching Band Contest on October 19, 2024, at Planet Ford Stadium in Spring ISD.



The Crosby Education Foundation made dreams come true in Crosby ISD on October 10. The grant giveaway prize patrol visited every campus distributing more than \$79,000 in innovative teaching grants.

A reminder for families that Election Day will be a student holiday in Crosby ISD. Staff development will be held at all campuses on Tuesday, November 5. Several schools are being utilized as polling locations, so students will not be in the building while voters are there. For those who would like to vote, the Crosby Community Center is the early voting location in our communities through November 1. Here are the six locations that will serve as voting locations on Election Day itself:

- Newport Elementary
 - Drew Elementary
 - Crosby Kindergarten Center
 - Crosby Community Center
 - Riley Chambers Community Center
 - Harris Co WCID #70
- Keep in mind that voters registered in Harris County can vote at any polling location in Harris County. Finally, add a reminder to your calendar for the Crosby ISD Veterans Day Ceremony on Monday, November 11, at 7pm, at Cougar Stadium. We

are inviting Crosby / Barrett Station veterans and their families to attend our celebration and be recognized for their service. Students from all grade levels love to sing and perform for our veterans, their families, and all community members. We ask that veterans arrive by 6:30pm so they can be recognized by name, rank, and branch of the military. I hope to see our families there wearing red, white, and blue! We are Committed to Excellence! Go Coogs!



Crosby High School cheerleaders and their sponsors took a moment before the Barrett Station Homecoming Parade to snap a photograph with Superintendent Patterson.



Crosby ISD's "Pages for Pizza" reading incentive program rolled out to first and second grade students and parents this month each elementary school. The more students read the more pizza they earn! Marco's Pizza in Crosby is sponsoring the reading incentive program.



Congratulations to 4th grader Jayden Bucio from Barrett Elementary School. He won the accordion-playing contest at the Baytown Grito Fest!

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Development

GRFISIL, LLC: Notice of Finding of No Significant Impact

AGENCY: Rural Business-Cooperative Service, USDA

ACTION: Notice of Finding of No Significant Impact.

SUMMARY: The Rural Business-Cooperative Service, (RBS), has made a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) with respect to a request for possible financing assistance to GRFISIL, LLC for the construction of the Crosby Park Model RV Park Project in Harris County.

FURTHER INFORMATION: To obtain copies of the EA and FONSI, or for further information, contact: Michael Self, Business & Cooperative Programs Director, 101 South Main Street, Temple, Texas 76501, at 254-742-9979 or michael.self@usda.gov. The EA and FONSI are also available for public review at the Huntsville Area Office, 2 Financial Plaza, Suite 745, Huntsville, TX 77340.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: GRFISIL, LLC proposes to build a Recreational Vehicle (RV) park facility that will consist of 351 fully equipped RV sites and will be completed in two separate phases in Crosby, Harris County, Texas. The project area is located approximately 0.23 miles northwest of the intersection of Ulrich Lane and FM 2100, Crosby, Texas. The purpose of the Crosby Park Model RV Park Project will attract campers to the area, creating tax revenue for the local government and new customers for local businesses.

Alternatives considered by GRFISIL, LLC include: No action; RBS would not provide financial assistance to GRFISIL, LLC, and/or the proposed Project would not be constructed. This alternative would not help attract campers to the area, creating tax revenue for the local government and new customers for local businesses. The alternatives are discussed in the Crosby Park Model RV Park Project EA. The RBS has reviewed and approved the EA for the proposed project.

The availability of the EA for public review was announced via notice in the following newspaper(s): The Highlands Crosby Star Courier, in Crosby, Harris County, Texas on September 12th and 19th of 2024. A 14-day comment period was announced in the newspaper notice(s). The EA was also available for public review at the USDA Rural Development office and website as well as USDA Huntsville Area Office.

Based on its EA, commitments made by GRFISIL, LLC, and no public comments received, RBS has concluded that the project would have no significant impact (or no impacts) to water quality, wetlands, floodplains, land use, aesthetics, transportation, or human health and safety.

The proposed project will have no adverse effect on resources listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Agency has also concluded that the proposed project is not likely to affect federally listed threatened and endangered species or designated critical habitat thereof. The proposed project would not disproportionately affect minority and/or low-income populations.

No other potential significant impacts resulting from the proposed project have been identified. Therefore, RBS has determined that this FONSI fulfills its obligations under the National Environmental Policy Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR §§ 1500-1508), and USDA Rural Development's Environmental Policies and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970) for its action related to the project.

RBS is satisfied that the environmental impacts of the proposed project have been adequately addressed. RBS federal action would not result in significant impacts to the quality of the human environment, and as such it will not prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for its action related to the proposed project.

Dated: October 21, 2024



Q: Have they said who will replace Hoda Kotb on the "Today" show after she leaves? — A.Y.

A: When Hoda Kotb announced at the end of September that she would be leaving the job she's held for 17 years with "Today," it came as a shock to her fans, but probably not her co-anchors Savannah Guthrie and Jenna Bush Hager. Now the mother of two young girls, Kotb recently purchased a home away from Manhattan in the hopes of spending more time with her daughters while they're still in elementary school.

