



Terri Stanton built this snowman in North Shore and he's holding one of her own coffee cups. Stanton sells all kinds of pottery. See Front Page

HIGHLANDS

CROSBY

# Star Courier

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VOL. 72, NO. 4 - \$1.00

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THURSDAY, JANUARY 30, 2025

P.O. DRAWER 446, HIGHLANDS, TEXAS 77562

## Intruder shot at Crosby American Legion Hall

By David Taylor  
Managing Editor

An intruder who entered the David H. Mc-Nerney American Legion Post 658, at 14890 FM 2100 in Crosby was shot after he allegedly threatened an employee with a stick similar to a cane or Shillelagh.

Deputies received the 9-1-1 phone call around 4 p.m. Friday afternoon reporting the wounded man was in a pavilion next door to the Legion Post.

"The call dropped around 4 p.m. today telling us that an employee of the Legion Hall was in his office when a man entered uninvited," said Sgt. Adriel Hinojosa of the Harris County Sheriff's Office.

The employee said the door was already unlocked while the employee was working on books.

"The man came in and got into a little verbal confrontation with the employee at the Legion Hall. During that conversation, the male was armed with a stick. At that point, the employee felt kind of threatened

Continued. See AMERICAN LEGION SHOOTING, Page 6

## CROSBY SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

# Crosby ISD Celebrates Winter Snowfall, Student Achievement, and Community Spirit!

Hello East Harris County and Crosby ISD families,

What a week we experienced with the winter storm! We recorded 4 inches of snow on the playing field at Cougar Stadium! It was so special to see the joy on the faces of our students enjoying the once-in-a-generation snowfall. We shared hundreds of photographs showing our families making memories, from sledding to making snow angels and snowmen, even celebrating Cougar pride in the snow! Crosby/Barrett



Dr. Paula Patterson  
Crosby Superintendent

Station truly turned into a winter wonderland! I want to thank our Operations team for ensuring our school entrances, driveways, and sidewalks were ice free and

safe for our students and staff members to return to class on Friday, January 24.

Congratulations to the students who competed in campus spelling bees this month. The top two finishers at each campus will compete in the 4<sup>th</sup> annual District Spelling Bee on February 6<sup>th</sup>. I'm looking forward to seeing the following students spell their hearts out: Wade and Camila from Crosby Elementary School; Emma and Piper

Continued. See CROSBY SUPERINTENDENT, Page 5



Stella, a third grader from Crosby Elementary School, was head over heels about Snow Day 2025.

# Rotary Chili Feast & Car Raffle this Saturday

## RAFFLE WINNER GETS A 2025 CHEVY SUV

HIGHLANDS – The Rotary Club's 50th Annual Chili Feast and Raffle takes place this Saturday, February 1st, and club members are busy with arrangements for the chili meal, the silent and live auctions, and of course selling the 700 tickets for prizes in the Raffle.

The top prize is a new 2025 Chevy SUV, either a TRAX or Trailblazer from Turner Chevrolet in Crosby.

Tickets for the Chili Feast are going fast, but still available from any Rotary Club member, local banks, businesses, and Turner Chevrolet, too. The



Highlands Rotarians display the Chevy SUV auto that will be raffled off at their 50th Annual Chili Feast to be held Saturday, Feb. 1st at St. Jude's Social Hall. Raffle tickets are \$100 and available from all Rotarians and many local businesses. SEEN ABOVE, Rotarians Johnny Gaeke, Weston Cotten, Robert Woodall, Karrie Torina, Connie Russell, Gaylynn Milliorn, Tricia Scott, Andy Scott, Jennifer King, Martha Sutton, Denise Smith, Dr. Larry White, Cora Ann Miller, Turner Chevrolet Manager David Mendez, and Wayne Prescott. (Photo by Rotarian Gil Hoffman)

number of tickets is limited, so you have a good chance of winning one of the 17 valuable prizes.

And of course, you get two delicious chili meals, cooked by Johnny Gaeke and his cooking team. The secret recipe for the great taste dates back to Chester Stasney early in the days of the first chili feasts. Now it is a tradition that the whole community anticipates and enjoys.

Every year the club uses the proceeds of the event for community projects and scholarships. Last year they awarded \$41,000 for 22 scholarships.

# Lake Houston Brewery to Open New Location in Huffman



The Crosby-Huffman Chamber of Commerce celebrated the ribbon cutting with the Lake Houston Brewery in Huffman on Thursday. The members also had lunch at the restaurant and tasted the many delicacies.

By David Taylor  
Managing Editor

Mother Nature tried. A pandemic tried. The economy tried. All failed and now against incredible odds, the Lake Houston Brewery not only survived as a new business but will soon expand and open their own brewery location for distribution. It was a dream they weren't sure would come true.

A piece of blue tape in the heart of the restaurant marks the water line

where the business was flooded by Hurricane Harvey, the first of many calamities for the building.

The business was first formed in 1978 and then bought in 2019 by Sean Matthews and his brother-in-law, and their first task was to do a little expansion.

"We expanded the number of boat slips out there," he said, "to about 15 or 16 now and we also added the boardwalk that wraps around the concrete with handrailings."

They also added a stage

which has become a great attraction for artists to entertain the guests on weekends.

Neither had any prior restaurant business experience, Matthews himself only working as a server back in his college days, but the two have managed to keep it open and build on their success.

Business was rolling for the two partners until March 17, 2020.

