

Goose Creek Employees raise \$54,000 for United Way, Page 2

Harris County Tax Bill will Shock You, Page 4



'BRAS FOR THE CAUSE' First-timer Gunner Gates came dressed as a cowboy and drew the attention of a lot of the women. (David Taylor photo). See Story Below and on page 6

HIGHLANDS

CROSBY

Star Courier

Serving Highlands, Crosby, Huffman and Surrounding Communities since 1955 ■ www.starcouriernews.com

VOL. 72, NO. 6 - \$1.00

© Copyright 2025

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2025

P.O. DRAWER 446, HIGHLANDS, TEXAS 77562

Crosby's 'Bras For The Cause' raises \$170k to fight Cancer

By David Taylor
Managing Editor

Amidst all the cat calls, loud music, and a few women making it 'rain' with dollar bills for their favorite dancers, organizers of Crosby's Bras For The Cause managed to raise \$170,000-plus to fight cancer on Saturday night.

The packed out American Legion Hall was rocking with tunes and 20 models from across the Gulf Coast area who donated their time and a little bit of humility to help raise funds for the cause.

After 13 years, the organization has raised more than \$1.7 million, a staggering amount for a small community.

Austin Holmelin, president this year of the organization, said they have fought the economy the last few years and was glad they did a little better this year.



The stars of the show were the brave models who put on a show for the crowd. Dancers included Tim Londene, Mike Stamper, Lane Rehorn, Jared Barrett, Gunner Gates, Shannon Talbott, Robby Scott, Serapio Garza, Jeremiah Price, Kevin Pipes, Jose Fernandez, Jason McWhorter, Richard Holst, Manny Pulido, Jackie Sims, Stephen Prasek, Matt Crumpler, Dr. Joe Dervay, Matt Whitworth, and James Blaha.

"We raised that amount in one night," she said proudly. "We will give that money back to the community and through different organizations," she said.

She has been a member

of the Bras For The Cause committee for a decade since she moved back from college.

"We're officially a 501(3)(c) charitable organization now and no longer under the umbrella of

anyone else," she said gladly.

Much of that money, she said, goes back into the community and area organizations that support cancer patients from the Crosby-Huffman-

Baytown area.

"We give to the Pink Heals Fund and Breast Care Center at Houston Methodist Baytown Hospital, The Candlelighters Childhood Cancer Family Alliance and the Lung Center as well," she said.

They also support the Crosby organization Joseph's Warriors whose mission is to promote childhood cancer awareness, to promote childhood cancer research, and to raise funds to be distributed as financial assistance to families of children undergoing cancer treatment in the Gulf Coast area.

Throughout the year the BFTC also gives out gift cards to aid families with parking, meals, and more as families visit their loved ones fighting cancer.

"We love having this in the American Legion Hall because this is home and the community we serve. Plus, the rental money also helps the veterans," she said.

Holmelin was grateful to the sponsors who donated their services.

Continued. See CROSBY'S BRAS FOR THE CAUSE, Page 6

IN THE STARS

Crosby-Huffman Chamber Awards Banquet Feb. 27

Crosby-Huffman Chamber will hold their Awards Banquet on Thursday, February 27 at 6:30pm at Stonebridge at Newport, 16401 Country Club Drive, Crosby.

Tickets, Sponsorships and information, contact www.crosbyhuffmancc.org, or 281-328-6984 Deanna@crosbyhuffmancc.org.

CROSBY SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Crosby High School Expansion on Track for 2025 Opening, Boosting Academic and Career Training Spaces

Hello East Harris County and Crosby ISD families,

I wanted to share an update on the expansion of Crosby High School. Construction continues on the two wings being added to CHS. One wing is an all-new academic house with capacity for 900 additional students. This building will contain 32 classrooms and 8 labs, increasing the learning space inside CHS by 50%. The second wing is an expanded CTE Center for our Career and Technical Education training. This building will house additional welding and carpentry labs to help



Paula Patterson
Crosby Superintendent

better train our students for careers in the industrial trades. In the past few weeks, exterior metal panels have been installed on the new academic wing, while crews prepare the CTE Center for the instal-

lation of similar exterior metal panels. Crews have also started to install industrial-sized chillers for the new wings. The expansion is the first school construction project in Crosby ISD in 8 years, and everything remains on track budget wise. The planned opening remains set for late 2025. Our new spaces will also have the flexibility to incorporate training for the jobs of the future, many of which don't exist right now! We're excited to see the growth for our current and future CHS students.

I want to congratulate seven Crosby High School



Drone photo above new academic wing being built at Crosby High School. The new academic wing will contain 32 classrooms and 8 labs, increasing the learning space inside CHS by 50%.

football players on their advancement to play ball at the collegiate level. As their coaches said on National Signing Day on February 5 student-athletes

are not just skilled athletes but good people. The Crosby/Barrett Station commu-

Continued. See CROSBY SUPERINTENDENT, Page 5

Senator Alvarado files Bills to correct Hurricane Beryl's problems

By David Taylor
Managing Editor

Promises made. Promises kept.

Senator Carol Alvarado (D) promised at a Public Utilities Commission of Texas hearing in Houston last fall on the response to Hurricane Beryl that she would file legislation related to the debacle created by CenterPoint Energy. The Senator kept her word.

Now as the session gets underway, some of her colleagues are signing on to strengthen the chance they will get a vote on the floor of the Senate and eventually become law in the state.

Last year, Hurricane Beryl struck the Texas Gulf Coast leaving nearly 3 million homes without power, exposing critical gaps in Texas's disaster preparedness and leaving some of the most vulnerable residents



Sen. Carol Alvarado has the mike in the Senate chatting with her colleagues. The Senator filed six bills related to the state's response to the hurricane and the failure of CenterPoint as promised last fall at the Houston PUC meeting.

in dire straits.

Alvarado said the legislation is aimed at closing the gap between the haves and have-nots after disasters, when safe living conditions are too often a privilege.

Here's a brief summary of each of the six bills filed by Alvarado.

—SB 481 requires nursing homes and assisted living fa-

Continued. See ALVARADO'S BILL, Page 2

GOOSE CREEK SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE Self-Advocacy Starts at Home: A Call for Legislative Action

Advocacy shapes our daily decisions and actions, whether supporting loved ones, promoting fairness at work, or driving change in our communities. In education, it's no different. The "funding crisis" in Texas public schools, including Goose Creek CISD, highlights the need for collective action and determination. Alarmingly, some legislators have proposed restricting our right to advocate, making unity more crucial than ever.

School funding issues in Texas are not debatable, with the state ranking among the lowest in educational investment. Unlike most states, Texas funds schools based on student attendance while requiring education for all



Goose Creek CISD Superintendent Randal O'Brien

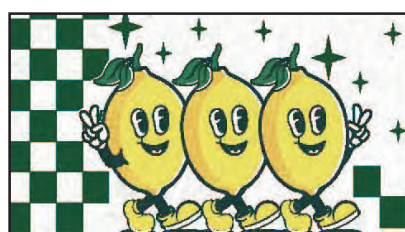
enrolled students, creating a deficit model that reduces funding by about 5% before the school year begins. Texas is one of only eight states using this approach, choosing to keep the withheld funds in its savings.

