



Jullian Pereida will require a Heart Transplant. See Story on Page 2.

EPA orders Cleanup of Waste Pits to Proceed Environmental Group THEA sees Victory after years of Effort

By David Taylor
Managing Editor

In a significant victory for the residents of East Harris County, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has approved the cleanup plan for the San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund Site. This decision comes after years of delays and persistent advocacy from the community, led by the Texas Health and Environment Alliance (THEA).

The EPA's ruling imposes over 40 additional conditions on the companies responsible for the toxic waste, International Paper Company and Waste Management subsidiary McGinnes Industrial Maintenance Corporation. These conditions are designed to ensure a thorough

and effective cleanup of the site, which has been a source of dioxin and other hazardous materials for decades.

Jackie Medcalf, CEO and Founder of THEA, expressed her gratitude and relief at the EPA's decision.

"The EPA is taking decisive action to protect the community and the San Jacinto River," Medcalf said. "This is a victory for all of the residents who have been pushing for the cleanup of this environmental hazard for so many years."

The San Jacinto River Waste Pits, located in Harris County just east of Houston, have been under a court mandate to produce a final cleanup plan since 2018. While the Southern Pit was successfully



THEA Executive Director Jackie Medcalf announces the EPA Ruling, which will compel the Responsible Parties to proceed with the Waste Pits Superfund Site Cleanup. She is joined at the Press Conference, which took place near the river site of the Waste Pits, with Environmental Activists Carolyn Stone, Pam Bonta, Greg Moss, and others in the Community.

cleaned up in 2024, the plan for the Northern Pit faced numerous delays and setbacks. The companies responsible for the cleanup sought and received 565 days' worth of delays and

submitted multiple plans that did not meet the EPA's requirements.

In a letter dated September 9, 2025, the EPA approved the companies' final plan but took the un-

usual step of requiring agency approval for any changes.

"EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin has said his priority is to jumpstart the superfund site cleanup process, and this may be the most important project to see action under that policy," Medcalf noted. "We appreciate the EPA taking firm action on a project that has been allowed to languish for far too long."

The community's involvement played a crucial role in the EPA's decision.

"The people who live along the river deserve the real credit for this action," Medcalf said. "The EPA's conditions reflect many of the same requirements that the community has been pushing for, including assurances that the site will be thoroughly

tested to make sure the cleanup was done properly."

Harris County Precinct 3 Commissioner Tom Ramsey, who has been actively pushing the EPA to take definitive action, also praised the decision.

"For decades, families along the San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund site have carried the burden of living next to one of the nation's most toxic sites," Ramsey said. "The decision by the EPA to approve the removal plans is a long-awaited victory for our community."

Despite the approval, there are still details to be finalized, including establishing a timeline and setting penalties for any

Continued. See EPA ORDERS WASTE PITS CLEANUP, Page 2

Highlands hosts Multi-Club Rotary Meeting

Highlands Rotary Club was the host for the annual visit and convocation of area Rotary Clubs, from Baytown, Highlands, North Shore, and Galena Park/Jacinto City.

The luncheon meeting was held last Thursday, September 18th at the Highlands San Jacinto Community Center, with over 100 Rotarians attending from the representative clubs.

District Governor Tom Kelchner was the official host, and also concluded his club visits in the area. In his remarks to the attendees, he said "It was wonderful to complete our 20th and last official District Governor visit with my home Baytown club and the Rotary Clubs of



Members of the Highlands Rotary Club with DG Tom Kelchner



District Governor Tom Kelchner, center, with Club Presidents from Baytown, Galena Park/Jacinto City, North Shore, and Highlands.



Multi-Club Rotary Meeting at the Highlands Community Center

North Shore, Highlands and Galena Park/Jacinto City! Thanks to Club Presidents Ledell Johnson, Mini Izaguirre, Patricia Scott and James Cline!

Thanks for the generous donations to Polio! Thanks to our fantastic Presentation Team!"

Included in the event were acknowledgements of major gifts to Rotary International, including the Highlands Rotary Club donating thousands to the Rotary International effort to eliminate Polio worldwide. The Highlands club every year raises the money for this donation from the annual Washer Throwing Tournament, with Rotarians and the community combining for fun and funds.

Crosby's ESD 5 faces tough questions amid proposed tax rate increase



ESD 5 board members discuss the new tax rate with residents present at the hearing required by law when the entity raises the tax rate

By David Taylor
Managing editor

CROSBY, Texas — The Emergency Services District (ESD) 5 board met last week to discuss the proposed property tax rate for the 2025 fiscal year, sparking a spirited conversation with community

members about the cost and future of emergency medical services in the Crosby area.

The board is considering a tax rate of three cents per \$100 of assessed property value, the maximum allowed by law without triggering a public election. Last year's rate was also

three cents but rising property appraisals mean most residents will see an increase in the amount they pay.

"For the average home- stead in our district, valued at \$204,672 this year,

Continued. See RESIDENTS DEBATE 3-CENT, RATE AS DIRECT Page 2

Crosby Evening Lions Club Celebrates Charter Night

By David Taylor
Managing Editor

The Crosby Evening Lions Club marked a significant milestone on Saturday night, September 20, 2025, with a grand Charter Night Banquet held at the David H. Mc Nerney American Legion Post 658. The event was a celebration of the club's official charter and its commitment to serving the community.

The night was marked with several highlights including recognition certificates from Harris County Commissioner Tom Ramsey and State Representative Briscoe Cain.

"Our constituents and I are proud to celebrate this momentous day with you and look forward to even greater things in your fu-



Past District Governor Bill Simpson pinned Crosby Evening Lions Club President Deanna Becker with her official service pin.

ture in Harris County Precinct 3," the certificate read from Ramsey.

State Representative Cain echoed those sentiments, congratulating the club on its charter and expressing best wishes for its future endeavors in his certificate.

The keynote speaker for the evening was Council Chair-elect and Past District Governor Chris Gunstream, who shared inspiring remarks about the importance of service

Continued. See LIONS CLUB LAUNCHES WITH CHARTER, Page 2

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

IT'S NOT JUST CHECKING
It's love at first swipe

CRCU.ORG/REWARDS
Open Today!




Julian Pereida's heart condition worsens, requires transplant

By David Taylor
Managing Editor

Julian Pereida, affectionately known as JuJu, has faced a significant setback in his health journey. After discovering a heart condition during a pre-season heart screening provided by Crosby ISD, Julian's football career came to an abrupt end. The screening, a routine event held by the district since the death of Cody Stephens, revealed serious issues that could have cost the teen his life had they not been caught.

Now, the concerning news is that Julian's condition has worsened.

"Julian (JuJu) had a catheterization procedure done on Wednesday morning. What they're saying is that every time he breathes," his mom said as tears rolled down her face, "the ventricular opens, the blood is not filling in thick enough so when it closes, it's not flowing through fast enough from the upper ventricular to the lower," she explained. "Essentially, he's going to need a heart transplant. So now we're working towards getting him prepared to be put on a heart transplant list. That's going to be a

hard process," she said.

The catheterization procedure went very well, and JuJu did amazingly, his mom shared. He is now at home, relaxing after being discharged. For now, he will be focusing on the process of making sure he will be a candidate to be placed on the heart transplant list. "We were expecting these results in the future, but here we are today. JuJu is such a strong kid, and I'm amazed at how well he took the news," she said.

Julian's mom emphasized the importance of maintaining his body mass index (BMI) below 35 and taking his medications at the same time every day.

"He is below 35, but I guess we need to lower it just a little bit more so that we can keep him stable. And then his medications, he needs to take them at the same time every day, which he has not been doing because he's 16 and wants to hang out with his friends and things like that."

Now he knows the importance of keeping that schedule taking his pills at the same time every day.

"That's going to help us now be able to make it onto the transplant list," his



mom said.