Continued. See HUFFMAN NEW BREWERY, Page 6

# Historic Snowfall Blankets Houston

City and Schools closed for 2 days; Temperatures fall below 20 degrees; Snow up to 5 inches

By David Taylor  
Managing Editor

From the I-10 area near the San Jacinto River and through Highlands and Barrett Station, north down FM 2100 through Crosby, to Huffman and SH 99, the Lake Houston area was completely blanketed by a historic snow for two days. Winter Storm Enzo packed a wallop, the result of a rare combination of weather factors causing the first blizzard in southeast Texas in more than a century.

The Houston area is not accustomed to a winter wonderland and the 4 to 6 inches of snow and at times it showed.

The rare snow days paralyzed the entire Gulf Coast with school closures, most staying home from work, or ordered to remain at work during the perilous traveling conditions that lasted from late Monday to early Thursday morning.



Gene Hicks, Jr. takes his tractor out and acts as a Good Samaritan to help a neighbor stranded in the ditch.

"Enzo was the rare combination of a primarily strong polar vortex that came off Siberia, pushing frigid Arctic air all the way across the states to the Gulf Coast," The Weather Channel reported.

The unusual cold front then collided with a low-pressure system near the Gulf Coast that brought the precipitation onshore turning it into a wintry mix of sleet and snow.

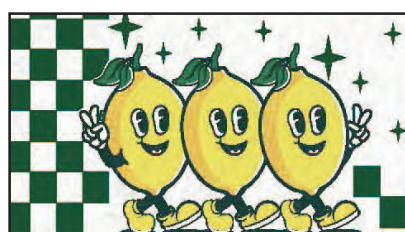
"The mix didn't only affect the Texas coastline but also across New Orleans all the way to parts of Flor-

ida dumping record snowfall across the south.

The frosty conditions began late Monday afternoon and one by one, Goose Creek, Huffman, and Crosby ISDs began canceling classes for at least Tuesday, which brought the brunt of the storm, through Wednesday when frigid temps froze the ice and snow creating 'black ice' and treacherous driving conditions. By Thursday morning, most of the

Continued. See HISTORIC SNOWFALL BLANKETS HOUSTON, Page 6

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# Winter storm Enzo dumps record snow on Lake Houston Area,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



Jesus Villada neighborhood in Crosby is completely covered in snow including vehicles and side roads.



Don and Melinda Killion may have to have some new plantings after snow completely covered their landscaping during the snow.

area began to see the snow melt away as temperatures climbed back above 32-degrees and sunlight broke through to begin the melting process.

The storm brought some anxiety for Houston and Texas residents who saw their power go out for several days when Winter Storm Uri impacted the coast with four to five days of winter ice and snow.

According to Center-Point Energy, 99 percent of their customers main-

tained power completely throughout the snow storm. At least 11 have been confirmed dead from the Gulf Coast of Texas to Florida from the record-breaking snow and ice storm.

Widespread road closures, flight cancellations, and power outages occurred due to the heavy snow and icy conditions. Galveston and the coastal areas experienced additional issues due to storm surge combined with snow-

fall.

Kids and families home from the two days off spent time making snow angels and snowmen, a first for many of them.

Life returned to normal for most across the state and North Channel area with a return to school on Thursday and Friday. Remnants of melting snow and ice lingered throughout most of Thursday, but began to dissipate and gone by Friday.

# New Texas Laws that Took Effect on Jan. 1

By David Taylor  
Managing Editor

With the Texas state legislature days away from gaveling in the 89<sup>th</sup> regular legislative session, the biggest fight on the floor the first day will be over the election of a new speaker. In the last biennium, the legislature drafted legislation that was signed by the governor and went into effect on Jan. 1, 2025. Only about four laws might directly affect local voters. Here they are:

### Senate Bill 2 Property tax relief

Most of the law is already in effect with the exception of Sections 3.05, 3.08, and 3.15(b) which took effect on Jan. 1, 2025. Sections 4.02, 4.05, 4.08, 4.10, and 4.12 which take effect on Jan. 1, 2027.

This year, the Education Code will be amended to ensure school districts receive additional state funding to offset property tax revenue lost due to reduced tax increase limits for elderly or disabled homeowners.

In addition, the Education Code will now require the Texas Education Agency to post each school district's maximum compressed rate for the current and preceding tax year bringing light to taxation of taxpayers.

Section 3.15(b) repeals tax discounts that have already expired.

### House Bill No. 4 Texas data privacy and security

Most of the law took effect on July 1, 2024, introducing new consumer data privacy regulations, by enhancing protections for Texans' personal information. The key provision of the bill took effect Jan. 1 which was the Business and Commerce Code.

What does it do? It gives consumers more power over their personal data with unified opt-out mech-



anisms for their personal online data processing.

Consumers will be able to use their browser settings, device preferences, or extensions to automatically opt of targeted advertising, data sales and profiling without the need to interact individually with each business.

Consumers can confirm whether a business is processing their personal data and will be able to access their personal data, correct inaccuracies, delete personal data provided by or obtained about the consumer, and opt out of the processing of personal data for purposes of targeted advertising, the sale of personal data, or profiling.

Businesses will be required to respond to a consumer's request within 45 days after receipt and without delay. They can request and extension as long as they inform the consumer and provides a reason for the extension. If the business wishes to decline the consumer's request, they must provide justification and instructions on how to appeal the decision.