Over 90% of Texas public schools are underfund-

ed, with 60% chronically so, reflecting decades of neglect. The legislature's failure to increase basic allotment funding, tied to the governor's push for a voucher system, has created unprecedented financial strain. Since 2019, inflation has risen over 22%, driving up costs for schools already stretched thin. One recent survey indicated that school districts across the state that have adopted a deficit budget rose from almost half previously to nearly 80% just within the last year or so. That shortfall is for all school districts across the entire state, symptomatic of a breakdown in our lawmakers' obligation to ade-

Continued. See GOOSE CREEK SUPERINTENDENT, Page 5

STAR-COURIER PHONES: 713-266-3444 • E-MAIL: GRAFIKSTAR@AOL.COM • ADS: 713-977-2555



DON'T LET DEBT SQUEEZE YOU
CONSOLIDATE YOUR DEBT INTO A FRESH START.

Community Resource CREDIT UNION
CRCU.ORG/EASYPEEZY

Goose Creek Superintendent message,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

quately fund public schools.

How has this affected Goose Creek CISD? In the past two years, to address a deficit budget, the board of trustees directed the administration to find solutions that protect our students and staff and maintain the quality of educational program offerings. Measures included reducing administrative positions and scaling back support services while limiting the impact on students. Staffing reductions were achieved through attrition, leaving some positions unfilled, which led to larger class sizes in some cases. The board also avoided consolidating underutilized campuses by using funds from the district's savings account. However, they acknowledged this approach is not sustainable long-term due to the slow replenishment of those funds.

This year, the board has had to reassess campus efficiency due to demographic shifts that left some campuses underutilized and some well over capacity. While rezoning may help, it cannot fully address the financial strain of operating under-capacity campuses. Consequently, the board approved the administration's recommendation to consolidate and repurpose specific campuses. We recognize that change is difficult, but inaction, amid insufficient legislative support to address inflation, has already harmed public education statewide.

We will continue to evaluate our school system for efficiencies every year. However, as educators, we

must also be mindful of the lack of support that has been overtly demonstrated by our elected officials in Austin. A story cannot be spun to explain why our schools have not been adequately funded. We must become our own self-advocates to ensure a high-quality education for all, which we know to be the great equalizer.

I'm not sure what advocacy may look like for you, whether a trip to our capital in Austin, a letter or phone call to your congressmen, or maybe joining a local advocacy group. Whatever it is, I believe it must begin with action. It is crucial to actively confront the diminishment of local control rather than standing passively by.

Please consider how your voice may best be heard in support of our local public school system across our great state. Despite any push for private sector options, public schools still educate nearly 90% of all Americans. The support of any alternative measure designed to educate a small fraction of the student population should be secondary to ensuring that all Texas children are provided adequate educational funding first!

Thank you for supporting Goose Creek CISD. Please know that we want to hear from you. Consider joining one of our future steering committees, which will undoubtedly provide input and direction that will help shape and serve as a catalyst for our future success.

Dr. Randal O'Brien
Superintendent of Schools

Sen, Alvarado delivers on promise, files six bills to strengthen disaster response,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

cilities to maintain emergency generators to power heating, cooling and emergency functions for at least 96 hours. In Harris County alone, 14 nursing homes and 30 assisted living facilities were without power for at least four days after Beryl struck, leaving residents exposed to extreme heat. This bill ensures facilities can maintain safe temperatures, properly store medications and operate essential medical equipment during extended outages.

—SB 482 protects utility workers by increasing penalties for assault during disasters — the same protections afforded to first responders. After Hurricane Beryl, thousands of line workers traveled from across the country to help restore power to millions of Texans. These essential workers must be protected from harassment and violence.

—SB 483 mandates that utility companies securely share customer contact information to promote timely communication during emergencies. While millions struggled without power during Hurricane Beryl, many were unable to receive basic updates about outages affecting their homes. This bill enables direct emergency communications while implementing strict data security requirements and time limits on information retention.

—SB 484 requires warning labels on portable generators that do not include carbon monoxide safety shut off features. Portable generators are one of the most dangerous consumer products on the market. Carbon monoxide deaths spike predictably because of portable generators after every major power outage and this legisla-

tion ensures consumers are properly warned when the product lacks an essential safety feature.

—SB 485 creates clear duties of care for landlords serving senior citizens and Texans with disabilities. The bill establishes clear responsibilities for landlords during disasters, requiring them to take reasonable precautions to protect residents, prepare for hazardous conditions and ensure that staff are properly trained and available during emergencies. Additionally, landlords are prohibited from abandoning their complexes during disaster situations, emphasizing their obligation to remain present and accountable to their tenants.

—SB 486 increases criminal penalties for the abandonment of children, seniors and disabled Texans during declared disasters. With rising rates of natural disasters, caretakers must be held accountable when they desert those in their care. This bill ensures that leaving vulnerable Texans behind during their time of greatest need carries serious consequences.

"These bills represent critical steps toward ensuring that all Texans have the protections and support they need when disasters strike," Alvarado said in a press release.

All bills must endure a seven-stage process: Stage 1, the bill is filed; Stage 2, the bill leaves out of the Senate committee; Stage 3, the bill receives a vote by the entire Senate and then heads to the House; Stage 4, the bill leaves the House Committee; Stage 5, the bill receives a vote by the House; Stage 6, if the bill survives, it then heads to the governor for his signature; and lastly, Stage 7, the bill becomes law.

LET THE PROS HANDLE IT! LeafFilter GUTTER PROTECTION

Say "NO" to Cleaning Out Your Gutters. Protect Your Home With LeafFilter.

20% OFF Your Entire Purchase* + **10% OFF** Seniors + Military

++ We offer financing that fits your budget! Promo: 285

CALL TODAY FOR A FREE INSPECTION! **1-855-762-1481**

Full Service Gutter Protection - Schedule Your Free Inspection Now! 1-855-762-1481

Jacuzzi BATH REMODEL

YOUR BATHROOM. YOUR WAY. IN AS LITTLE AS **ONE DAY**

CALL NOW **844.265.7098**

SPECIAL OFFER 50% OFF Installation WITH **No Interest No Payments for 1 Year PLUS FREE Safety Upgrade!**

*Add'l terms apply. Offer subject to change and vary by dealer. Expires 3/31/2024.

★ SCHOOL PAGE ★

Goose Creek CISD Employees Raise Over \$54,000 for United Way



Goose Creek CISD employees have once again demonstrated their commitment to the community by raising an impressive \$54,455 for the United Way of Greater Baytown Area & Chambers County. A total of 1,039 employees contributed to this year's campaign, reinforcing the district's long-standing partnership with the organization in supporting students and families in need. Supporting education is one of United Way's primary focus areas, and the organization plays a vital role in strengthening schools and providing support for our families. United Way funds and supports initiatives such as Communities in Schools, Hearts and Hands of Baytown, Girl Scouts, DePelchin Children's Center, and many more.