Julian is also aware of the certainty that for him to receive a heart transplant, someone dies to make that possible which made his mom emotional.

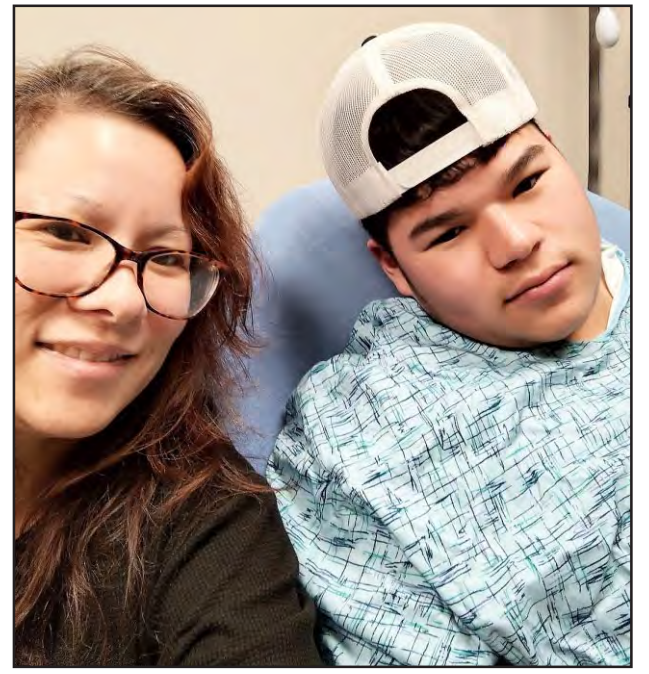
Julian's family has an appointment next Friday to learn more about how to get on the transplant list.

"He was in recovery when they were telling us, so it was just a briefing, how the surgery went and things like that, and a brief statement of, he's going to have to be put on a transplant list. So next Friday, we'll know in depth more," his mom explained.

In the meantime, a GoFundMe fundraiser has been started to help the

family financially. "This fundraiser is to help our family financially because my husband had a work injury three years ago, and his unemployment expires. Our income hasn't been as stable as we're used to and so it's been very difficult for us. Somehow, we've been making a way to get Julian the necessary ambulance rides, but financially, it's been very hard," his mom confessed.

Any money that exceeds their goal they want to use to begin a foundation in Julian's name to help others with genetic testing to see if they might also have the heart issue. She also wants to help Scott Stephens and the Cody



Julian has his mom as his advocate during a scary time with his heart. The teen now faces a heart transplant after his own heart had too many issues

Stephens Foundation that was instrumental in discovering her son's heart issues.

Julian's journey is far from over, but with the support of his family, friends, and community, he remains hopeful and determined.

"Julian is such a strong kid, and I'm amazed at how well he took the news. He even asked the cardiologist if he received the

heart transplant, can he play football again? The cardiologist replied, 'likely you can,' and Julian said, 'let's do it today! I'm ready,' and made us all laugh. Please continue to pray for us as we have a long road ahead of us," his mom requested.

To help Julian and his family, visit this website at <https://gofund.me/89660d372>.

Residents debate 3-cent rate as ESD5 seeks to meet community needs,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the ESD portion of their tax bill would be \$61.40," explained Nicole Pierce, district counsel for ESD 5. "That's an increase of \$2.53 over last year, about 4.3 percent."

Some residents questioned the need for the hike, expressing frustration about growing tax burdens as property values rise. "If 30 taxing entities get just a little bit, you're left with less and less every year," one resident said, voicing a common sentiment. "And the appraisal district is what's causing you problems," Pierce rebutted.

The board emphasized that they have no control over appraisal values. "We didn't do anything. It was the appraisal district that raised the value of your homes," one ESD member responded. "We try to keep the tax rate down, but property values keep going up."

The conversation also touched on how ESD 5's rate compares to surrounding districts. "ESD 5 is one of the lowest tax rates in the state. Some other ESDs are at 10 cents," said a long-serving board member. "We're not trying to gut nobody. We're trying to do everything we can to keep our head above water."

The additional revenue—about \$126,000 more than if the district had adopted the "no new reve-



ESD 5 Board President Sharon Cotton explains the tax rate to a handful of residents who showed up to the board meeting to ask questions about the new tax.

nue" rate—will help ESD 5 address increased service demands in a rapidly growing community, board members said. "With 13,000 or so new homes being built, every one adds another property tax and more calls for service," one board member explained. "We need funds for ambulances and to ensure trained staff are always ready to respond."

Residents also heard about the costs of emergency services. "A new ambulance costs \$300,000," explained a staff member. "Add to that the expense of stretchers, equipment, and training—it adds up quickly. We're doing our best to serve you."

For some, the tax is worth the peace of mind.

"If your loved one needs EMS, the ambulance comes with properly trained and equipped staff," one board member said. "It's \$61 a year for that security."

Board members invited the public to continue attending monthly meetings and promised to remain transparent with their budget and spending. "We really appreciate people coming to get informed," board chair Sharon Cotton concluded. "We're all taxpayers. We want what's best for Crosby."

Public comment on the proposed tax rate will remain open until the board's final vote next month.

EPA orders Waste Pits Cleanup to Proceed,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

failure to follow the plan. THEA and its coalition remain committed to ensuring the companies are held accountable until the hazardous material is removed.

"Residents have lost loved ones. Many have developed cancer and other illnesses themselves, but they never stopped," Medcalf said. "This community isn't going anywhere, and they aren't going to stop pushing for a full, effective cleanup."

The EPA's decision marks a new phase in the long battle to clean up the San Jacinto River Waste Pits. The community, along with local officials and THEA, will continue to monitor the progress

and ensure that the cleanup is done right, done safely, and done quickly.

"This is our river, our home, our future, and we are determined to see this cleanup is done right," Medcalf emphasized.

As the legal wheels begin to turn, the community remains vigilant.

"We will keep watching. We will keep demanding transparent timelines, clear expectations, and accountability to make sure every one of EPA's conditions is met and that the remedy moves forward without further delay," Medcalf said. "We have fought too long to accept anything less than the safest and most expeditious cleanup possible."

At a press conference in Meadowbrook Park, just yards away from the actual Superfund site, Medcalf gave the details to the media and interested parties from the community.

In the background, teams of fish were jumping in the river, none of which can be eaten without fear of dioxin contamination.

Residents were relieved that in their lifetime, the river may finally be restored to its original state.

"This decision is not the end. It's the start of a new phase. The legal wheels will now turn, and we will keep fighting to ensure that the cleanup is done right," she concluded.

Driver dies after hitting pole on Crosby-Lynchburg in Barrett



Sheriff Gonzalez said that the Vehicle, a Dodge Charger, struck a pole at a high rate of speed, and split in two.

BARRETT, Texas — A man is dead after a car crashed into an electric pole early Sunday morning in the Barrett area, according to the Harris County Sheriff's Office.

The crash happened around 2:20 a.m. on Crosby Lynchburg Road near the Barrett Settlement community.

"A single-vehicle (Dodge Charger) struck a pole and split the car," Sheriff Ed Gonzalez said on social media. "The driver was confirmed deceased on scene."

In a news release, the sheriff's office identified the driver as Oscar Pedraza Lopez.

"Mr. Pedraza Lopez was traveling at an unsafe speed and lost control of his vehicle," the sheriff's office said.

Nearby residents said it

was a dangerous stretch of road.

"You know, it's sad that there's loss of life," said resident Emery Palmer. "There's always somebody got to show out and jump on it and get from here to there."

He said speeding was an issue on the road.

"It can be dangerous, you've got to be watching all the time," Palmer said. Another resident, Jasi-

ah Williams, shares those concerns, especially since he said he often walks to work.

"It's concerning for sure, I mean you've got to stay safe somehow," he said. "If everyone could slow down just a bit."

The sheriff said Center-Point Energy was called to the scene to assess the damage to the electricity pole.

