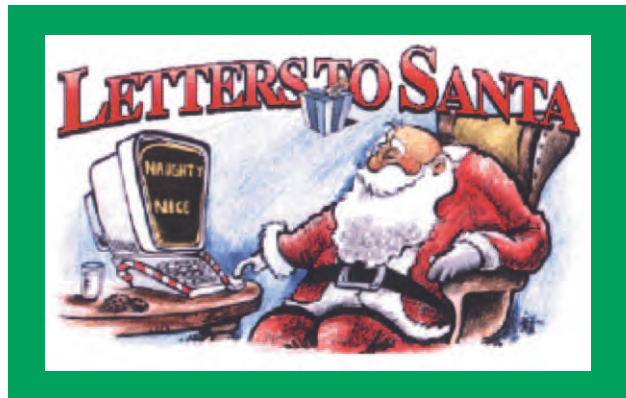




HIGHLANDS CROSBY

Star Courier

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



VOL. 72, NO. 48 - \$1.00 © Copyright 2024 **THURSDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2025** **P.O. DRAWER 446, HIGHLANDS, TEXAS 77562**

IN THE STARS

Crosby 27th Annual Christmas Festival & Parade Saturday Dec. 13

You are invited to the Crosby Huffman Chamber Christmas Festival & Parade, Saturday Dec. 13. Indoor/Outdoor Market from 1pm to 5pm at the Crosby Church, 5725 Hwy. 90, Crosby 77532. Parade starts at 6pm. Christmas Market, Pictures with Santa 2pm to 4pm, Petting Zoo, Balloon Artist, Inflatables, Hay Rides, Holly the Elf, and so much More.

Title Sponsor Lyondell-Basell.

Free Hot Dogs, Popcorn and Cotton Candy. Don't miss this spectacular Holiday Event.

Crosby's Christmas Nutcracker Market Brings Holiday Cheer

By David Taylor
Managing Editor

The Crosby American Legion Hall was transformed into a festive marketplace this weekend as the community gathered for the first-ever Christmas Nutcracker Market. Organized by Melissa McBride, the event featured a vibrant array of local vendors, unique holiday gifts, and special activities designed to support both the Legion and local students.

The market, which ran over two days, hosted approximately 55 to 60 booths, with a variety of vendors offering everything from handcrafted goods to gourmet treats.



Brooklyn Miley of Huffman was excited to share her Christmas wishes with Santa Claus last Saturday. The jolly guy also found out she attends school at Huffman Elementary.



Melissa McBride, who organized the Nutcracker Market for the American Legion, visits with Heather and Corey Collins of Roughhouse Coffee.

"We're hosted our first Christmas Nutcracker market. We're also doing a raffle for a Christmas wreath and a 50/50 pot, plus a drawing for a boy's and a girl's Christmas

stocking," explained McBride.

"The proceeds from the 50/50 pot and the wreath are going to Project Graduation 2026 for Crosby High School," she announced.

Visitors not only enjoyed shopping for unique gifts but also contributed to a good cause. Funds raised from booth fees and raffles will help support

local students' graduation celebrations.

Additional funds come from the sale of booths to

Continued. See HOLIDAY MARKET RAISES FUNDS FOR LOCAL, Page 5

GOOSE CREEK SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Dr. Randal O'Brien Named ExxonMobil's 2025 Refiner of the Year

Story by Kendall David, GCCISD Executive Director of Community Engagement.

Goose Creek CISD is proud to announce that Superintendent Dr. Randal O'Brien has been named ExxonMobil's 2025 Refiner of the Year.

Since 1987, ExxonMobil has presented this prestigious honor to a long-term Baytown citizen whose leadership, dedication, and service have made lasting contributions to the growth and success of the Baytown community.