In addition to these programs, United Way actively contributes to Goose Creek CISD during Days of Caring, where volun-

teers complete projects across the district to enhance learning environments and provide necessary resources for students.

To recognize this outstanding effort, United Way Campaign and Events Manager Ms. Clapper joined Goose Creek CISD leaders in honoring the top-performing campuses in two categories: highest employee participation and highest monetary contribution.

Clark Elementary had the third-highest employee participation at 73%, led by Principal Kem Scheidt and United Way Campaign Coordinator Elizabeth Lewis. IMPACT Early College High School came in second with 75% participation, with Principal Laura Reyes also serving as the campaign coordinator. Highlands Elementary achieved the highest participation rate, with an outstanding 96% of employees contributing

under the leadership of Principal Blanca Capetillo and Campaign Coordinator Renee Stripling.

In the highest monetary contribution category, IMPACT Early College High School led among small campuses (1-69 employees) with \$3,440 raised. Highlands Junior School was the top contributor in the medium campus category (70-99 employees) with \$2,115. Pumphrey Elementary topped the large campus category (100-234 employees), raising \$3,932. Principal Renee Meyer and Campaign Coordinator Michelle Grimes spearheaded the effort at Pumphrey Elementary.

Goose Creek CISD extends its gratitude to every employee who contributed to this year's campaign. Their generosity will help United Way continue its mission of improving lives and strengthening the Baytown and Chambers County communities.

GC CISD Board of Trustees has officially approved Rezoning Map B for the 2025-2026 school year

This decision was made with careful consideration of community feedback and the district's long-term needs. We are also pleased to announce a grandfather clause for the following students, allowing them to remain at their current campus if they choose: Current 4th graders Current 6th & 7th graders Current 9th, 10th & 11th graders Students who are eligible to receive the grandfather clause will be contacted in the coming weeks. A huge thank you to the GC2035 Committee, District Rezoning Task Force, our community, and the Board of Trustees for their dedication and input throughout this process. Your voices helped shape this plan for the future of our schools!

- Benefits of the Approved Rezoning Plan**
- Balanced Enrollment**
The plan helps distribute students more evenly across campuses, reducing overcrowding in high-growth areas and better utilizing under-enrolled schools across Goose Creek CISD.
 - Optimized Resources**
By aligning student populations with campus capacities, the district can allocate teachers, staff, and funding more efficiently, enhancing the overall educational experience.
 - Stronger Feeder Patterns**
Rezoning creates clearer, more consistent feeder patterns, allowing students to progress through elementary, intermediate, junior, and high school with the same peer group.
 - Reduced Need for Portables**
Balancing enrollment across schools decreases reliance on portable classrooms, improving learning environments and safety.
 - Improved Transportation Efficiency**
Adjusted boundaries can shorten bus routes, reducing ride times and transportation costs.
 - Future Growth Planning**
The rezoning accounts for expected population increases, particularly in high-growth areas, ensuring schools can accommodate future students.
 - Purpose of District-Wide Rezoning**
The purpose of this district-wide rezoning initiative is to address overcrowding, ensure equitable access to educational resources, and create balanced enrollment across all schools. By thoughtfully realigning attendance boundaries, we aim to provide every student with a safe, supportive, and high-quality learning environment while fostering long-term growth and sustainability for our district.
 - Process**
 - 1.Review of Enrollment Data:** District leaders consulted with demographic experts at Population and Survey Analysts (PASA) to assess current and future needs.
 - 2.Development of Rezoning Options:** The district formed a rezoning task force to evaluate a first draft rezoning option provided by PASA. Through multiple committee meetings, two zoning options were established to meet the needs of the district.
 - 3.Community Feedback:** GCCISD will launch an online survey to gather community input and address concerns.
 - 4.Develop Final Rezoning Option:** Feedback, combined with PASA's expertise, will be used to create a final option that balances enrollment, addresses overcrowding, and promotes equity.

Barbers Hill Press

Dayton

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

VOL. 30, NO. 6

© Copyright 2025

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2025

MONT BELVIEU, TEXAS 77580

ON THE HILL

Introducing Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc to East Harris and Chambers County



Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. is a historically Black Greek-lettered organization founded on January 13, 1913, by 22 collegiate women at Howard University. With a mission to promote academic excellence and provide assistance to those in need, our organization has grown to over 350,000 members worldwide and more than 1,000 local chapters.

Locally, the East Harris Chambers Liberty County Alumnae Chapter was chartered on March 30, 2019, by over 90 college-educated women dedicated to serving the residents of East Harris, Chambers, and Liberty counties. As the 1,050th chapter within the Sorority, we are proud members of the Blazing Southwest Region and are committed to the core values of sisterhood, scholarship, service, and social action. Our chapter mission statement is Bridging the Tri-County Communities: One Voice, Committed to Serve reflects our dedication to uplifting and empowering our local communities through impactful programs and initiatives.

We invite you to learn more about our chapter and initiatives by visiting our website at www.easthclcdeltas.org, as well as the national website of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

Visit our New Website for Chambers County News: www.BHDPRESS.com

Cody Simper Hired as New Football Coach at Barbers Hill

From Community Reports,

One of the most sought-after coaching positions in Texas high school football has been filled.

Cody Simper, the head football coach at Cypress Woods High School, has been hired as the new head coach at Barbers Hill High School, replacing Carl Abseck, who held the role for four seasons. Simper's first day on the job will be February 10.

"It was quickly apparent that Cody has the qualities our district espouses," said Barbers Hill Superintendent Dr. Greg Poole. "He has small-town values, a great work ethic and gets the absolute most out of his kids because of the relationships he builds."

Simper, 43, comes to Barbers Hill with an impressive track record. Over the course of his career, he has compiled a 106-55 overall record. Most re-



BHNewCoach 01 - New head football coach at Cody Simper is ready to change fortunes at Barbers Hill High School meets with the players. His first day on the job is Monday, February 10, 2025.

cently, he led Cypress Woods to an 8-3 season in 2024, following a district championship performance in 2022. Before his time at Cypress Woods, Simper spent five seasons at Corpus Christi Veterans Memorial, where he posted an impressive 50-14

record and guided the team to the Class 5A-Division I state semifinals in 2020.

Simper's hiring comes at a time when the Barbers Hill football program is expected to maintain its tradition of excellence. The



Cody Simper, head coach

previous three head coaches at the school all won state championships, setting a high bar for Simper's tenure.

When asked about the move, Simper expressed excitement about joining the Barbers Hill community, citing the school's culture of excellence and the close-knit feel of the Mont Belvieu area as key factors in his decision. He also noted that the family-friendly atmosphere was ideal for his family and young son.

"I'm thrilled to be join-

ing a community that has such a rich tradition of success both on and off the field," said Simper. "Barbers Hill's commitment to excellence is a perfect fit for my coaching philosophy, and I'm excited to work with the talented athletes here to continue building on that legacy."