—KHOU





90

Celebrating 90 Years Of Service

Foundation cracks getting worse?

Our Services:

-  Foundation Repair
-  Crawl Space Recovery
-  Payment Plans as Low as \$125/mo
-  FREE Home Evaluations

-  Water Management
-  Basement Waterproofing
-  Industry-Leading Warranty Options
-  Patented Technology

-  Concrete Lifting
-  Basement Wall Recovery

Limited Time Offer
Up to \$250 off
Foundation Repair

We help families live better.

 4.8 Rating - 1,978-Verified Reviews

 4.9 Rating - 3,000-Verified Reviews

Schedule Your Free Evaluation!

(855) 587-2176

Offer valid from 9/1/2024 to 1/1/2026. Only valid for new customers. \$250 savings valid on projects \$2,000 or more. Cannot be combined with any other offers or promotions. Offer is non-transferable, has no cash value and cannot be applied to previous purchases. Void where prohibited by law. Terms of offer are subject to change.

Barbers Hill Press

Dayton

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

VOL. 30, NO. 37

© Copyright 2025

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2025

MONT BELVIEU, TEXAS 77580

ON THE HILL

2025 Movies in The Park: SONIC, THE HEDGEHOG 3

After the Wave Pool closes for the season, our movies return to City Park!

September 20
Sonic the Hedgehog 3 (2024) PG | Runtime: 109 minutes

Sonic, Knuckles, and Tails reunite against a powerful new adversary, Shadow, a mysterious villain with powers unlike anything they have faced before. With their abilities out-matched in every way, Team Sonic must seek out an unlikely alliance in hopes of stopping Shadow and protecting the planet.

Movie begins at 7PM
Free event at Mont Belvieu City Park

2025 Greens Bayou Regatta Oct. 4

About This Event
Starting Line: Brock Adventure Park (8201 John Ralston Rd, Houston, TX 77044)
Race Day Registration: 7:30 - 8:15 am
Start Time: 9:00 am
Finish Line and Awards Ceremony: Thomas Bell Foster Park (12895 Greens Bayou St, Houston, TX 77015)

Awards Ceremony: 12:30 pm
Must be 18+ years old to register. Minimum age for entry is 12 years. Children under 16 must be accompanied by an adult on the boat. A waiver must be signed by a parent or guardian. Waivers must be signed by all participants. For waiver.

Entry includes tee-shirt and lunch, while supplies last. Does not include canoe or kayak.

Your registration fee does not include boat rental.

PLEASE NOTE: On-line registration closes on Thursday, October 2, 2025, at 11:59 pm CST. You will be able to register CREDIT CARD ONLY at the event on Saturday, October 4, 2025, but you will NOT be included in the official timekeeping of the race, nor be eligible for awards, and will start 5 minutes after the last start of the race.

Severe Water/Weather and Event Cancellation: The Greens Bayou Regatta is rain or shine. If cancellation does take place due to severe water or weather conditions, entry fees will not be refunded and will support the mission of the Greens Bayou Coalition.*

For packet pick-up on October 2 & 3, you must register by Monday, September 30, at 11:59 pm CST. All other packets will be available at registration. Packets include boat number, race instructions, back-packs, etc.



EPA's Administrator tours ExxonMobil's new second Advanced Recycling Unit

BAYTOWN TX - EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin spent a day at the beginning of September touring ExxonMobil's Advanced Recycling operations at their Baytown Complex, followed by a visit to Clean Harbors Incineration Facility where hazardous waste is being treated daily. It's always impressive to see new American technologies being implemented to protect the environment.

ExxonMobil has successfully launched its second advanced recycling unit in Baytown, TX, effectively doubling the company's capacity to transform plastic waste into valuable raw materials. As of May 2025, the company reports having processed more than 100 million pounds of plastic waste at its Baytown facility.

The second unit complements the first unit, which has been operational since late 2022.

"We're ready for this expanded capacity — we've learned from the first unit what works well and what to do better," the company stated on its website. "These lessons have been applied to the second unit and improvements will continue with each new unit."

Core part of strategy to address plastic waste



EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin in Baytown with ExxonMobil officials, touring the Recycling plant #2.

ExxonMobil said these units represent sound investments and are central to the company's strategy for addressing plastic waste. Advanced recycling serves as a complement to traditional mechanical recycling by converting plastic waste into raw materials suitable for manufacturing various valuable products, including fuels, lubricants, high-performance chemicals, and plastics. The company emphasizes that advanced recycling can process a wider range of plastic waste that isn't suitable for mechanical recycling and would otherwise end up in landfills or incinerators.

Advanced recycling also plays a key role in establishing a circular economy for plastics, according to the company. This circularity encompasses the entire lifecycle of plastics, from designing products for easier recycling to enhancing waste management systems.

One of the major global challenges to increasing recycling rates is the collection and sorting of plastic waste. To address this, ExxonMobil is collaborating with communities, customers, and other companies to collect plastic waste for its recycling units.

In 2021, ExxonMobil helped establish the joint ven-

ture Cyclyx to improve plastic waste collection and sorting. The company also helped found the Houston Recycling Collaboration to expand residential plastic waste collection. Additional local communities have expressed interest in similar programs, and ExxonMobil is eager to expand these collaborative efforts.

Additional investment

Looking ahead, ExxonMobil plans to invest more than \$200 million to further expand its advanced recycling operations at its sites in Baytown and Beaumont, TX. These new operations are expected to begin in 2026 and

aim to increase advanced recycling rates while diverting more plastic from landfills. The company intends to construct additional units to achieve a global recycling capacity of 1 billion pounds per year by 2027.

The investment will add 350 million pounds per year of advanced recycling capacity at Baytown and Beaumont, bringing ExxonMobil's total capacity to 500 million pounds per year.

In May, Exxon Mobil Corp. announced first-quarter 2025 earnings of \$7.7 billion.

"The work we've done to transform our company over the past eight years positions us to excel in any environment," said Darren Woods, chairman and CEO.

The company continues to develop additional advanced recycling projects at manufacturing sites across North America, Europe, and Asia, working toward its goal of reaching 1 billion pounds per year of recycling capacity globally by 2027.

ExxonMobil's advanced recycling technology, known as Exxtend, is currently serving customers in more than 15 countries across multiple sectors, including food-safe packaging and pet food, with demand continuing to increase, according to the company.

Chambers County supports LSET continuing education and leadership development for employees

This week, Chambers County Judge Jimmy Sylvia, a graduate of the Leadership Southeast Texas (LSET) Program, had the honor of presenting to the 2025 LSET Class. He spoke about what makes Chambers County so special, shared lessons from his years of service, and emphasized why leadership development is vital to the success of any organization.

The presentation was especially meaningful as two Chambers County Department Heads—Human Resources Director Lauren Van Deventer and Director of Economic Development & Grant

Management Samantha Humphrey—are members of the 2025 LSET Class.

What is LSET?