### House Bill No. 3297 Eliminating state vehicle inspections

The law was passed in the 2023 legislature and took effect on Jan. 1, 2025.

The new legislation eliminates annual inspections for non-commercial drivers to get their vehicle registration with a few exceptions that include Har-

ris County.

Drivers will have to pay a nominal \$7.50 fee for the inspection program replacement when they get their registration.

The exceptions are for counties that will require non-commercial vehicles in Harris, Brazoria, Fort Bend, Galveston, and Montgomery counties will include a vehicle emissions inspection and maintenance program. The law also affects drivers in Dallas-Fort Worth in Collin, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Johnson, Kaufman, Parker Rockwall, and Tarrant counties. It also includes Travis, Williamson, El Paso, and Bexar (2026) counties.

### House Bill No. 4504 Streamlining criminal procedure

This bill is an ongoing effort to simplify legal rules in the state of Texas. There are small, technical updates to the Code of Criminal Procedure without changing the meaning of the laws.

These updates directly involve the duties of police officers, how they interact with the public, where cases can be tried, moving cases to a different location, rules for certain local courts, and clearing criminal records.

There are considerably more laws that don't directly affect taxpayers locally including the creation of several new judicial districts across the state.

## ☆ SCHOOL PAGE ☆

# Shonna Prentice Selected As Stuart Career Tech High School Principal

Congratulations to Shonna Prentice, recently appointed as the Stuart Career Tech High School Principal!

Shonna Prentice, a proud product of Goose Creek CISD, has dedicated her entire educational career to serving the district that shaped her. With a commitment to student success, she has held various roles within GCCISD, including 10th Grade ELA Teacher, Teacher Mentor, Campus Teacher Mentor, Intern Mentor, Assistant Principal at Goose Creek Memorial High School, and Academic Dean at Stuart Career Tech High School. A graduate of the University of Houston-Downtown, Shonna pursued her Master's in Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Houston-Clear Lake and earned her Principal Certification from Lamar University. Her accolades include being named Teacher of the Year and a Finalist for the Region 4 Assistant Principal of the



Year in 2022.

As Principal of Stuart Career Tech High School, Shonna is excited to lead with passion, dedication, and a vision for preparing students for a bright future. Her journey exemplifies her commitment to education and her belief in the potential of every student in Baytown.

"At Stuart, we prepare, empower, and propel our students to a successful future. Our mission is to continue fostering generational change by equipping our students with the skills, confidence, and knowledge they need to thrive and contribute meaningfully to their community."

# Patricia Ducote Select As Director of Transportation

Patricia Ducote brings a wealth of experience and passion to her new role as Director of Transportation. Her career in pupil transportation has been marked by dedication, leadership, and a drive for excellence. Patricia began her journey as a bus driver and trainer at New Caney ISD, eventually earning the role of Transportation Supervisor. During her time there, she obtained her Official Transportation Certification from the Texas Association for Pupil Transportation (TAPT) and later served as Director of Transportation for Channelview ISD.

Patricia's contributions to the field extend beyond her district roles. She has served as President of TAPT (2022-2023) and the Gulf Coast Association for Pupil Transportation (2023-2024), while continuing as a long-standing committee member in both organizations. Her leadership within these professional associations reflects her commitment to advancing pupil transportation standards across the state.



Within GCCISD, Patricia has held key positions, including Lead Transportation Coordinator and Associate Director of Transportation, preparing her to take the helm as Director. She credits her four daughters as her greatest inspiration, driving her to work hard, grow, and lead with purpose.

Patricia is passionate about improving student transportation, fostering the success of

drivers, and building strong community relationships. She looks forward to continuing her journey with GCCISD, where her vision aligns with the district's commitment to excellence in transportation services.

"As Director of Transportation, my mission is to lead the transportation team with dedication, commitment, and integrity to safely transport our giants to academic success."



# Barbers Hill Press

## Dayton

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

VOL. 30, NO. 4

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THURSDAY, JANUARY 30, 2025

MONT BELVIEU, TEXAS 77580

### ON THE HILL

#### Market at The Park

The City of Mont Belvieu's Monthly Market at the Park takes place at City Park on the first (1st) Saturday of every month from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

The mission of the Mont Belvieu Market at the Park is to support our community by providing our residents and visitors with vendors that bring quality, fresh locally-produced agricultural products, and delicious homemade foods to the market.

The market also features merchants who sell unique custom crafts, apparel, jewelry, and more.

Come out and support local small businesses and enjoy wonderful fresh food.

#### Mueller of Mont Belvieu Named to Fall 2024 Dean's List in U of A's Fulbright College

FAYETTEVILLE, AR (01/24/2025)—Bethany Mueller of Mont Belvieu was named to the Fall 2024 Dean's List in the Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Arkansas.

Mueller joins more than 1,100 additional Fulbright College students on the Fall 2024 Dean's List.

To qualify for the Dean's List, students must achieve at least a 3.75 grade-point average for the semester while completing at least 12 credit hours.

"It is with great pride that we celebrate students like Bethany who has earned a place on the Dean's List this semester," said Brian E. Raines, dean of the Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences. "This recognition reflects not only Bethany's academic excellence and dedication but also their resilience and commitment to learning."

"We also want to recognize Bethany's family and supporters, the Fulbright College faculty and staff, and the wider University of Arkansas community who have all helped champion them every step of the way on their pursuit of academic excellence," Raines added.