Simper's coaching career began in 2004 at Corpus Christi Ray, where he served as a running backs coach. He later moved on to Cy-Fair ISD in 2008, working as offensive coordinator at Cypress Springs. At just 28 years old, he landed his first head coaching job at Corpus Christi Ray in 2010. Known for his high-energy, organized approach, Simper is recognized for his ability to implement a wide-open style of football and for encouraging his athletes to participate in multiple sports.

Senate Passes Universal School Choice

Report on SB2 progress by State Senator Mayes Middleton



By Sen, Mayes Middleton

Last week, the Texas Senate passed a universal school choice bill, Senate Bill 2. This bill empowers parents to choose the educational option that is best for their children.

Our rights as parents come from God, not government. Unfortunately, **Texas is one of only 18 states where the law positions government to have the final say on a child's education.**

While Texas boasts some of the best teachers and traditional public schools in the nation, we must trust the moms and dads in every community by empowering parents to direct their children's education, with money following the child to the school of their choice. **At the end of the day, parents know what is best for their kids.** The passage of Senate Bill 2 moves us one step closer to educational freedom in Texas.

Under Senate Bill 2, ensures money follows the child educational choice, with up to \$11,500 per child to use on private school, hire tutors, seek out educational therapies, as well as many other education expenses.

The concept of public dollars being used by taxpayers at private businesses is nothing new. There are numerous examples of public funds going to private businesses, including food stamps to grocery stores, Pell grants to private universities, and Medicaid to doctors. We trust individuals to choose their grocery store, their private university, and their doctor.

Why would we take a different approach with K-12 education? In Texas, we must trust parents to make decisions about their child's education.

As a parent to four children, I feel a great responsibility to help spur the change our state's education system desperately needs. Parents matter, and they are demanding their voices be heard. We must answer that call and pass a school choice bill that allows parents to decide which education option works best for their children according to their values.

SB 2 TEXAS SCHOOL FUNDING

ESA FUNDING

Parents would have full authority over how their child's education funds are used

Each student would receive \$10,000 in financial support

Students must complete the STAAR exam or another nationally recognized standardized test

Private schools must be officially accredited, and all vendors and tutors need prior approval while following student safety guidelines

While private schools determine their own admission criteria, they cannot reject applicants based on race, color, and national origin

Running the ESA program would require hiring 42 additional staff members

92% of the program's funding would be directed to benefit students

Participation in the program is completely voluntary

PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDING

ISD administrators have the authority over how a child's education funds are managed

As of 2023, the funding per student is \$16,792.

Students must meet STAAR testing and graduation criteria

Teachers are required to meet state certification requirements

Public schools do not have open admissions; they enroll students based on residential boundaries, though some districts offer open enrollment

Texas public schools employ 35,429 administrative staff members

Less than half of the per-student budget-40%- directly supports classroom instruction

Students are required to attend the school assigned to their residential zone

Stay Ahead of Texas Weather with Mont Belvieu INFOrce

What is INFOrce?

Mont Belvieu INFOrce keeps you informed with real-time alerts about severe weather, emergencies, and other important updates. Notifications go straight to your phone or email, so you'll always have the information you need when it matters most.

How Do I Sign Up?

Signing up is easy! Just visit www.montbelvieu.net/inforce and follow the instructions to register. Already signed up? Don't forget to renew your registration once a year to keep your information current. Don't let Texas weather catch you off guard—sign up for Mont Belvieu INFOrce today and stay a step ahead!



sign up for Mont Belvieu INFOrce today and stay a step ahead!

OPINION PAGE

OPINION

By BILL KING



Harris County's Tax Bill will be a Sticker Shock

As I have previously shared with you, when Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo claimed that the Commissioners' Court was raising property taxes by 8%...

The Commissioners' Court set the tax rate for four entities: the County, the Hospital District, the Flood Control District, and the Port Authority. Here are the increases in the tax rate for each:

Table with 4 columns: Entity, 2023 Tax Rate, 2024 Tax Rate, Rate Increase, % Increase in Rate. Rows include County, Flood, Port, Hospital, and Total.

This shows that the tax rate for these four entities increased by 14% in just one year. To be fair, voters narrowly approved the Flood Control District's increase...

But the Flood Control portion of the County's tax bill is a relatively minor portion. Even if we eliminate the Flood Control District's rate increase...

So, there was no universe in which the tax increase was only going to be 8%, as Hidalgo promised.

But it gets worse because your actual tax bill is the product of the tax rate and the taxable value of your property. According to the last report from HCAD...

Commissioners' Court was primarily able to cram down this onerous tax increase by using a loophole that allows local governments to exceed the State imposed limits...

Harris County was not the only jurisdiction that jumped on the tax-raising bandwagon. Almost 100 other taxing entities in Harris County raised their tax rates...

Some homeowners will see truly eye-popping increases, especially if they live in a jurisdiction that raised taxes like Harris County and had a large valuation increase...

Table with 6 columns: Total Tax Bill by Year, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025. Rows include Total Tax Bill by Year and Total Year % Diff.

You will notice that his tax bill declined in the previous two years, due to the property tax relief passed by the Texas Legislature. However, in his case, local governmental entities have clawed back about half of that relief.

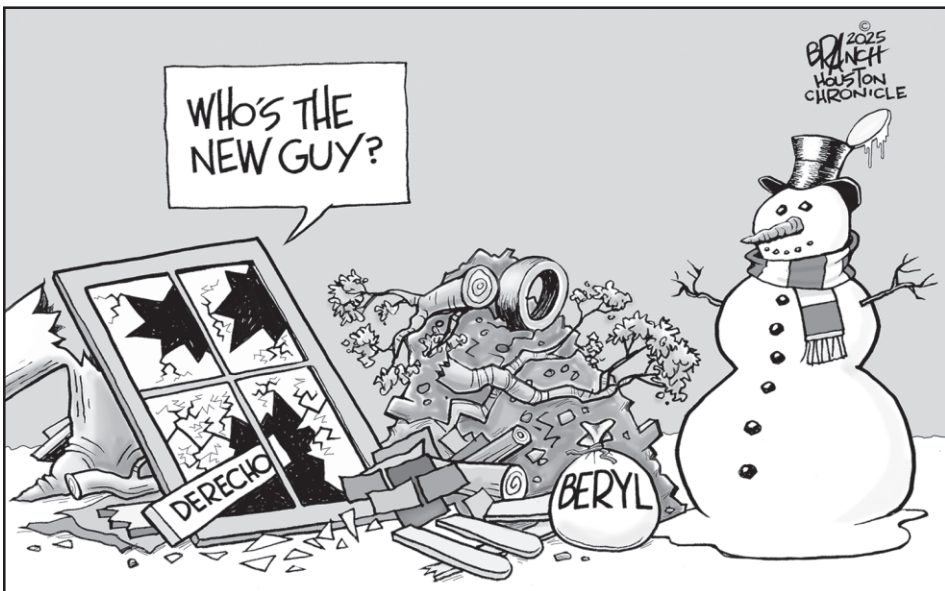
By the way, the five-year history for your home is included on the back of your tax bill or you can access it on the County Tax-Assessor's website...