Leadership Southeast Texas is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to educating regional leaders on the complex issues facing our area. The program creates opportunities for participants to learn from professional speakers, connect with diverse groups, and engage in meaningful discussions on topics such as:

- Education and workforce development
- Community resiliency and economic protection
- Preserving our natural



Chambers County Judge Sylvia makes presentation to the LSET class.

environment

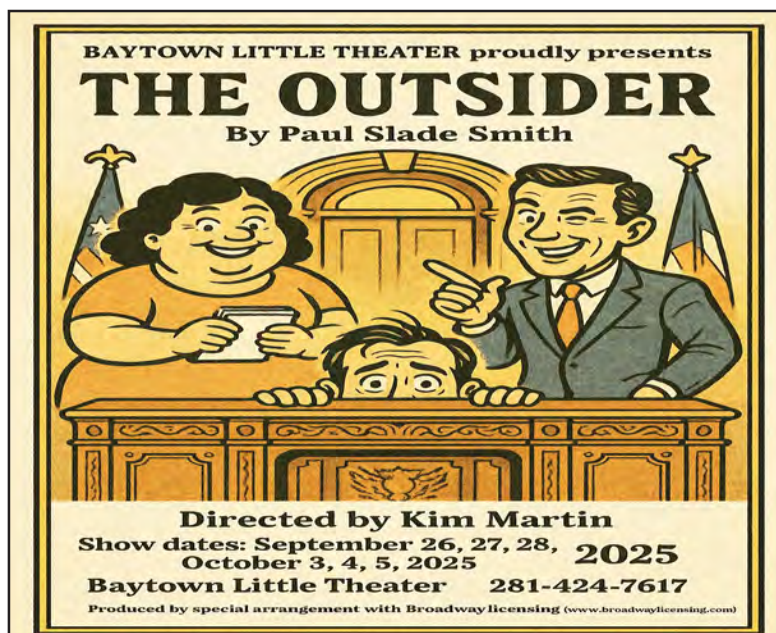
Each year, LSET alumni and current class members also team up with Youth LSET participants on impactful community service projects.

We're proud of our Judge and our team for investing in leadership growth that benefits all of Chambers County.



Chambers County LSET class members and department heads: Lauren Van Deventer and Samantha Humphrey

Baytown Little Theater Presents "The Outsider"



Directed By: Kim Martin

The Baytown Little Theater will open its 2025-26 season with a production of the riotous comedy by Paul Slade Smith, *The Outsider*.

Ned Newley doesn't even want to be governor. He's terri-

fied of public speaking; his poll numbers are impressively bad. To his ever-supportive Chief of Staff, Ned seems destined to fail. But political consultant Arthur Vance sees things differently: Ned might be the worst candidate to ever run for office. Unless the public is looking for... the worst candidate to ever run for office. A timely and hilarious comedy that skewers politics and celebrates democracy.

Thrilling Lineup of Must-See Shows Now on Sale!

Baytown Little Theater

PROUDLY PRESENTS OUR 2025-26 SEASON!

SEASON TICKETS NOW ON SALE!!!

THE OUTSIDER
SEUSSIFIED CHRISTMAS CAROL
THE SHADOW BOX
RIPCORN
The Musical Comedy Murders of 1959
1776 The Musical

WWW.BAYTOWNLITTLETHEATER.ORG

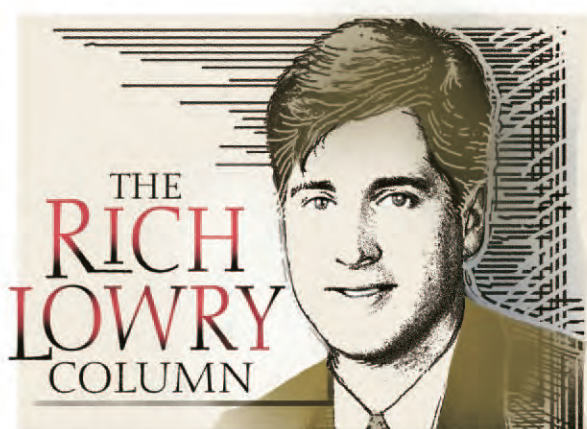
The wait is over, our 2025-26 season is here, and it's brimming with must-see shows that will dazzle, move, and delight you. From heart-warming classics to bold new productions, this lineup is our most thrilling yet!

Why settle for one show when you can experience them all? Whether you love edge-of-your-seat drama, side-splitting comedy, or show-stopping musicals, this season has some-

thing to ignite every imagination.

Season tickets are NOW AVAILABLE! Lock in your seats today and guarantee your spot for every curtain rise, standing ovation, and magical moment on our stage.

OPINION PAGE



The Siren Song of Despair

The siren song of despair

Charlie Kirk was a one-man answer to campus illiberalism. He rose to prominence at a time when university administrators and progressive students were working in league to make campuses no-go zones for conservatives.

They effectively banned them from their faculties. They didn't invite them on campus, or if they did, they were liable to disinvite and cancel them. They banned so-called hate speech. They shouted down speakers they didn't like. They created "safe spaces." In short, they did everything they could to render the opposing point of view illegitimate and indefensible.

Kirk showed not only that it was possible to punch through these obstacles and get a hearing, but to win the argument despite them.

He created a student movement that he leveraged into a huge, multifaceted organization and that he mobilized to vote in 2024, to great political effect.

He was provocative, occasionally outlandish and sometimes wrong, but always interesting and brave.

His events on campus should be viewed as a public service. All of the best, most creative college deans could have gotten together to figure out how to routinely get thousands of energized students to events about public affairs, and never managed it. No worries. Kirk figured it out for them. That he was shot while he engaged in an act of peaceful persuasion makes his murder all the more devastating.

Kirk wasn't a literary figure, but his assassination was a little like, say, William F. Buckley or James Baldwin getting gunned down in the midst of their famous 1965 debate at the Cambridge Union.

What Kirk was doing drew on some of the finest traditions of civilized life. Gathering on a hill to hear people speak and argue, like what we saw at Utah Valley University prior to the shot ringing out, is as old as the Pnyx in ancient Athens.

The university as a battleground of ideas, with clashing worldviews vying for influence, goes back to the Middle Ages. Founded in 1231, the University of Paris quickly became "a forum where great questions of theology, society, and government were analyzed and answered," writes historian Dan Jones.

More fundamentally, language and abstract reasoning make us distinctly human; violence, the tool of brutes, does not. What are young people on the right to conclude from the horror at Utah Valley? Progressives viewed Kirk as a "MAGA troll" (as a New Republic headline put it in the immediate aftermath of his shooting), but for his fans, he was a figure of hope and inspiration.

It's also important to realize that Kirk worked diligently and effectively to bring disaffected kids into mainstream politics. He pushed back against anti-semitism and other poisonous influences. The far-right envied and hated him.

It would be natural for Utah Valley to become the Right's equivalent of Kent State in the 1970s, a shattering experience, and a radicalizing one.

Charlie Kirk did it the right way, and now he's gone. He espoused the Christian faith, and what did it get him? He believed in open debate, and it left him defenseless unto his enemies. He did his enemies the favor of taking their arguments seriously, whereas (presumably) one of them used a bullet to silence him forever.

To quit on persuasion, though, is the counsel of despair. Political violence in a free society is always wrong. There's no substitute for convincing our fellow citizens, and we should also assume — as Kirk did, even with the odds stacked heavily against him — that they can be convinced by good arguments made sincerely and passionately.

Kirk's murder will long be remembered as a symbol of the irrationality and hatred of this era, with, one fears, worse to come. His life's work, on the other hand, is a testament to how one person can, with enough pluck and talent, move the needle of our politics.

Kirk fought back against illiberalism, and his supporters — when the shock and grief subsides — should be equally committed to his mission.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.

(c) 2025 by King Features Synd., Inc.



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

By Gary Borders



Talarico Launches U.S. Senate Campaign

State Rep. James Talarico, D-Round Rock, announced last week that he is entering the Democratic primary next March for U.S. Senate. The San Antonio Express-News reported Talarico hopes a new face and approach will give Democrats a chance to garner their first statewide win in more than three decades.

Talarico faces Collin Allred, the former Dallas congressman who unsuccessfully challenged U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz in 2024, and former NASA astronaut Terry Virts in the Democratic primary. Others could enter that race as well.

Incumbent GOP Sen. John Cornyn is facing a stiff challenge on the Republican side from Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton.

"There's a moment here where I think people are ready for something very different," Talarico said. "It's been 10 years of Trumpian politics, politics as blood sport, politics as professional wrestling. And I think people are tired of it."