Mueller is one of more than 8,000 students who study and research in Fulbright College, which offers degrees across the fine arts, humanities, natural sciences and social sciences. Learn more about the U of A's Fulbright College at [fulbright.uark.edu](http://fulbright.uark.edu).

## Chambers County Breaks Ground on New Emergency Services Building

CHAMBERS COUNTY, TEXAS – Chambers County has broken ground on a new partially grant funded Emergency Services Building in Anahuac, Texas.

This building will serve as not only the headquarters for the Chambers County Emergency Services Department which includes Emergency Management, Employee Safety, EMS, Communications and the Fire Marshal's Office, but will also house a new Emergency Operations Center.

Of the approximate \$10 million price tag associated with this building, half of the funding will come via the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs Community Resiliency program. The remaining portion of the budget will be covered through the County's Gen-



eral Fund and other local sources.

"Chambers County has taken great steps to improve the quality of emergency response for our residents over the past several years," said Chambers County Judge Jimmy Sylvia. "We are proud to continue to invest in the wellbeing of this County through the completion of

this project."

While the project was initially inspired by the inadequacy of existing EMS facilities in Anahuac – with bays that were too small to house ambulances – the need was punctuated by the consolidation of the Emergency Management and Fire Marshal's office with the EMS service. This consolidation

underscored the need for a centralized headquarters that housed not only all departments, but also an updated Emergency Operations Center that will fit the needs of the growing County.

"This facility will allow us to better meet the needs of residents not only in Anahuac, but across the County," said Emergency

Services Chief, Ryan Holzaepfel. "Having a centralized headquarters with adequate space for staff, equipment and training will allow us to continue providing top quality service, maintain a skilled workforce and extend the longevity of our equipment."

When asked about the project budget, Director of Economic Development and Grant Management Samantha Humphrey explained that "by leveraging grant dollars in addition to County funds, we are able to deliver a facility that is desperately needed at a fraction of the cost."

The project is slated for completion in late 2025 or early 2026, depending on weather.

Contact the Department of Economic Development with questions at 409-267-2692.

## Historic Snowfall in Mont Belvieu

City and Schools closed for 2 days; Temperatures fall below 20 degrees; Snow up to 5 inches

By Gerardo Hernandez

MONT BELVIEU - Residents proved their resilience and community spirit as Winter Storm Enzo blanketed the city with a rare snowfall. The storm brought icy conditions and several inches of snow, transforming the area into a picturesque winter scene. While the snowfall was a delight for children building snowmen and families enjoying the rare weather, the icy roads posed a significant challenge. Yet, thanks to proactive measures and cooperation, the city emerged unscathed with zero traffic accidents reported during the storm.

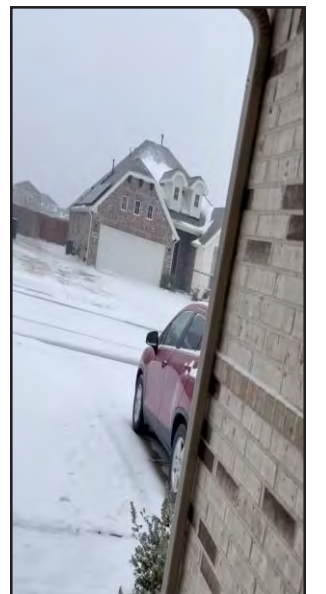
City officials commended residents for their exceptional response, noting that most citizens heeded warnings to stay off the roads and remain safe indoors. The people of Mont Belvieu did an incredible job, Mont Belvieu Police Department expressed. By staying home and avoiding unnecessary travel, they not only kept themselves safe but also made the work of emergency responders and road crews much easier. Crews worked tirelessly to sand major intersections and ensure essential services continued without disruption.

As the snow melted and normalcy returned, the city reflected on the sense of togetherness that the storm inspired. Neighbors helped each other shovel driveways, shared supplies, and even found joy in the unexpected winter wonderland.

Mont Belvieu's citizens ability to remain safe and took of precautionary measures throughout the storm with zero traffic incidents serves as a testament to the power of preparation and community cooperation.



Mont Belvieu City Park completely covered with snow and kids having fun.



Pictured, Midnight Shift Sergeant coming in to brief the oncoming day shift



MB Police officer and kids from the neighborhood posing for a good memory



Residents Leave their houses the morning after the storm to enjoy and play with snow





OPINION PAGE



Know Your Immigration Rights and Stay Prepared

As you have probably heard through news reports, the new Trump administration plans to make changes to our immigration laws that will impact all of us. Therefore, it is crucial to ensure everyone is informed of their rights and responsibilities.

What are your rights?

IN YOUR HOME: ICE agents cannot search your person, belongings, car, or home without your permission or a valid search warrant signed by a judge with your correct name and address on it.

AT WORK: ICE can only enter a workplace with the employer's consent or a judicial warrant. If they enter your work place, do not panic or try to run away.

IN PUBLIC: You are not required to answer questions about your immigration status, where you were born, or how you entered the country. You may refuse a search.

AT DOCTOR'S OFFICES: You are not required to disclose your immigration status to receive medical care, even if your healthcare provider asks you for this information.

AT SCHOOL: Students have the right to attend school without providing documentation of their immigration status. Schools should not ask about immigration status, and they cannot deny enrollment based on immigration status.

AT PLACES OF WORSHIP: Currently, ICE is directed to avoid enforcement actions in certain "protected areas" like schools, places of worship, and hospitals.