This year, ExxonMobil's Glenn Hayes presented the award, stating:

"ExxonMobil honors an outstanding community partner whose contributions have made a lasting impact on the Baytown



Goose Creek CISD Superintendent Randal O'Brien

area. This Refiner of the Year has been a valuable asset to the community, exemplifying a lifelong dedication to investing in the future of our area through education. He has supported our district through remarkable growth and transformation, launched innovative

programs like career academies, passed two bonds, and modernized facilities. He championed early childhood initiatives ensuring students start from a strong day one. His vision has earned numerous accolades and, most importantly, he has shaped the future for thousands of students in our community."

This year's recognition was shared between two honorees, Dr. O'Brien and Connie Tilton, a longtime supporter of Goose Creek CISD and the Baytown community.

Dr. O'Brien shared, "There is no one more fitting to share this award with. I am honored to stand alongside a tremen-

Continued. See Goose Creek Superintendent, Page 6

CROSBY ISD SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Growth, Excellence, & Services Define Crosby's Fall Semester Progress

Dear East Harris County Communities and Families,

Although the calendar year is ending, Crosby ISD is just past the halfway mark of our school year. I want to take a moment to reflect on our Fall Semester and celebrate the incredible accomplishments of our students, staff, and community so far this year.

One of the most exciting milestones of the semester was the opening of our Gray House and the CTE expansions at Crosby High School. These two new wings added 47 classrooms and learning spaces, helping us "future proof" our school for anticipated growth. Two Gray House classrooms, designed for our Health Science program, mimic real health



Dr. Paula Patterson Crosby Superintendent

clinics to provide students hands-on experiences as they work toward their certifications. Meanwhile, our CTE wing modernized our Agriculture and Manufacturing classrooms, providing updated spaces for metal work, wood work, and floral design.

Construction at Crosby High School continued with the groundbreaking of much needed new park-

ing lots for both staff and students. Once completed, these lots will provide safe, secure, and convenient parking for our entire community, a significant improvement over our previous temporary solutions.

Academically, our students have shined. We proudly recognized 21 juniors and seniors at our November Special Called Board Meeting with College Board National Recognition Awards, honoring their dedication, determination, and excellence.

Our Big Red Machine Marching Band also achieved tremendous success this semester. They earned first place at the Pre UIL Class 5A compe-

Continued. See CROSBY ISD Superintendent, Page 6

Santa Stops by San Jacinto Community Center to Visit Children in Holiday Event

By David Taylor
Managing Editor

Despite a busy pre-Christmas schedule that includes listening to as many children as possible for their Christmas wishes, Santa Claus stopped by for a few hours to visit the children of Highlands.

The fourth annual Cookies and Photos with Santa at the San Jacinto Community Center since it was moved.

"We used to host the event every year in the park by the railroad tracks. We felt it was a little dangerous and always at the mercy of the weather," said Tonya Kostka, who took over the event after the chamber went through a transformation.



Members of the Highlands Rotary Club prepared and served the hot chocolate to the hundreds of children and parents who came through to see Santa. Members are, from left, Patricia Scott, Wayne Prescott, Weston Cotten, Andy Scott, Denise Smith, Anne Woodall, and Robert Woodall.

"We moved it inside and brought all the partners with us and haven't looked back," she said. Parking is

more available at the community center and residents are protected, for the most part.

At times, the line can be out the door with the hundreds of children and parents who come through to

see the jolly guy.

Last Tuesday's event was no less successful than previous years and all the

partners were there to help.

Continued. See SANTA DRAWS CROWDS AT HIGHLANDS, Page 7



Santa listened intently to the Christmas wishes of Ava, Oakley, and Hadley from Highlands. Each year, the family comes for their Christmas photo.

STAR-COURIER PHONES: 713-266-3444 • E-MAIL: GRAFIKSTAR @ AOL.COM • FAX: 713-977-1188



90 YEARS OF LENDING

The Perfect Loan Starts Here.