ABBOTT LIMITS THC PRODUCTS TO THOSE 21 AND OLDER

After two special sessions ended without lawmakers agreeing on how to regulate the state's THC market, Gov. Greg Abbott issued an executive order restricting the use of products infused with the psychoactive cannabis compound to adults age 21 and older, The Dallas Morning News reported.

The order goes into effect immediately and comes after Abbott vetoed an outright ban on THC products passed during the regular session.

"Absent the kinds of regulations that apply to other psychoactive substances that may safely be enjoyed by adults like alcohol and tobacco, minors have been allowed to purchase these products without any safeguards," Abbott said in his order. "The Legislature did not pass any legislation concerning consumable hemp products, not even a ban for minors, leaving in place the status quo."

Texas outlawed THC vapes effective Sept. 1, but other products such as snacks, gummies and drinks are still legally available for anyone 21 and older. Since hemp



products became legal in 2019, more than 8,000 retailers across the state are selling them.

TEXAS TROOPERS TAKE IN MILLIONS IN OVERTIME PAY

State troopers dispatched to the border under Operation Lone Star are taking in millions of dollars in overtime pay, even as border crossings have dropped to record lows, the Houston Chronicle reported. Data obtained by Hearst Newspapers indicates that the Department of Public Safety is on track to spend about \$77 million on overtime this year, surpassing what it spent in 2023 when crossings peaked and thousands of migrants were arrested.

As of June, approximately 1 in 10 troopers were on track to double their annual salaries through overtime. Operation Lone Star now accounts for a third of DPS' total overtime spending.

DPS officials say their focus is shifting from policing the Rio Grande to arresting drug smugglers and human traffickers across the state and assisting ICE in finding immigrants with outstanding warrants.

"It is true, you no longer see troopers simply stationed along the riverbanks — that is not where they are needed at this time," said Ericka Miller, a DPS spokeswoman. "Troopers, special agents, Texas Rangers and others are working at various locations — some many miles from the physical border — to apprehend criminals and criminal illegal immigrants and crack down on crime connected to the border including drug cases, human smuggling, human trafficking, weapons trafficking, stash houses and more."

COST OF OWNING A HOME IN TEXAS ON THE RISE

Despite lawmakers' efforts to dramatically reduce property taxes, the cost of owning a home in Texas grew in 2024, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The Texas Tribune reported other home ownership costs, such as insurance and utilities, have eaten into money saved on property taxes. The median Texas homeowner last year paid \$1,452 in monthly costs — up 2.7% from 2023.

Texas homeowners' monthly costs last year were about 7% higher than in 2019, and the typical Texas homeowner with a mortgage spent 22.2% of their income on home costs.

Texas renters are seeing some relief after several years of steep rent hikes. The median Texas rent rose 1.4% in 2024, a slower pace than the previous two years.

PERMIAN BASIN COUNTIES DRIVE U.S. OIL GROWTH

Eight Texas counties within the Permian Basin accounted for 93% of the nation's oil output growth over the past four years, the Chronicle reported. That production growth comes even as employment numbers have stagnated or dropped.

"We are, through mid-year 2025, producing record volumes of crude oil and natural gas in Texas, with fully 1/3 fewer direct upstream oil and gas employees in Texas compared to the industry peak in 2014," said Karr Ingham, president of the Alliance of Texas Energy Producers. "That is an otherworldly achievement in terms of efficiency and productivity releases those resources to other endeavors."

When oil production from two New Mexico counties included in the Permian Basin are added, the 10 counties account for almost 40% of the country's total crude oil and lease condensate output.

FLEA-BORNE TYPHUS MAKING COMEBACK IN TEXAS

Typhus is making a comeback in Texas, carried by fleas despite having almost been eradicated in previous decades, the Texas Standard reported.

The state has reported the most flea-borne typhus cases in the nation, with more than 6,700 cases recorded from 2008-2023. About 70% of patients were hospitalized, and 14 deaths attributed to typhus.

One of the reasons for the increase in typhus cases is climate change, with warmer conditions allowing fleas to reproduce faster and spread the typhus bacteria. Symptoms include fever, headache, rash and cough, and in rare cases more serious illnesses if left untreated. Typhus is successfully treated with antibiotics.

State health officials emphasize pet flea control, yard cleanup (removing brush and outdoor food sources that attract rodents and opossums), and promptly seeking care for unexplained fever — especially after flea bites or exposure to pets and wildlife.

THE POSTSCRIPT By Carrie Classon

Saggy Belly



My mother told me she was worried that her cat, Katy, needed to lose weight. Privately, I agreed.

My sister and I spent the weekend with my parents up at their cabin in the woods. Their cat, Katy, is now middle-aged and not as active as she used to be. She is no longer allowed outside because she is an excellent bird killer. So Katy spends a lot of her time napping—something cats are very good at (and something I think is a good idea for people as well). But over the years, Katy developed a saggy belly. My mother, who feeds her, felt responsible and worried that she might not be healthy.

"Look at all that flab!" my mother said.

My parents had a cat before Katy, Maggie, and she was undeniably overweight. But Maggie became their cat after she was found out in the winter cold, eating bird food beneath the feeder. After she nearly starved and the tips of her ears froze off, I think everyone decided that Maggie should get to eat as much as she wanted—and she did. My father promised they would put Maggie on a diet only if the veterinarian recommended it.

When the vet recommended that Maggie lose a little weight, my father's response was, "What do vets know?"

Maggie remained a lovely, rotund kitty cat. But Katy does not have this kind of sad origin story. Katy was adopted as a kitten from the local humane society and has never missed a meal. So my mother has reduced her daily allowance from four little scoops to three, although she still gets an afternoon treat called "Katy, Katy Good Stuff."

"I don't think Katy looks bad," my sister said, in Katy's defense. "She just has some flab on her belly," my sister added. Then, because she is my sister and a teacher, she picked up her phone and asked it, "Why do cats have saggy bellies?"

No one was expecting any surprises. Everyone was wrong.

"Primordial pouch," my sister read.

"What?" my father and my mother and I said, in unison.

"It's not fat," my sister said. "It's called a primordial pouch, and cats are born with them. It's described as, 'A saggy, hanging flap of loose skin and fur located on a cat's underside.'"

Now my sister was laughing. My father looked skeptical, as he did with a lot of new information discovered on the internet and not otherwise verified. My mother just looked very surprised. I thought it was hilarious. But we were all looking at Katy in a new way.

My sister kept reading. "The pouch, which develops as a cat matures, is believed to have served evolutionary purposes such as protecting vital organs during fights and enhancing flexibility for running. A prominent pouch is not an indicator of a cat's overall health or weight."

Katy noticed everyone was staring at her and blinked.

"Well! There you have it," I said. "Katy is not fat. She just has an admirably large primordial pouch!"

My sister was now laughing a lot, and my dad was shaking his head. I'm sure I imagined it, but Katy looked pleased. "Finally!" I told her. "Someone understands you!"

My sister was still looking at photos of cats with particularly impressive primordial pouches (many of them more substantial than Katy's), and it occurred to me that I had never stopped to consider that a cat's body could be all different shapes—how there was room for variety and different kinds of beauty.

Katy was exactly as she should be.

Till next time, Carrie

Advertisement for Star Courier newspaper, including contact information and subscription rates.

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

FOOTBALL SEASON WEEK 5: Huge matchups in college; Parsons returns to Dallas

It's going to be quite a weekend for high school, college and NFL fans this weekend.

In college action, there are a number of intriguing matchups involving nationally ranked teams that could very well determine what 12 teams will earn slots in the College Football Playoff (CFP).

And in the NFL, the folks at NBC have to be happy as former Cowboys defender Micah Parsons returns as a Green Bay Packer as his new team will visit his old squad when GB visits Dallas on Sunday Night Football.

It should be interesting to see if Parsons and Cowboys owner Jerry Jones have any interaction prior to the game. Jones traded one of the league's best pass rushers in August after the two sides failed to come to an agreement on a new contract for the 26-year-old Parsons, who had 1.5 sacks (the team had 8 in two games) in his first two games in Green Bay.