This year's tax increases came on top of an average increase of over 10% last year because even though a taxing entity did not raise its tax rate, HCAD increased the average home value...

Recent polls have shown the growing frustration of young people, in particular, at the unaffordability of owning a home. The combination of a storage of single-family homes, high interest rates...

Many attribute this frustration to the trend of many younger Americans abandoning the Democratic Party in favor of more populist candidates. However, many of our local officials, and especially some on Harris County Commissioners' Court...

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...



THE POSTSCRIPT

By Carrie Classon

Not My Cake



My father and my niece have a wonderful tradition. Born just 69 years and one week apart, they have celebrated their birthdays together...

Last year, my father turned 90 and my niece turned 21, and so I bought a single candle that said "21" on it and put in nine candles, and they blew them out together...

I thought, as long as the bakery was writing "HAPPY BIRTHDAY" on the cake, they could just as easily write "HAPPY BIRTHDAYS!" followed by "22 & 91." Then I could put a single candle by each age and simplify the whole complicated (but mandatory) candle-blowing-out procedure...

So that's what I did. A nice young woman repeated the message back to me on the phone, and I headed out the next day to pick up the cake. "Right here!" a young man who I had not seen working there before said.

"Could I have a quick look at it?" I asked. I only asked because they put their cakes in sturdy boxes tied up with two lengths of strong ribbon and knot the ribbon at the top. It makes it easy to carry the heavy cake home...

"Sure!" the young man said. The cake said, "HAPPY BIRTHDAY." I knew the young woman had understood me, so I suspected this was not my cake. I told the young man that the ages should be on the cake, and he took the first cake back and went looking for my cake.

He was gone a very long time. "Got it!" he finally said when he returned with another cake. "Can I have a look at it?" I asked again. At this point, I was starting to feel like a bit of a nuisance, but the staff was as friendly as always, so I went around the counter and looked at the cake.

It said, "HAPPY BIRTHDAY 55." "This is not my cake," I told the young man. By now, the manager—or at least a more senior member of the staff—had taken an interest.

"Aren't you Karen Carlson?" the manager asked. "No. I'm Carrie Classon." The two bakery employees looked at the cake. "We gave someone the wrong cake," the young man announced.

By now, a young woman (I believe the one who took the order) was involved. She confirmed what the cake should have said, and the manager wrote it down on a piece of paper, and the young man disappeared into the back again.

"So sorry for the delay!" the manager said. After a long wait, a new cake appeared. "HAPPY BIRTHDAYS! 22 & 91!" it read. They tied up the cake with very strong ribbon, and I walked home with my cake. And at least twice every block, I stopped to laugh out loud.

Because I knew Karen did not check her cake. She had already taken that cake to someone who was going to get the most confusing birthday message they have had in all their 55 years.

Till next time, Carrie

STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

By Gary Borders



Patrick Releases 25 Legislative Priorities

Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick has released his top 25 legislative priorities as the legislative session gets underway, The Texas Tribune reported. They include banning all forms of consumable THC, the psychoactive ingredient in CBD products...

Patrick released a statement saying his priorities guarantee the Texas Senate, over which he presides, "will continue to lead as the pre-eminent legislative body in America by passing our bold, conservative agenda, helping President Trump deliver on his promise of making America great again."

He said he plans to release an additional 15 priority bills soon, for a total of 40.

FLU CASES SPIKING ACROSS THE STATE

The number of influenza cases is rising rapidly, the Austin American-Statesman reported, particularly in North Texas where at least two school districts were forced to close because of excessive absences. Data from the Texas Department of State Health Services indicates a 34% positivity rate in the week of Jan. 12-18.

A Fort Worth children's hospital last week reported nearly 700 patients visiting its emergency rooms within a 24-hour span.

"Which is just an astronomical number," Dr. Stephanie Felton, attending physician at Cook Children's Medical Center, said. "Every year, we obviously see the flu. This year, I will say, that we're seeing an abundance of it, as far as the numbers."

Flu symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, muscle aches, headaches, and a runny or stuffy nose. Severe symptoms can last up to three days, while less-severe symptoms can hang around for up to two weeks.

ABBOTT SEEKS FED REIMBURSEMENT FOR BORDER SECURITY

Gov. Greg Abbott has asked the federal government to reimburse Texas for the \$11.1 billion the state has spent in the past four years in Operation Lone Star.

"Over the past four years,



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS By Gary Borders

OLS efforts successfully reduced illegal immigration into Texas by 87%, demonstrated the ongoing effectiveness of President Donald Trump's border measures, and shone a spotlight on a national crisis, Abbott wrote in a letter to U.S. congressional leadership.

MEASLES CASES CONFIRMED IN WEST TEXAS, HOUSTON

Two cases of measles have been confirmed in school-aged children in West Texas a few weeks after two cases were reported in a pair of Houston residents, the Houston Chronicle reported. The West Texas cases were children living in Gaines County who had not received the measles, mumps, and rubella vaccine, according to DSHS. The children were hospitalized for a time in Lubbock but have since been discharged.

The cases in Houston involved two unvaccinated adults who had recently traveled internationally.

DSHS has warned that additional cases may occur, given the highly contagious nature of measles. The virus is transmitted by contact with infectious droplets that travel airborne when an infected person breathes, coughs or sneezes. The virus can remain infectious in the air for up to two hours.

MORE THAN 20 BILLS FILED TO WEAKEN VACCINE REQUIREMENTS

More than 20 bills have been filed for this legislative session that aim to claw back vaccine requirements, The Tribune reported. The proposed legislation would make it easier for parents to opt out of vaccinations for their children; give the Legislature final approval on any new vaccinations required by schools; apply more rules for dispensing the COVID-19 vaccination; and demand more transparency regarding possible adverse effects of vaccines.

The founder of Texans for Vaccine Choice, Rebecca Hardy, said her group is not anti-vaccine. "We're not here to restrict anybody's access to vaccines or to dismantle the vaccine program," she said. "So, we do not take a stance on if children should get all, some or no vaccines."

Carrie Williams, a spokesperson for the Texas Hospital Association, said vaccines have become politicized and their importance overlooked because of their efficacy.

"Vaccine decisions impact the availability of care, hospital workforce and wait times, and the people around you," she said. "We're always going to be on the side of policies that help prevent epidemics."

DATA CENTERS ARE BOOMING ACROSS TEXAS

The Lone Star State is "ground zero" for the boom in data centers to meet growing demand, including a new joint venture between OpenAI, SoftBank and Oracle announced recently by President Trump. The Texas Standard reported 10 data centers are already under construction, with 10 more on the way. Each building will occupy half a million square feet.

STATE'S POPULATION NOW SURPASSES 31 MILLION

For the past two years, Texas has gained an average of 1,542 residents each day, according to the Texas Demographic Center. The U.S. Census Bureau now estimates the state surpassed 31 million residents in 2024, driven largely by international migration. For example, of those 1,542 new daily residents, 876 were from international migration, the report showed. "These figures highlight the state's position as a key destination for global migrants, as well as its continued appeal to those relocating from other parts of the United States," according to the report.