If you are detained by ICE, ask to speak with an attorney immediately. If you do not have a lawyer, ask an immigration officer for a list of pro bono lawyers.

To help protect yourself and your loved ones, here's a "Know Your Rights" card that outlines your legal protections and present it to ICE agents if needed.

Develop a family safety plan by identifying trusted contacts that can keep important immigration paperwork safe and memorizing important phone numbers you can contact in case you are detained.

During these uncertain times, we must stand together as neighbors and ensure everyone knows their rights.

If you have any questions or need assistance with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services or have an issue with ICE, please don't hesitate to reach out to my office at 832-325-3150.

Sincerely, Sylvia R. Garcia Member of Congress

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.



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS By Gary Borders



Hegar Releases Biennial Revenue Forecast

The Texas Legislature begins its work creating a state budget for the next two years with slightly less revenue available than it had during the previous biennium.

Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar projects lawmakers will have \$194.6 billion available during the 2026-27 budget cycle, down 1.1%.

He noted the state is in good financial shape and predicts revenue collections will continue to rise in the upcoming biennium.

"Thoughtful consideration of spending decisions, as always, will be crucial to ensure new and existing investments can be funded in the future — and that these investments focus on improving the lives of Texans," Hegar said.

Sales tax collections continue to make up the state's largest source of general fund revenue at 61%, followed distantly by oil and gas tax collections.

WATER BOARD DEEMS MARVIN NICHOLS RESERVOIR 'FEASIBLE'

The Texas Water Development Board recently reported to Gov. Greg Abbott that a controversial reservoir project in Northeast Texas could be finished and operating within the next 25 years.

The Marvin Nichols Reservoir has been on the drawing board for decades to be built in the Sulphur River Basin, which includes parts of Franklin, Red River and Titus counties.

Landowners in the affected areas have long opposed the reservoir's construction since they would lose valuable farm and timber land. The reservoir has pitted two regional water groups against each other.

The News reported that the official recommendation of a reservoir project in no way guarantees its construction. The permitting process at the



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS By Gary Borders

ABBOTT FLOATS NOTION OF BUYING WATER FROM HOUSTON FOR WEST TEXAS

Abbott and Houston Mayor John Whitmire reportedly have been in initial talks to sell the city's "excess" water to West Texas, the Houston Chronicle reported.

Whitmire, a longtime state senator before being elected mayor, told the Chronicle that he was open to the idea if it means the city can get much-needed infrastructure funding, calling it potentially a "win-win."

Cities and businesses operating in the Permian Basin are calling for more access to water as their aquifers run low after decades of unrestricted drilling.

Whitmire said the city could build new reservoirs to hold water sold to the state in exchange for funding to fix its crumbling infrastructure.

The city needs about \$15 billion just to fix its water pipes and build a new water purification plant. Houston has lost 36 billion gallons of water in the past two years — enough to supply the entire city of Fort Worth, with 900,000 people, with water for a year.

INVESTOR TIED TO PAXTON IMPEACHMENT PLEADS GUILTY

Austin real estate investor Nate Paul pleaded guilty last week to a single federal count of making false statements to a financial institution, the Austin American-Statesman reported. All other charges were dropped.

Paul faces up to six months in prison under the plea deal.

Paul, a major contributor to Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton's campaigns, was the focus of a federal investigation. Allegations that Paxton improperly used his office to help Paul thwart the probes led to the attorney general's impeachment in the House in 2023 on 20 counts of improperly accepting gifts and favors from the developer.

Investigators said Paul underreported his total debt and overreported his cash on hand in order to obtain loans to buy commercial properties.

FATAL OCCUPATIONAL INJURY REPORT RELEASED

A total of 564 workers died on the job in 2023, according to the Texas Department of Insurance's annual report, down slightly from the previous year. Most of the fatalities occurred in the private sector — 93%.

The trade, transportation, and utilities industry, both private and public sector, reported the most fatalities at 183. During the same period 126 construction workers died on the job.

The number of worker fatalities has not changed markedly in the past five years, according to TDI.

TEXAS FIREFIGHTERS DEPLOYED TO SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

The Texas Division of Emergency Management and Texas A&M

Forest Service have deployed firefighters, emergency management and medical personnel, fire engines, and equipment to assist with wildfire response efforts in California.

More than 135 firefighters and other emergency personnel, as well as more than 45 fire engines, ambulances, command vehicles, and equipment, have been sent to California.

"I thank all the brave firefighters and first responders who are answering the call to help Californians in need as these fires continue to burn," Abbott said.

AIR IN 12 COUNTIES EXCEEDED FEDERAL SOOT STANDARDS

A dozen Texas counties have recently exceeded federal air quality standards for particulate matter, also called soot, The Texas Tribune reported.

However, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality is recommending that eight of those counties be excluded from stricter federal pollution rules because of either faulty air monitoring data or "exceptional events," such as wildfires and dust storms.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency last year cut the permitted level of particulate matter from 12 to 9 micrograms per cubic meter annually. It is considered the deadliest form of air pollution.

TCEQ has proposed that four counties — Dallas, Harris, Tarrant, and Bowie — be declared out of attainment. The other eight counties that exceed the new limit would be allowed to avoid the tougher standards. Those are Travis, Montgomery, Kleberg, Harrison, Ellis, Webb, Hidalgo and Cameron counties.