The hometown Texans play their second straight AFC South game when they host Tennessee and No. 1 overall draft pick Cam Ward on Sunday at NRG Stadium. After their first two games, this team has some worrisome issues. Of course, the offensive line still can't protect anyone or open holes for a questionable running game. QB C.J. Stroud appears to be regressing and the defense, although decent at times, seems to disappear at the most important times in games as it did allowing Tampa Bay to drive for the winning score two weeks ago that resulted in a 20-19 loss. Texans fans had better hope this team does not play down to the level of competition on Sunday, or it could be another long day in NRG.

The defending Super Bowl champ Eagles head to Florida to take on Tampa Bay, while Baltimore visits Kansas City to take on a Chiefs team that lost its first two games of the season. It could be desperation time for Patrick Mahomes and his Chiefs.

The college schedule is loaded with big games this weekend (I personally will be in Iowa to watch the Hawk'eyes take on No. 19-ranked Indiana. Ah, retirement is grand!). There are a couple of big ones in the SEC, as No. 3-ranked LSU visits No. 13-ranked Ole Miss, while No. 14-ranked Alabama heads to Athens to take on No. 5-ranked Georgia in prime time at 6:30 p.m. on ABC.

Also in the SEC, No. 22-ranked Auburn heads to Kyle Field to take on No. 10-ranked Texas A&M, which two weeks ago picked up a huge road win at Notre Dame with a 41-40 win over the Irish. The Aggie offense is thriving under second-year QB Marcel Reed, but that unit should get a good test from a solid Auburn defense. There's also a huge one in the Big 10 as No. 6-ranked Oregon visits No. 2-ranked Penn State. This will be an interesting matchup between an Oregon offense that averaged 54 points in its first three games and a very stout Penn State defense that allowed just 17 points in its first three contests.

Before we take a look at this weekend's schedule, let's review last week's record. A 6-6 week brought the season record to 17-17 (50%).

Now, onto this weekend's games.

NCAA

Notre Dame at Arkansas - These are desperate times for No. 24-ranked Notre Dame, which lost its first two games of the season and can't afford to lose another game this season if it hopes to remain in the CFP picture. Two weeks ago, the Irish defense, especially its secondary, was badly exposed in its 41-40 loss at home to A&M. That unit will face another tough test this Saturday in Fayetteville when it faces an Arkansas team that averaged 47 points in its first three games. The Hogs are led by dual-threat QB Taylen Green (866 passing yards, 11 TDs/307 rushing yards, 2 TDs), running back Mike Washington (260 yards, 3 TDs) and wideout O'Mega Blake (18 receptions, 266 yards, 3 TDs). ND needs to get its two-headed running game going with Jeremiyah Love (127 yards, 1 TD) and Jadarian Price (113 yards, 2 TDs) to keep the Hogs offense off of the field and set up the passing game for QB C.J. Carr (514 yards, 2 TDs), tight end Eli Raridon (9 receptions, 182 yards) and wide receiver Malachi Fielders (8 receptions, 125 yards). This will be a tough environment for the Irish, but look for Love to have a bust out game to lead ND to the victory. My pick, Notre Dame 33,



Arkansas 30

LSU at Ole Miss - A good one in the SEC has No. 3-ranked LSU traveling to Oxford to take on No. 13-ranked Ole Miss. The Tigers will bring one of the best defenses in the country to face a high-scoring Rebels team. The defense led the way to a 20-10 conference-opening win over Florida two weeks ago, while the Ole Miss offense led the way in a 41-35 victory over Arkansas. Something tells me LSU QB Garrett Nussmeier (687 yards, 3 TDs), running back Caden Durham (196 yards, 2 TDs) and wideout Aaron Anderson (18 receptions, 247 yards) will get going against a suspect Rebels defense. The Ole Miss offense will face its first true test of the season after averaging 44 points in its first three games. The Rebs are led by QB Austin Simmons (580 passing yards, 4 TDs), running back Kewan Larcy (290 yards, 5 TDs) and wide receiver Harrison Wallace III (15 receptions, 339 yards, 2 TDs). Look for the LSU defense to slow down the Ole Miss offense, while its offense erupts in Oxford. My pick, LSU 34, Ole Miss 20

Auburn at Texas A&M - Another good one in the SEC has the No. 24-ranked Auburn Tigers visiting the No. 10-ranked Texas A&M Aggies at Kyle Field. Two weeks ago, the Ags improved to 3-0 on the season with a wild 41-40 road win at Notre Dame. Auburn also won its first three games and appears to have found a QB in Jackson Arnold (501 passing yards, 4 TDs). The Tigers also have weapons in running back Jeremiah Cobb (314 yards, 4 TDs) and wideout Cam Coleman (10 receptions, 149 yards, 1 TD). A&M also has a big-play QB in Marcel Reed, (869 passing yards, 9 TDs), who has improved immensely as a passer. Reed has two big-play wideouts to throw to in Mario Craver (20 receptions, 443 yards, 4 TDs) and KC Concepcion (13 receptions, 227 yards, 3 TDs) and a solid runner in LeVon Moss (168 yards, 4 TDs). The Aggies also have a pretty solid defense, which should be the difference maker come Saturday at Kyle Field. My pick, Texas A&M 33, Auburn 17

Alabama at Georgia - Another big one in the SEC pits No. 14 Alabama against No. 5 Georgia on prime time (6:30 p.m., ABC, Channel 13) between the Hedges in Athens. After losing their opener at Florida State, the Crimson Tide ran off to convincing victories before their first (of two) bye week of the season, while Georgia overcame a 14-point deficit in Knoxville to knock off Tennessee, 44-41 in overtime. 'Bama QB Ty Simpson (862 passing yards, 9 TDs) seems to be settling into the role as the man under center after an underwhelming opening game performance. It helps that he has one of the best wide receivers in the country in sophomore Ryan Williams (10 receptions, 195 yards, 2 TDs) on his side. Williams missed the second game of the season with a concussion, but returned with a big game in the Tide's 38-14 rout of Wisconsin two weeks ago. Simpson also has another top target to throw to in Germie Bernard (15 receptions, 275 yards, 3 TDs). 'Bama needs the run the ball better and it appears head coach Kalen DeBoer has turned to Kevin Riley (120 yards) to handle that job. The Bulldogs have a dual-threat QB in Gunner Stockton (721 passing yards, 4 TDs/124 rushing yards, 3 TDs), a solid running back in Nate Frazier (189 yards, 2 TDs) and a decent receiver in Zachariah Branch (11 receptions, 181 yards, 2 TDs). Georgia will be out to avenge last year's road loss in Tuscaloosa and it says here Kirby Smart's team gets the job done. My pick, Georgia 31, Alabama 27

Oregon at Penn State - A big one in the Big 10 has No. 6-ranked Oregon traveling to State College to take on No. 2-ranked Penn State in prime time (6:30 p.m. NBC). This game will pit the Duck's high scoring offense (54 points per game) against Penn State's stifling defense (5 points per game). Oregon is led by QB Dante Moore (657 passing yards, 2 TDs), speedy runners Dierre Hill Jr. (161 yards, 2 TDs) and Noah Whittington (159 yards, 2 TDs) and big-play wideout Malik Benson (11 receptions, 161 yards, 2 TDs). While Penn State has an

excellent defense, it also has key veterans back on offense led by QB Drew Allar (626 passing yards, 4 TDs), and running backs Kaytron Allen (273 yards, 2 TDs) and Nicholas Singleton (179 yards, 5 TDs). Look for head coach James Franklin to give Oregon a steady dose of Allen and Singleton to control the clock keep Oregon's offense off of the field. I think the Nittany Lions also have the better defense, and that unit will make a key play or two late to secure the victory for PSU. My pick, Penn State 26, Oregon 23