Advertisement for Star Courier newspaper, including contact information for Gilbert Hoffman, David Taylor, and Kristan Hoffman, and subscription rates.

Crosby ISD celebrates milestones CHS expansion, student Achievements, and highlight a season growth,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

nities should proud of their journey, and we can't see what they do in the future. These seven students earned a combined \$600,000 worth of free college tuition because of their dedication on the field and in the classroom. Kudos to: Wesley Yarbrough (University of Arizona); Josiah Jones (University of Texas-El Paso); Nathan O'Flaherty (Air Force); Aanson Johnson (Texas A&M Kingsville); Cameron Grandmaiter (Texas Wesleyan); Malik Windfont (Texas Wesleyan); and Copelin Windfont (University of Texas-El Paso). This is one of the largest recruiting classes for CHS football in recent memory. Congratulations to you and your families!

From athletics to agriculture, twelve Crosby High School students just won their official FFA jacket! In November, tractor dealer Lansdowne-Moody-Kubota visited campus and allowed students a chance to win a coveted blue jacket with the FFA insignia. They had to recite the full FFA creed without a single mistake! This month, the students who aced the creed were awarded their jacket.

Our elementary students are shining each day this semester. On February 6, we hosted the 4th annual Crosby ISD District Spelling Bee. Congratulations to the winner: 5th grader **Kassandra Arellano** from Drew Elementary School. Also kudos to the first and second runner-up, 4th grader **Emma Roscom** from Barrett Elementary and 5th grader **Rose Holloway** from Newport Elementary, and all of the students who competed. Kassandra correctly

spelled "inferno" and "buzzard" to be crowned the spelling bee champion. She now advances to the Houston Regional Spelling Bee later this spring. Good luck! Remember, a three-letter word for success is: YOU!

Also on February 6, we celebrated the 100th Day of School! Students across our elementary school campuses dressed like their grandparents or wore adorable 100 day t-shirts. There's another reason to celebrate, because our elementary Cougars are really reading! So far this school year, students at the four elementary campuses have read a combined 18,737 books or about 41,980,560 words! Way to go, CES, NES, BES, and DES!

This month, we celebrated Staff Development in a big way! On February 7, the district's Curriculum & Instruction team rolled out our conference-style learning sessions called Cougar Con. Staff members select from a menu of classes to target personal or career growth. Cougar Con is truly a staff-driven event, with most sessions taught by fellow Crosby ISD employees. We have a wealth of knowledge in this district, and we're tapping into that collective brain power to improve instruction for our students each day.

During this Black History Month, we're also celebrating the rich history in our district. Barrett Station was one of the first communities in Texas to be established by formerly enslaved families. I'm proud that I am a descendant of one of those founding families. Barrett Station, first known as Barrett Settlement, is cel-

brating 150 years since its establishment in 1875. Just before Black History Month, the district celebrated HAABSE Teachers of the Year including: Ms. Chloe Vallot (Drew Elementary); Coach Abby Marek (Newport Elementary); Ms. Delecia Vallot (Crosby Elementary); Ms. Tymtree Jones (Crosby Kindergarten Center); Ms. Latonya Glover (Barrett Elementary School); Ms. Tene Brown (Crosby Middle School); and Ms. Ibukun Chaney (Crosby High School). I was also thrilled to applaud Crosby High School senior, Kaitlyn Daniels. She earned a \$1,000 HAABSE scholarship toward her future college career. Kaitlyn is a rising star with plenty of academic successes under her belt.

Finally, a reminder for our families and community members. The Crosby ISD Spring Break will run March 10 through March 14. I hope all of our families are planning to do whatever makes them happy, from travel to spring cleaning to a good old-fashioned staycation!

We are Committed to Excellence! Go Coogs!



Seven Crosby High School football players committed to play college ball during National Signing Day on February 5. The seven students earned more than \$600,000 in free college tuition. Pictured here are Nathan O'Flaherty and his family. O'Flaherty has signed with Air Force.



Crosby High School FFA students earn their blue jackets after reciting the FFA creed without making a single mistake.



This signing day saw one of the largest recruiting classes ever for Crosby High School football. Seven players signed to play college ball, including Wesley Yarbrough who is headed to the University of Arizona.



Crosby ISD Superintendent, Dr. Paula Patterson, crowned a new district Spelling Bee Champion on February 6. Kassandra Arellano correctly spelled "buzzard" to advance to the regional spelling bee. Kassandra is a 5th grader at Drew Elementary School. 4th grader Emma Roscom from Barrett Elementary School was first runner-up, and 5th grader Rose Holloway from Newport Elementary School was second runner-up.

Channelview's Jalen Hurts MVP in Super Bowl win

Channelview High School and the community were rooting for alumnus Jalen Hurts in Super Bowl LIX.

The Philadelphia Eagles' quarterback from Channelview was aiming to become an NFL champion two years after a Super Bowl loss against the Kansas City Chiefs. The teams faced each other again Sunday in New Orleans, and Hurts led the Eagles to an outstanding 40-22 victory, and was named the MVP.

Eagles quarterback Jalen Hurts is a product of Channelview High School east of Houston.

The offensive coordinator for the school's football team, Byron Henderson, said Channelview ISD is rallying in support of the Eagles and wore their colors at school Friday. On Sunday in New Orleans, Philadelphia faced the two-time defending champion Kansas City Chiefs in Super Bowl LIX.

"I am ecstatic, and I am so proud just to know where he's come from,"



Henderson said of Hurts. "People think that when you make it to the NFL, that every step was given to you. It wasn't the case for him. I saw the trials and tribulations."

Hurts, 26, is a two-time Pro Bowl selection known for his proficiency as both a passer and runner. He starred collegiately at the University of Alabama and the University of Oklaho-

ma before becoming the Eagles' starting quarterback as a second-year pro in 2021.

Henderson met Hurts when the latter was in elementary school and coached both Hurts and his brother. The Channelview coach said Hurts was a leader and would encourage those around him to perform to the best of their ability.

"He's actually one of the hardest-working young men that I have been around," Henderson said. "His work ethic has helped me be a better coach."

Hurts helped lead the Eagles to the Super Bowl after the 2022 season, when they lost 38-35 against the Chiefs. Two years later, he has another chance to be an NFL champion.

Henderson attended an Eagles game a few weeks ago and will be rooting for Hurts again on Sunday.

"The man that he has become is what I am most proud of," Henderson said.

--Houston Public Media

top ten

NFL Teams With Most Super Bowl Wins

1/2	New England Patriots, 6 Pittsburgh Steelers, 6
3/4	San Francisco 49ers, 5 Dallas Cowboys, 5
5/6/7	Kansas City Chiefs, 4 Green Bay Packers, 4 New York Giants, 4
8/9/10	Denver Broncos, 3 L.A./Oakland Raiders, 3 Washington Commanders, 3

Source: ProFootballNetwork.com

Consumer CellularSM

NO HIDDEN FEES. NO HIDDEN ANYTHING. FREEDOM CALLS.

Plans start at just \$20/month.