THE POSTSCRIPT By Carrie Classon

Clean Ankles



I don't normally tackle controversial issues, but today I'm going out on a limb.

Baths are better than showers.

I don't care what my husband, Peter, or my mother and father have to say on the subject. I don't care about those people who take samples of bathwater and look at them under microscopes and tell you that you are bathing in minuscule amounts of dirt and micro-organisms.

I looked at my ankles.

When Peter and I stay in Mexico, I do not have a bathtub. I will admit, when the sun is shining and we are eating outside in February surrounded by the friendly staff at our hotel, I am not exactly hankering to get back to the gloom of the Midwest.

I love a hot bath. And baths are better. I have proof. The proof is on my ankles.

When I get home after a long stay in Mexico, I sit in the bathtub and give myself a good scrub, and the things that need scrubbing the most are my ankles. It would be only a slight exaggeration to say that they are filthy. And this is no surprise.

Anyone who has tried to properly scrub their ankles while standing in a shower should save their skills and become a yoga instructor. Or a stork. It is not physically possible. There are creative ways to get one's feet clean, but the ankles suffer in a shower. And before anyone tells me it doesn't matter because ankles are covered by socks, I'd like to point out that this could apply to a lot of other body parts.

Baths are also much more relaxing. I don't have to be worried about how much water is running down the drain while I wash. I can be concerned about the environment and the cleanliness of my ankles and my need to relax all at the same time. I can simply lie still in hot water and enjoy the sensation of nothing to do (other than wash my ankles, of course) and breathe in steamy air.

I realize I will not win this debate. There are houses that don't even have bathtubs these days. I hear people say they are dangerous and take up space and no one has the time.

My feeling is that, if I run out of time for a hot bath, I need to reorder my schedule. I will always have time for a hot bath. I will have time on good days and bad. I will have time when I'm actually dirty and on days when I just need to feel warm and relaxed.

And I have remarkably clean ankles. Till next time, Carrie



# Crosby ISD families enjoyed winter storm, students shine with achievements, and Community Spirit.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

from Barrett Elementary School; Cassandra and Juan from Drew Elementary School; and Rose and Julian from Newport Elementary School. Good luck to these eight competitors.

A big thank you and shout out to the volunteers from Chick-fil-A Crosby for devoting a day to helping at Drew Elementary School. Krisel, Rene, Nayeli, Salomon, Maria, Ryan, and Sondra are our Business Partners of the Month. On January 29, they read to students, told them stories, handled lunch duty, and spent the day assisting teachers. We appreciate Chick-fil-A Crosby and all our Crosby/Barrett Station business volunteers.

Now to some student success stories! Kudos to Crosby High School senior and Cougar Star dancer Rozlyne Speir. She attended tryouts for the Trinity Valley Community College Cardettes Dance Team. Rozlyne earned her place on the 65<sup>th</sup> line of the Cardettes! We are so proud of her and her dedication to her dance future!

Congratulations to Jude Ginn, a Crosby High School junior, who recently attained the highest rank of Eagle Scout. Jude completed his Eagle Project in November, working closely with Mrs. Donna Davenport and the Crosby Historical Society to build an outdoor seating area for the new Crosby Area Museum of History. His

project can be seen and enjoyed at the Crosby Area Museum of History, at Pecan St and Runneburg Rd, on either side of the mural. Jude encourages all members of the Crosby Community to visit the Museum and enjoy the rich history our area holds.

Rozlyne and Jude are just two of our students who are showing how far they can go pursuing their passions! They are truly examples of Goal-Oriented and Service-Minded, two of the student traits we celebrate in our Portrait of a Graduate.

We are Committed to Excellence! Go Coogs!



Jude Ginn completed his Eagle Project in November, working closely with Donna Davenport and the Crosby Historical Society by building an outdoor seating area for the new Crosby Area Museum of History.



Congratulations to Rozlyne Speir, Crosby High School student, earned her place on the 65<sup>th</sup> line of the Trinity Valley Community College Cardettes Dance Team!



Crosby High School drama teacher, Mr. Raymond Blanchard, shows his Cougar Pride during the Snow Day on Tuesday, January 21, 2025.



Congratulations to Jude Ginn, a Crosby High School Junior, who has recently attained the highest rank of Eagle Scout.



Crosby ISD students pose for a photograph with the snowman they created on January 21.

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# Lake Houston Brewery overcomes adversity to expand and brew local success,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

“That’s when COVID hit and we were shut down for a couple of months,” he said. They were able to manage some takeout orders, but they also took advantage of the down time.

“We spent that time expanding the outside area in front of the stage adding additional tables for outdoor seating,” he said.

It turned out to be great timing because they needed additional space when restaurants were allowed to reopen with spaced seating.

They’ve endured more hurricanes that left them mostly with wind damage and some flooding, but nothing could prepare them for the possibility of a tornado.

During the recent tornado breakout in the Houston/Gulf Coast area, one tornado formed in the Atascocita area and then made its way onto the lake, very visible to Matthews and others who were concerned for the business. Fortunately, it made an easterly turn and plowed its way into Liberty County.

A few years outside of the pandemic and constantly fighting rising prices with a sour economy and supply chain issues, the business is primed to expand again.

“About a mile-and-a-half down the road is our off-site location for our brewery. We don’t carry anyone else’s beer since we brew our own,” he said. They also serve mixed drinks, but their biggest business comes from their craft beer.