NFL

Philadelphia at Tampa Bay - The Eagles head to Tampa to take on a Buccaneers team that could very well challenge Philly for the NFC title come January. The Bucs are solid on both sides of the ball and have a big-play QB in Baker Mayfield (382 passing yards, 5 TDs), a solid runner in Bucky Irving (148 yards, 2 TDs) and two big-play wideouts in veteran Mike Evans (10 receptions, 107 yards) and rookie sensation Emeka Egbuke (8 receptions, 96 yards, 3 TDs). Two weeks ago in their 20-19 win over the Texans, Mayfield led his team on a lengthy drive late in the game to pull out the victory. This bunch is beginning to believe in itself. Tampa will see how really good they are when they take on the defending Super Bowl champs. The Eagles opened with wins over the Cowboys and Chiefs, but the offense has yet to put up the big numbers it did a year ago. Jalen Hurts (253 passing yards/77 rushing yards, 3 TDs) and Saquon Barkley (148 yards, 2 TD) might have another tough day putting up big numbers. It would help if Hurts got a little more production out of wide receivers DeVonta Smith (9 receptions, 69 yards) and A.J. Brown (6 receptions, 35 yards), who have both gotten off to slow starts. Look for the Florida heat and the Bucs defense to be the difference maker come Sunday as Tampa pulls off the big upset. My pick, Tampa Bay 23, Philadelphia 20

Tennessee at Houston - It might not be panic time just yet for DeMeco Ryans' Texans, but it could be getting close, especially if the Texans don't take care of business against a young Tennessee team. The Texans fell to 0-2 two weeks ago when they lost their home opener at Tampa Bay on Monday Night Football. The Titans have also got off to an 0-2 start behind rookie QB Cam Ward (287 yards, 1 TD). The Texans need their QB, C.J. Stroud (395 yards, 1 TD) to start making plays to big-play wideout Nico Collins (6 receptions, 77 yards, 1 TD). Look for the Houston offense to get after Ward and look to rattle him and force a turnover or two. My pick, Houston 26, Tennessee 12

Baltimore at Kansas City - Speaking of teams that have gotten off to a slow start, that would be the Chiefs, who lost their first two games of the season and host a very good Ravens team Sunday in KC. KC QB Patrick Mahomes (445 passing yards, 2 TDs/123 rushing yards, 2 TDs) has pretty much been a one-man team. He's gotten little help from his running game and thus far, has only two competent receivers to throw to in wideout Marquise Brown (15 receptions, 129 yards) and tight end Travis Kelce (6 receptions, 108 yards, 2 TDs). Head coach Andy Reid needs to find Mahomes some help. Baltimore, on the other hand, is loaded on offense and has been quite productive as evidenced by averaging 40 points in their first two games. QB Lamar Jackson is off to a hot start (434 passing yards, 6 TDs/83 rushing yards, 1 TD), along with running back Derrick Henry (192 yards, 2 TDs) and wide receiver Zay Flowers (14 receptions, 218 yards, 1 TD). Something tells me this game could turn into a shootout as Mahomes and Jackson try to out do one another come Sunday. My pick, Kansas City 34, Baltimore 31

Green Bay at Dallas - The Packers and Micah Parsons pay the Cowboys a visit on Sunday Night Football and you had better believe Parsons wants to put on a show against owner Jerry Jones, the man who traded him

Crosby Evening Lions Club launches with charter banquet,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



Becker, Simpson, Guiding Lion Suzie Vestal, and Jo George, wife of District Governor Mike George, work at a table putting together new member packets and certificates for the new Lions.

and fellowship in the Lions Club.

"The work of Lions is to make our communities a better place, and our motto, 'we serve,' certainly sets the tone. Our service comes from the heart. It is not manufactured or contrived; it is something that is part of a Lions DNA," Gunstream emphasized.

"Every Lions Club is different: they are autonomous, with their own personality and their own culture. That's exactly how our association was designed to operate."

Now the club will reach out to the community to discover what kind of services are needed and can be fulfilled by the club.

"As a group, you will decide what your focus of service will be whether it be from the eight service pillars of hunger, environment, childhood cancer, vision, diabetes, disaster relief, humanitarian, and youth or a different vision or purpose."

The ceremony also included the induction of charter members and the installation of the club's elected officers. Gunstream led the new members in their oath, reminding them of the Lions' mission to empower volunteers to serve their

communities.

Installed officers included President Deanna Becker, Vice President David Taylor, Secretary Peggy Bell, and Treasurer Rober to Cruz.

In her acceptance speech, Becker reflected on the club's journey and the legacy of the previous Crosby Lions Club.

"Tonight, we give honor to the Crosby Lions Club that served this community many years ago, and through the difficulty of the pandemic, fell victim to closure. It is on their shoulders of previous hard work and seeds sewn in the community that we have responded to the call to replant the club and promise to grow," Becker said.

She also thanked the Huffman Club for their support and input in the organization of the club early on.

"We were also blessed by the leadership of Lion Albert Harvey - Zone Chairman and President of the Dayton Noon Lions Club. In July, he appointed Suzie Vestal from his club to serve as our Guiding Lion to assist us and answer questions as we grow," Becker said.

It was a particularly bittersweet moment for Becker when she was sworn in.

Her father passed away recently and while going through his personal effects, she discovered that he had been a member of the Lions Club previously. She began her service in his memory on Saturday night.

Charter members of the new club include Benny Beck, Ray bell, Isabella Dion, Velma Ellison, Traci Galyean, Tina Jordan, LeeAnn Lockwood, Chelsey Long, Jeremy Reagan, Kyle Reed, Tom Richard, Delilah Rivas, Krissi Taylor, Leah Teems, Cora Thomas, Carol Thompson, and Evan Weibel.

The club learned that several transfers of membership were also in the works to the new club and a couple of new members will be sworn in at the next meeting.

Club members from other clubs were present at the meeting to support Crosby including Baytown, Dayton, Huffman, and Humble.

The evening concluded with the announcement of silent auction winners and closing remarks from President Becker, who expressed gratitude to all attendees and reiterated the club's commitment to making a meaningful difference in the community.



Roberto Cruz, center, is the sponsor for the Leos Club, affiliated with the Lions Club, and brought some of his students to volunteer to help at the banquet.

HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL SCORES/SCHEDULES

LAST WEEK'S SCORES

Thursday, Sept. 18
Iowa Colony 57, Baytown Lee 0

Friday, Sept. 19
Barbers Hill 43, Richmond Foster 13
Crosby, BYE WEEK
Dayton, BYE WEEK
Goose Creek Memorial, BYE WEEK
Huffman Hargrave, BYE WEEK

Saturday, Sept. 20
Baytown Sterling 36, Houston Chavez 12

NEXT WEEK'S GAMES
Thursday, Sept. 25
Barbers Hill vs. Lufkin (Youth Night) at 7 p.m., at Eagle Stadium

Friday, Sept. 26
Baytown Lee vs. Texas City at 7 p.m., at Stallworth Stadium
Baytown Sterling at Galveston Ball at 7 p.m., at Courville Stadium in Galveston
Crosby vs. Pasadena (Homecoming) at 7 p.m., at Cougar Stadium
Dayton vs. Montgomery at 7 p.m., at Bronco Stadium
Huffman Hargrave vs. Liberty at 7:30 p.m., at Falcon Stadium in Huffman

Saturday, Sept. 27
Goose Creek Memorial at Kingwood at 6 p.m., at Turner Stadium in Humble



to GB in August. Parsons leads a defense that recorded 8 sacks in its first two games and should be stoked to get after Dallas QB Dak Prescott (549 passing yards, 2 TDs). Prescott has gotten off to a decent start and it helps that he has two quality receivers to throw to in CeeDee Lamb (16 receptions, 222 yards) and George Pickens (8 receptions, 98 yards, 1 TD). The Cowboys are also get-

ting nice production from new running back Javonte Williams (151 yards, 3 TDs), but their best weapon is kicker Brandon Aubrey, who kicked a 64-yard field goal to force overtime two weeks ago against the Giants and then won the game by nailing a 46-yarder in the extra period. While the Dallas offense has been competent, the defense was exposed by a weak Giants team two

weeks ago, allowing 37 points to a bad team. This week, they face a much better offense led by Packers QB Jordan Love (480 yards, 4 TDs), running back Josh Jacobs (150 yards, 2 TDs), and tight end Tucker Kraft (8 receptions, 140 yards, 2 TDs). Look for Parsons to have a big night as he reminds Cowboy fans what a good player Jones let get away. My pick, Green Bay 33, Dallas 18



Jessica Chastain stars in "The Savant."