855-821-6277

© 2024 Consumer Cellular Inc. Terms and Conditions subject to change.

Crosby's Bras for the cause raises \$170,000+ in one night to fight cancer, celebrates 13 years of support,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"Dan Meaux of Crawfish Shack donated the meal and for 400 attendees, the music was donated by DJ Cruz and Concierge Infusion Services, and the decorations came from Monica's Brides and Touch of Glitz Flowers," she said. The in-kind donations were worth thousands of dollars.

"If you look around the room, about 90 percent of what you see is donated and our VIP sponsors are a big chunk of what funds everything, she said.

The biggest chunk of the money, however, is raised by the models—some who come willingly, while others are lured into the event by their significant others.

"They come to us and want to do it every year," Holmelin said smiling.

"I was volun-told to do it by my mom and girlfriend," laughed first-timer Gunner Gates of Huffman. "He didn't have a choice, and I can be a handful," smiled Hayley Fulghum.

One real life cowboy was back for a second year after surviving his first experience.

Matt Crumpler of Gonzales, Texas works at a commercial feed company, jackposts at a few rodeos and is a champion roper.

His girlfriend Sarah Humphries recruited him last year.

"You know, it's hard to say no. Great people. Great cause. I'll be there for it every time. It's a lot of fun," the cowboy said.

Crumpler said now that he plans on being a regular, his biggest challenge after overcoming the fear of dancing in a bra will be finding a new costume each year.

"We'll have to one up it every year," he said.

He said a little bit of

liquid courage helped him to overcome his worries of dancing.

"Heck, you kind of let your hair down, make a little bit of an idiot of yourself, and just have fun," he smiled.

It's not easy for some, but they all know the job assignment.

"I understand that it's hard to walk out into a crowd of 400 people in a bra and model it, but at the same time, it's usually less than five minutes and they're raising thousands of dollars for people that need it," Holmelin said.

The live auction of the bras alone raised just over \$86,000, about half of the night's haul.

The silent auction garnered another \$14,000 from items donated to the event.

Back in the dressing room, Beth King is using her seamstress skills to make sure there's no wardrobe malfunctions and about a dozen more women are spread out across the Legion Hall assisting with the production of the event.

Mike Stamper, who works at Sterling-White Funeral Home and Cemetery, said he was happy to do the event.

"It's amazing how much this community pulls together. Everybody's willing to step up and that's so cool," he said. Stamper was proud that between the sales of his bras and sponsorships by the funeral home, they have donated about \$8,500 the last two years.

While the event it past, it's not too late to make donations year-round to the organization in the name of the organization and its tax deductible. Donations can be made on their Facebook page and by the summer, a new website is in the making.



Cowboy Matt Crumpler's costume was themed Saw The Horns Off Cancer. It was his second year participating.



Jakie Sims collected the cash from the audience when he danced out in his Cajun Mardi Gras costume.



Mike Stamper of Sterling-White Funeral Home and Cemetery danced out in a Moulin Rouge-themed outfit at the Crosby Bras For The Cause benefit.



Dr. Joe Dervay lit up the American Legion Hall with a Space Jam costume with rockets that blew smoke.



First-timer Gunner Gates came dressed as a cowboy and drew the attention of a lot of the women.

CLASSIFIED ADS

Consumer Cellular™

NO HIDDEN FEES. NO HIDDEN ANYTHING. FREEDOM CALLS.

Plans start at just \$20/month.

855-821-6277

© 2024 Consumer Cellular Inc. Terms and Conditions subject to change.

BID NOTICE **BID NOTICE** **BID NOTICE**

PUBLIC NOTICE OF SALE OF REAL PROPERTY

HUFFMAN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT is soliciting competitive sealed bids to purchase ±131.73 acres off Holcomb Road in Huffman, Harris County, Texas (Parcel ID 0401830000172 and Parcel ID 0401830000009). Property information, the Invitation for Bid (IFB) Package, or answers to questions regarding the submission of sealed bids can be obtained by contacting Matthew Davis, Cushman & Wakefield, U.S., Inc. by email at Matthew.Davis@cushwake.com. **The deadline for submission of hardcopy sealed bids is 2:00 PM, on Monday, March 24, 2025.** All bids are to be submitted in the form required in the bid packet. Bids must be timely submitted by U.S. Mail, courier/express service, or hand delivery to Huffman Independent School District, Attn: Adam Skinner, 24302 FM 2100, Huffman, Texas 77336. No electronic submissions will be accepted. The Seller reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any informality in bids received. The public opening and announcement of the names of Bidders only will be held immediately following the deadline for submissions.

6-2T

SHOP LOCALLY -- Save Time & Money

Business Directory

SHOP LOCALLY -- Save Time & Money

281-428-1187
1-800-345-8471
Sales & Repair Service
Baytown, Texas
John Henderson
628 Cedar Bayou Rd.

CENTRAL AUTO INSPECTIONS
FULL SERVICE VEHICLE INSPECTIONS
713-702-3200
JOHNNY GAENE
OWNER-INSPECTOR
911 S. MAIN
HIGHLANDS TX. 77562

Graphics Unlimited, Inc.
CORPORATE GRAPHICS AT ITS BEST
Signs & Banners
281-462-1200
www.graphicsunlimitedinc.net
213 Kernohan • Crosby, TX 77532

WESTON COTTEN, ATTORNEY
HIGHLANDS
281-421-4050 1500 E. Wallisville Rd.
NOT CERTIFIED BY THE TEXAS BOARD OF LEGAL SPECIALIZATION

HILL MATERIALS
119 Listi Ln, Highlands
hillmaterials.com
FILL DIRT
BANK SAND
ROADBASE
LIMESTONE
WE DELIVER TO YOU
(281) 843-5000
residential • commercial • industrial

SMALL ADS BRING **BIG** RESULTS
Ask about our Business Directory Package
13 Weeks + Story + Display for \$260
Ask about our Ribbon Cutting Package
Photo + Story + Web for \$260
713-266-3444

Star ☆ Courier
Your Hometown Newspaper
News tips and Ad Inquiries:
713-266-3444

To advertise in the Business Directory, please call 713-266-3444 for details



Anya Taylor-Joy, left, and Miles Teller star in 'The Gorge.'