Up until now, their beer wasn’t available anywhere else but the restaurant. Now they hope to distribute the specialized craft beer to local HEB stores and other vendors across the area.

With a new brewery that they hope will be another revenue stream for profit, they discovered another feature that may help them back at the restaurant.



Co-owner Sean Matthews serves up some salad to guests from the Crosby-Huffman Chamber Of Commerce at their monthly luncheon.



Chefs are known for their catfish delicacies prepared fresh daily at the restaurant.

“When we looked at the numbers, our ticketed concert events were very profitable attracting large crowds,” he said. “We’ll look at expanding that this year as well,” Matthews said.

They also partner with Roger Randall of Texas Adaptive Aquatics and serve as the launching area for several of the parades on the lake.

During the spring and summer months particularly, the boater traffic that comes to the restaurant is very busy.

“Technically, we are the only restaurant literally on the water,” he said, “which is a great selling point for

us. Other restaurants are set back off the water.

“We always have boaters tell us that they can’t reach the other restaurants, but at our place, they can pull up to one of the boat slips, park, and walk down the boardwalk into the restaurant.”

Last Thursday, a lot of chamber members got their first chance to check out the facility when the chamber hosted their monthly luncheon at the restaurant and also welcomed them into the chamber with a ribbon cutting.

“We hope to be active and available to the chamber for whatever they need,” Matthews said.

# Shooting at Crosby American Legion Hall,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

by the male individual with the stick and discharged his firearm one time striking the male in the chest. The male was able to walk out of here and walk to a neighboring business,” where 911 was called.

Hinojosa said that’s where they found the man, in the front of a small pavilion next door to the Legion Hall.

“He was transported by EMS in stable condition to a local hospital,” he said.

Hinojosa said he didn’t believe the victim was trying to rob the employee nor was the disturbance physical until the victim allegedly threatened the employee with the Shillelagh-like stick.

Hinojosa confirmed only one shot was fired with a small caliber pistol.

A man matching the same description also entered a local restaurant

making demands, shouting and talking out of his mind, threatening and scaring employees. He only left after he was given a sandwich.

The same man also walked into the Crosby-Huffman Chamber of Commerce and frightened employees one of which made a report with the Sheriff’s Office after he left.

He is also the same person who has been hanging out at a local church and seen walking along FM 2100 making gestures toward vehicles on Friday.

The employee wouldn’t make a statement more than he tried to get the intruder to leave when he felt threatened.

After the investigation was finished, the employee was freed to go home and the case will be referred to a grand jury for any possible charges.

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# HOLLYWOOD

by Tony Rizzo

HOLLYWOOD — All eyes are on the Blake Lively/Justin Baldoni lawsuits! Lively accused Baldoni of sexual harassment on the set of "It Ends with Us," then accused him of mounting a smear campaign to tarnish her reputation. He filed a \$250 million suit against the New York Times for running Lively's complaint against him. He also accuses her of a smear campaign. The "he said, she said" campaign drove the \$25 million film to a \$351 million gross in the box office.

Lively and husband Ryan Reynolds skipped the Golden Globes because they were unhappy that neither of them were nominated. She has since moved on to the sequel to her 2018 black-comedy/crime film "A Simple Favor," which is being directed by Paul Feig for Amazon MGM Studios. It co-stars Anna Kendrick, Henry Golding, Andrew Rannells and Allison Janney.

Meanwhile, Reynolds recently wrapped the live-action animated comedy "Animal Friends" in April 2024, as well as the action-adventure film "Mayday" with Kenneth Branagh and Maria Bakalova, which wrapped in May 2024. How will this in-fighting affect their future images?

People are still talking about Demi Moore's wonderful speech at the Golden Globes after she won for "The Substance." I met Demi in 1982 when she was Jackie Templeton on "General Hospital" before she starred in "Blame It on Rio" (1984), "St. Elmo's Fire" (1985), "About Last Night" (1986), and her superstar-maker "Ghost" (1990).

During her speech for "The Substance" (which cost \$17.5 million and grossed \$76.5 million), she said "I've been doing this a long time — over 45 years. This is the first time I've ever won anything as an actor." Next, she'll star in the sci-fi comedy "I Love Boosters" with "Password" host Keke Palmer and Will Poulter.

Sebastian Stan was another Globe winner for "A Different Man" (which he also produced), but the film only grossed \$1.3



Justin Baldoni and Blake Lively in "It Ends with Us"

million. He fared better with "The Apprentice" (yes, as TV host Donald Trump), which cost \$16 million and grossed \$17.3 million because distributors were afraid to incur Trump's wrath! In fact, 83% of the 238 critic reviews on Rotten Tomatoes were favorable.

His next film should fare even better. It's the Marvel superhero film "Thunderbolts\*" with Florence Pugh, Wyatt Russell (Kurt Russell's son), David Harbour, and Julia Louis-Dreyfus. It's due on May 2.

Imagine when I met George Clooney on the set of "The Facts of Life" in 1985 and talked him into an at-home photo shoot for TV Radio Mirror Magazine (because he was handsome, a nice guy, and had "TV star" written all over him). I never envisioned that he'd become the superstar icon he is today. His next film is the Netflix coming-of-age comedy "Jay Kelly" with Adam Sandler, Laura Dern, Billy Crudup, Riley Keough, Jim Broadbent, Isla Fisher and Greta Gerwig.

Who better to help "Jay Kelly" come of age than Clooney, who had four young girls teach him "The Facts of Life"?