According to Us Weekly, an NBC insider hints that the top contender to replace Kotb is weekend "Today" anchor Laura Jarrett. Other possibilities include Craig Melvin or Carson Daly. Since Kotb isn't departing until early 2025 and will remain part of the NBC network in some capacity, there's still several months to determine who will fill her chair.



Hoda Kotb ("Today")

Q: What happened to the "Charlie Brown" holiday specials? I miss seeing the Halloween, Thanksgiving and Christmas ones on regular TV. I haven't seen them in a couple years. — E.B.

A: The "Peanuts" holiday specials started airing on Apple TV+ in 2020 as part of an exclusive deal with the streaming service. Previously, these classic shows were a part of CBS's holiday programming since 1965, so it's understandable that viewers are upset with the move to streaming.

Fortunately, each year, Apple TV+ offers days where nonsubscribers can watch the specials at no cost. "It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown" was made available on Oct. 19 and 20. "A Charlie Brown Thanksgiving" will be available on Nov. 23 and 24, while "A Charlie Brown Christmas" will be shown on Dec. 14 and 15.

Apparently, creator Charles Schulz wasn't a fan of the Christmas special's finished product, but when it became a massive hit, the franchise went on to create dozens of more specials. However, none of them has achieved the classic TV status that this trio from the fall and winter holidays has.

Visit TV.apple.com for more information.

Q: I read about the newest "Big Bang Theory" spin-off in the works. Is Jim Parsons going to be on it? — L.L.

A: For those who might not have heard yet, in addition to "Young Sheldon" and "Georgie & Mandy's First Marriage," it was recently announced that a spin-off centered around three supporting characters from "The Big Bang Theory" is in development.

According to TVLine, Kevin Sussman (Stuart), Lauren Lapkus (Denise), and Brian Posehn (Bert) have all inked a deal with HBO's streaming service Max for the new yet-to-be-named series, "which is suspected to revolve around Stuart's comic bookstore."

When he was interviewed on "Who's Talking to Chris Wallace?" Parsons stated that he has no plans now to appear on the new series, but that he "would never say never to anything because life just changes so much."

Parsons, who served as an executive producer and narrator of "Young Sheldon," the prequel sitcom about his "BBT" character, reprised the role onscreen for the series finale.

Send me your questions at NewCelebrityExtra@gmail.com, or write me at KFWS, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Amber Waves



Weekly SUDOKU by Linda Thistle. Includes a 9x9 grid and difficulty level: Moderate.

HOCUS-FOCUS by Henry Boltinoff. Find at least six differences in details between panels.

October 21, 2024 Posting Date King Crossword

Crossword grid with ACROSS and DOWN clues. Clues include: 1 Pop singer Celine, 5 "It's c-c-cold!", 8 Cicatrix, 12 Vicinity, 13 Fib, 14 Sharpen, 15 Huge kudos, 17 Assess, 18 Blue, 19 Shadowed, 21 Pretended, 24 Decorate, 25 Rapsallions, 26 Campus cafeteria offering, 30 Carnival city, 31 Long skirts, 32 Oklahoma tribe, 33 '80s arcade game, 35 Castle defense, 36 Eyeglass frames, 37 Smooths, as wood, 38 Source of gum arabic, 41 Numerical prefix, 42 Composer Bartok, 43 Performance bonus, 48 Japanese noodle, 49 "Rocks", 50 Rights org., 51 Head, to Henri, 52 Fine, at NASA, 53 Detail, 8 Tempura choice, 9 Furnace fuel, 10 Pay to play, 11 Clarinet insert, 16 Scepter, 20 Feels unwell, 21 Mattress option, 22 Writer Kingsley, 23 Music genre for BTS, 24 Plano's state, 26 Abba-inspired musical, 27 Lake bird, 28 Slightly, 29 Forget-me-not (flowers), 31 1102, to Nero, 34 Esoteric, 35 Rum cocktail, 37 Hindu honorific, 38 Border on, 39 Give up, 40 Oodles, 41 Arduous journey, 44 Author Umberto, 45 Agt.'s cut, 46 Hearty brew, 47 "Tasty!"

Answers for King Crossword. Includes a grid with numbers and the words: ANSWERS: 1. Celine, 5. Cold, 8. Cicatrix, 12. Vicinity, 13. Fib, 14. Sharpen, 15. Kudos, 17. Assess, 18. Blue, 19. Shadowed, 21. Pretended, 24. Decorate, 25. Rapsallions, 26. Cafeteria, 30. Carnival, 31. Skirts, 32. Tribe, 33. Arcade, 35. Castle, 36. Frames, 37. Smooths, 38. Source, 41. Prefix, 42. Bartok, 43. Performance, 48. Noodle, 49. Rocks, 50. Rights, 51. Henri, 52. Fine, 53. Detail, 8. Tempura, 9. Fuel, 10. Play, 11. Clarinet, 16. Scepter, 20. Feels, 21. Mattress, 22. Writer, 23. Kingsley, 24. Plano, 26. Abba, 27. Lake, 28. Slightly, 29. Forget-me-not, 31. 1102, 34. Esoteric, 35. Rum, 37. Hindu, 38. Border, 39. Give, 40. Oodles, 41. Arduous, 44. Author, 45. Agt., 46. Hearty, 47. Tasty!

Trivia test by Fifi Rodriguez. 10 questions on U.S. states, television, history, literature, geography, movies, science, animal kingdom, music, and psychology.



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