'Kinda Pregnant'

'KINDA PREGNANT' (R) — Rally your friends, get some snacks and adult beverages, then gather around for a proper girls' night with this hysterical comedy film out now on streaming. Starring Amy Schumer ('Unfrosted'), who also co-wrote the script, the film centers around Lainy, who's pretty much your average woman. And of course, it is sometimes natural for the average woman to experience jealousy after her best friend falls pregnant. What isn't natural, however, is a woman putting on a fake belly to appease her envy. But this is exactly what Lainy does, and as she soon finds out when she meets the man of her dreams, her fake belly might not have been the best approach. Jillian Bell ('Reunion'), Will Forte ('That '90s Show'), and Brianne Howey ('Ginny & Georgia') co-star. (Netflix)

'BRIDGET JONES: MAD ABOUT THE BOY' (R) — 'Bridget Jones' is the film franchise that keeps on giving, with an astonishing 24 years between the release of the original film and the fourth installment, which will shortly be available to stream on Feb. 13. Renee Zellweger reprises her role as the titular character, who now navigates life as a single mom. With people around her eager to get her back in the saddle when it comes to dating, Bridget finally decides to try her hand at it when a younger man named Roxster (Leo Woodall) shoots his shot. Although she attempts to get enveloped by this new love interest, memories of her former husband still fill her mind, leaving her to crave a more secure and stable man who could be a better match. Guess we'll have to wait and see who Bridget Jones finally ends up with! Hugh Grant, Emma Thompson, and Colin Firth reprise their

roles from the previous films as well. (Peacock)

'THE GORGE' (PG-13) — Miles Teller took a break from acting after an exciting 2022 with the release of 'Top Gun: Maverick.' Now he's back ahead of his role as John Branca in the upcoming biopic 'Michael,' and he stars opposite Anya Taylor-Joy ('Furiosa: A Mad Max Saga') in this film that has a taste of many genres — sci-fi, horror, action, and a bit of romance! Out on Feb. 14, 'The Gorge' follows two elite operatives named Levi (Teller) and Drasa (Taylor-Joy), who are tasked with guarding either side of a mysterious gorge. These two snipers must carry out their mission without contacting one another, but with the gorge being described as the 'door to hell,' they are forced to work together when the evil inside of the gorge finally emerges. (Apple TV+)

'YOU'RE CORDIALLY INVITED' (R) — The romantic comedies are in full supply this week! Starring two A-list actors Will Ferrell and Reese Witherspoon, this movie is reminiscent of others like 'Shotgun Wedding' (2022), where viewers just know they're going to be taken on an unbelievably wild ride in a traditional wedding setting. Ferrell plays single father Jim, whose daughter plans to get married in a small inn; the catch is, Margot (Witherspoon) also booked the same inn on the same day for her sister and future brother-in-law. When the two parties show up on the same weekend, Jim and Margot start scrambling to figure out how to keep the peace. Lucky for us viewers, their plans backfire into buffoonery. Out now! (Amazon Prime)



Q: I really enjoyed the first two seasons of 'The Recruit' on Netflix. It's hard to tell if there will be a third one. Will there be? — K.W.

A: It's too soon to tell, but after the first season of the spy-adventure series 'The Recruit' debuted on Netflix, it was a big streaming success. The series stars Noah Centineo ('The Fosters') as a rookie CIA lawyer. His first assignment involved Russia, but the second season that premiered on Jan. 30 led him to Seoul, South Korea, where he's assigned to rescue the wife of a rogue NIS agent (Teo Yoo).

Showrunner Alexi Hawley, whose previous producing credits include 'The Rookie,' views Centineo's character, Owen, as 'flawed, young and selfish.' Hawley further explains that 'even though Owen had no business getting involved [in the Korean assignment] in the first place, this presented an opportunity for him to prove his worth — not only to the CIA but to everyone he disappointed last season, including himself.' The creative team really wanted to see him grow up this second time around and show that it's 'not all fun and games — people get killed.'

As far as a season three renewal, the show's fate isn't known yet. According to Forbes, Netflix typically analyzes a show's performance over several weeks to months before deciding. Unfortunately, the streamer has also developed a reputation for canceling shows too quickly after just one or two seasons, but hopefully with its strong initial numbers, 'The Recruit' will be given the green light.

Q: When is the new 'Outlander' spin-off coming out? Will it also be on Starz or somewhere else? — D.P.

A: 'Outlander: Blood of My Blood' is a prequel series to 'Outlander,' which recently wrapped up its seventh season (the eighth will be its last) on Starz. The prequel will have 10 episodes in its debut season, but it won't premiere until this summer. It did, however, drop a teaser just ahead of the 'Outlander' finale a couple weeks ago.

According to Entertainment Weekly, 'Blood of My Blood' will tell the story of the parents of Jamie (Sam Heughan) and Claire (Caitriona Balfe), as well as their respective love stories in both 18th-century



Noah Centineo stars in 'The Recruit' on Netflix.

Scotland and World-War-I-era England. Matthew B. Roberts, one of the co-showrunners behind 'Outlander,' will write and preside over the new series.

Q: What ever happened to Paula Patton? I remember she was married to Robin Thicke, but wasn't she also an actress? — M.M.

A: Paula Patton divorced her pop-star husband and high-school sweetheart Robin Thicke in 2015 and appears to be living a peaceful life if you follow her Instagram account. The terms of their divorce settlement are private, but she still does acting jobs to exercise her creativity and supplement her income.

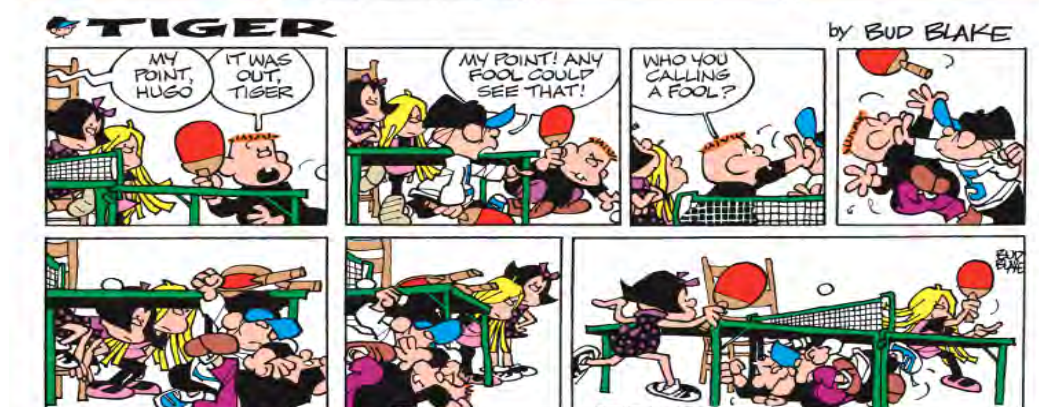
Patton most recently guest-starred on the new drama 'Murder in a Small Town,' but before this, she starred in the BET+ original series 'Sacrifice' as well as 'Somewhere Between' on ABC. She and Thicke share a 14-year-old son named Julian.

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

(c) 2025 King Features Synd., Inc.

ENTERTAINMENT

Amber Waves



Weekly SUDOKU grid and instructions

HOCUS-FOCUS comic strip panels

King Crossword puzzle grid and clues

Trivia test questions and answers



PRIMARY CARE

Personalized to You

Convenient, customized care — close to work or home.

Our Houston Methodist primary care doctors in Baytown and Mont Belvieu provide personalized care for you and your family, including physicals, immunizations and preventive health services.

Many of our practices:

- Provide in-person and virtual visits with online scheduling
- Offer same-day sick visits
- Are conveniently located close to work or home
- Accept most major insurance plans

Your health and safety are our priority. We are taking every necessary precaution to keep you safe.



HOUSTON
Methodist[®]
PRIMARY CARE GROUP

houstonmethodist.org/pcg/east
281.428.2273