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**Q: Is Mark Wahlberg really bald in his new movie "Flight Risk," or is he wearing a bald cap?**

A: He looks like George Costanza from "Seinfeld." — N.W.

A: That's no bald cap or special effects. Mark Wahlberg really did shave off the top of his hair for his latest movie role as a pilot who transports a prisoner (Topher Grace) cross-country to testify against a mafia group. It was Wahlberg's idea to fully commit to the role with daily shavings and leaving "the horseshoe around the sides."

Wahlberg told People magazine that the best part about his temporary look was seeing his wife's face the first time he took off his hat. The movie, which was directed by Mel Gibson and also stars Michelle Dockery ("Downton Abbey"), was originally set for release in 2024 but got moved back to Jan. 25.



Mark Wahlberg star in Mel Gibson's "Flight Risk" (1973)

**Q: I saw an ad for a new show that looks really good. It's about prisoners breaking free, but I can't recall the name of it. When does it come out?** — B.F.

A: You're thinking of the upcoming NBC drama "The Hunting Party," which premiered on Jan. 19. The premise follows a group of prisoners who escape after their underground top-secret prison (known as The Pit) blows up. The hunters in this case are a small team of investigators assembled to "capture the most dangerous killers our country has ever seen."

The search team includes a former FBI profiler played by Melissa Roxburgh ("Manifest"), a prison guard played by Josh McKenzie ("La Brea"), and a CIA agent played by Patrick Sabongui ("The Flash"). Among the deadly escapees are a serial killer played by Tobias Jelinek ("Stranger Things"), who Roxburgh's character initially helped put away for his crimes.

JJ Bailey, one of the show's creators, explains that there's enough plot besides escaped prisoners to engage viewers for several seasons. He claims that by the end of the season, it "turns out there's much more going on."

He further explains, "We talk a lot about what was going on at the Pit as being sort of ... this octopus with many tentacles. In the end of season 1, we sort of chop one off only to realize there's more, and there definitely is someone behind the explosion at the Pit with an ulterior motive that we'll uncover hopefully seasons ... down the road."

**Q: Will there be some kind of benefit concert to help the victims of the California Wildfires?** — K.K.

A: Yes, there is a concert in the works that is expected to air live on Jan. 30 at 6 p.m. PT (3 p.m. ET) from two different venues: the Kia Forum and the Intuit Dome. Details can be found at FireAidLA.org, but artists who are scheduled to perform include Olivia Rodrigo, Billie Eilish, No Doubt, P!nk, Sting, Stevie Nicks, Rod Stewart, Joni Mitchell, Lady Gaga, Jelly Roll, Earth, Wind & Fire, plus many more!

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

3			8	7				1
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Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

**DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK:** ♦♦♦♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging  
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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### HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Reference: 1. Foot is moved. 2. Can is moved. 3. Sock with a hole. 4. Hair is different. 5. Frame is reversed. 6. Shirt has a pocket.

January 27, 2025 Posting Date  
**King Crossword**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12			13					14		
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49					50				51	

**ACROSS**

1 Dime portrait  
4 "Phooey!"  
8 Chow  
12 Singer Reed  
13 Aachen article  
14 Russo of "The Intern"  
15 Top floor cooler  
17 Roman poet  
18 Farm fraction  
19 Corrodes  
20 Monk's home  
22 Raw minerals  
24 Paint layer  
25 Skillet with low sides  
29 Gearwheel tooth  
30 Prefix with "logical"

**DOWN**

1 Ga. neighbor  
2 Speck  
3 Yellow turnip  
4 Belittle  
5 Teaming  
6 Political strategist Navarro  
7 Hamilton bill  
8 Complain  
9 Guns the engine

49 Singer Lovett  
50 Tools with teeth  
51 Label

10 One  
11 Hotel furniture  
16 "Cold As Ever" rapper  
19 Seized vehicle  
20 Bank statement no.  
21 Rude dude  
22 Killer whales  
23 Check  
25 Designer Chanel  
26 Table protector  
27 Summer month in Paris

28 Terse denial  
30 Roe provider  
33 Treeless tract  
34 Poi base  
36 Some Pacific salmon  
37 Pickling herb  
38 "Hi, sailor!"  
39 Implement  
40 Garbage barge  
42 Roast VIPs  
43 "Caught ya!"  
44 "I - Rock"  
45 Eggy quaff

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### Trivia test

by Fifi Rodriguez

- GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: What year was the first Barbie doll released?
- MOVIES: What is the name of the island in the "Jurassic Park" film?
- ANIMAL KINGDOM: What are baby rabbits called?
- U.S. STATES: Which state is the home of Mount Rushmore?
- INVENTIONS: When were emojis invented?
- TELEVISION: In the TV series "The Walking Dead," what was the character Rick Grimes' profession previously?
- CHEMISTRY: Which element is also known as quicksilver?
- SCIENCE: What is the name of the pivot on which a lever turns?
- GEOGRAPHY: Which country is home to the ancient city of Petra?
- MUSIC: Which of Taylor Swift's songs was first to appear on the Billboard Hot 100?

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**King Crossword**  
Answers  
Solution time: 26 mins.

Trivia Test Answers: 1. 1959; 2. Isla Nublar; 3. Kites; 4. South Dakota; 5. 1999; 6. Sheriff's deputy; 7. Mercury; 8. Fulcrum; 9. Jordan; 10. "Tim McGraw"





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