"The Savant"

"The Fantastic Four: First Steps" (PG-13) — Marvel Studios had a good start with the first film in Phase Six of their Marvel Cinematic Universe, bringing in \$518.8 million at the box office after an over \$200 million cost. It also became the ninth highest-grossing film of the year. Led by Pedro Pascal ("The Last of Us"), Vanessa Kirby ("Napoleon"), Joseph Quinn ("Gladiator II"), and Ebon Moss-Bachrach ("The Bear"), "First Steps" picks up as the Fantastic Four as they celebrate their fourth anniversary as a superhero team. In addition, Reed Richards, aka Mister Fantastic, and Sue Storm, aka Invisible Woman, are expecting a child and are left to wonder about

their child's future and superpower capability. The cherry on top is a threat to Earth from the planet-devouring Galactus, who has selected Earth as his next meal. Rent it now! (Fandango at Home)
"Hotel Costiera" (TV-MA) — Jesse Williams ("Grey's Anatomy") and "Station 19" found his latest starring role as Daniel "DD" De Luca in this action-drama series that hits streaming on Sept. 24. DD is a former Marine and half-Italian, so he decides to return to Italy, "the land of his childhood," and takes on a new job as a luxury hotel "fixer." Since DD acts as half-concierge and half-bodyguard, he's immediately tasked with finding the hotel owner's daughter after she suddenly gets

kidnapped. Known more for using his fists than his words, DD is more than up to the task and even has an eccentric team behind him to help him save the day. (Amazon Prime Video)

"The Savant" (TV-MA) — This new crime-thriller series is inspired by a story that ran in Cosmopolitan and featured a woman nicknamed "The Savant," who attempted to infiltrate hate groups online to prevent domestic terrorism attacks. In the eight-episode series, the title character is portrayed by Academy Award winner Jessica Chastain ("George & Tammy"), who goes by the name of Jodi Goodwin. During the day, Jodi is the average suburban mom to most, but by night, she's diving deep into the "darkest corners of the internet" to scour information from people who are actively planning attacks. A hunch drives Jodi to track down a man named Jason (Pablo Schreiber), who seems to be orchestrating something more major than her previous cases. But infiltrating further might lead Jodi down a dark road that comes with horrible sacrifices. The first episode premieres Sept. 26, with new episodes dropping every Friday. (Apple TV+)

(c) 2025 King Features Synd., Inc.



Q: When does the new season of "Elsbeth" start? Also, is anyone else from "The Good Wife" or "The Good Fight" going to join the show? — S.B.
A: Season three of the hit CBS series "Elsbeth" returns Sunday, Oct. 12, at 9:30 p.m. ET, with Carrie Preston returning as the quirky attorney she originated on "The Good Wife" and later played on its spin-off, "The Good Fight." The first character to cross over to "Elsbeth" was Carter Schmidt, who is played by Christian Borle. This coming season, Sarah Steele, who previously played Melissa Gold, will appear. The franchise's creators, Robert and Michelle King, told Entertainment Weekly that Steele was "at the top of the list of actors from 'The Good Fight' that we wanted back." They claimed, "She can read a medical chart and make it funny."
Guest stars for season three also include Annaleigh Ashford ("Happy Face") and William Jackson Harper ("The Good Place"). In the season premiere, Stephen Colbert will play a fictional version of himself as a late-night talk show host, alongside Amy Sedaris ("Strangers with Candy") and Andy Richter ("Conan").

Q: I heard that the teen show "Euphoria" is coming back to HBO. Will it have the same cast? Aren't they too old now to be high schoolers? — P.M.
A: Yes, "Euphoria" is gearing up to start filming its third season this coming January with most of its original cast scheduled to return. It'll have been four years since season two ended, but the new season will wisely take place after a time jump. Zendaya, Jacob Elordi and Sydney Sweeney have all become huge stars since the series debuted, but they haven't forgotten their roots and are expected to return. Other stars returning include Hunter Schafer, Alexa Demie and Maude Apatow. Eric Dane, who was sadly diagnosed with ALS this past year, is also expected to return, but he recently had to bow out as a presenter at the Emmy Awards at the last minute for unknown reasons. Sharon Stone ("Basic Instinct") recently confirmed that she has signed on with the show. It's not known what role she'll play, but the Oscar-nominated star will



Carrie Preston as Elsbeth Tascioni in "Elsbeth"

surely make a memorable impression.
Q: I saw that the film "Downton Abbey: The Grand Finale" just released in theaters. Is it really the final film of the franchise? — O.B.

A: With the film "Downton Abbey: The Grand Finale" out now, it would appear that the final chapter of the beloved British historical drama has been written. "Downton Abbey's" creator Julian Fellowes told Entertainment Weekly that this current film is the conclusion of the saga that he's been telling since 2010. He said it's the last time we'll see this generation of characters. However, according to EW, "the door has been left open for potential prequels, spin-offs following the children of these characters, and more." In the meantime, you should check out the HBO series "The Gilded Age," if you haven't. Fellowes is the co-showrunner of the historical drama with Sonja Warfield, and it has recently been renewed for a fourth season. It takes place about three decades before "Downton Abbey" and has a star-studded cast that includes Christine Baranski ("The Good Fight") and Carrie Coon ("The White Lotus"). Send me your questions at NewCelebrityExtra@gmail.com. (c) 2025 King Features Synd., Inc.

ENTERTAINMENT

Amber Waves



Weekly SUDOKU puzzle grid and instructions. Difficulty: Moderate. Includes a small 9-box square containing all numbers from one to nine.

HOCUS-FOCUS puzzle by Henry Boltinoff. Find at least six differences in details between panels. Includes a cartoon illustration of a man at an airport counter.

September 22, 2025 Posting Date King Crossword

King Crossword grid with ACROSS and DOWN clues. Includes a grid with numbers 1-59 and corresponding clues.

Answers for the crossword puzzle. Includes a list of words and phrases corresponding to the clues.

Trivia test by Fifi Rodriguez. Includes a grid and 10 trivia questions covering general knowledge, movies, geography, literature, astronomy, animal kingdom, television, and language.

Trivia Test Answers: 1. A horse; 2. Richard Dreyfuss; 3. Moscow, Russia; 4. Detroit, Michigan; 5. Panem; 6. Four; 7. 8 minutes, 20 seconds; 8. 10; 9. "Hill Street Blues"; 10. 26



CONVENIENT, ADVANCED MAMMOGRAMS FOR YOU

Taking care of your breast health is important. And early detection starts with your annual mammogram. That's why Houston Methodist Breast Care Centers offer:

- Innovative imaging technology
- Board-certified breast radiologists
- Online scheduling available when you are
- 13 convenient locations across Houston

Using cutting-edge breast screenings, such as 3D mammograms, to detect even the smallest lumps with accuracy, our breast experts have decades of experience and are all here to support you.

That's the difference between practicing medicine and leading it. **For you.**



**Pearland offers screening mammograms only*

HOUSTON
Methodist[®]
LEADING MEDICINE

houstonmethodist.org/mammogram
346.356.PINK (7465)