LEARN MORE!
CRCU.ORG/LOANSFORLIFE

Community Resource CREDIT UNION

90 YEARS STRONG SINCE 1935

 Letters to Santa 

 Letters to Santa 

Dear Santa
Give us joy. I helped my mom cleaning my room. Can I have a puppy? I would help you to carry it and bring it inside home.
Alex Mena, Highlands Elementary

Dear Santa
Hello my dear friend I want my grandpa cancer to be cured for Christmas and also I want a baby doll and a cat. Can you do that?
Lila Jane, 9 years old Crosby Elementary

Dear Santa
I'm really looking forward to Christmas I help my brother and my mom. I would like to get a Computer if you have room in your sleigh. Tell your elves that my brother wants a drone.
Joshua Mendoza, 8 years old, Highlands Elementary

Dear Santa
Hi for Christmas i just want a chameleon, ninja turtle, a cool mantis and a Beef jerky that's all.
Enoch, 8 years old Crosby Elementary

Dear Santa,
For christmas I would like a Buggati and a tesla for my mom and a Rolls Rocce and a McClaren and the eart and a ps5 20 schools an a masion thanks.
Arturo, 8 yrs old, Highlands Elementary

Dear Santa
Can I have a Deadpool custom for Christmas and also I would love too

Dear Santa
Dear santa I want a new shoes, an roller skate, also I want stich Airforce and stich slippers.
Rosalyn, 8 years old, Crosby Elementary

Dear Santa
I hope you have a safe trip on Christmas Eve. I deserve a gift card I am getting good grades. I would like to get a dirt bike if you have room in your sleigh. How hard the Elves working to make the toys?
Bradley Harvey, Highlands Elementary

Dear Santa
I am 8 years old. I live in Highlands. This year, I have been really bored. I would like you to bring me a camera and Iphone.. I really want these things.
Annaleah Pacheco Highlands Elementary

Dear Santa
Hi Santa how are you this year? Santa I was born on 2017 June 5th. I love to play soccer. I really want to get a Sonic pack of toys if you are so kind. How many Elves do you have?
Kai Manzo, 8 years old, Highlands Elementary

Dear Santa
I am 8 years old. I live in Highlands, Texas. I have really been good this year. I did all my homework. I would really like it if you could bring me a pink ipad and apple pen.
Love, Mia Cuellar Highlands Elementary

Dear Santa
I am 8 years old. I live in Battle Bell, Texas. I have been good this year. I would really like it if you could bring me an Iphone 15 and a scooter.
Love, Ariyah Hamilton Highlands Elementary

Dear Santa
Give us joy. I helped my mom cleaning my room. Can I have a puppy? I would help you to carry it and bring it inside home.
Alex Mena, 7 years old, Highlands Elementary

Season's Greetings

from
WESTON COTTEN
Attorney at Law
281-421-4050

Not Certified by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization

Holiday Greetings from

CENTRAL AUTO INSPECTIONS

FULL SERVICE VEHICLE INSPECTIONS

713-702-3200

JOHNNY GAEKE
OWNER-INSPECTOR

911 S. MAIN
HIGHLANDS TX, 77562

Season's Greetings

Carter~Conley Funeral Home

13701 Corpus Christi St.
Houston, TX 77015
(713) 455-5100

*Funerals *Cremations *Pre-Arrangements

Family Owned and Operated Since 1992
www.CarterConleyFH.com



Community Resource CREDIT UNION

281.422.3611 crcu.org

From Our Family to Yours,
Best Wishes for the New Year



Joe Stephens and family

HIGHLANDS ROTARY CLUB
51st Annual
CHILI FEAST
Feb. 7, 2026
Win a 2026 Chevy Trailblazer, or 2024 Chevy Trax SUV
Tickets \$100
Call 713-906-2337

MERRY
Cougar CHRISTMAS

WISHING YOU AN ABUNDANCE OF JOY THIS HOLIDAY SEASON FROM CROSSBY ISD



Wishing you and your loved ones a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



Your commissioner,
Tom S. Ramsey, P.E.
Harris County Commissioner, Pct. 3

STAR COURIER
wishes you
Happy Holidays
713-266-3444



From Our Family to Yours

Merry Christmas

Happy Holidays

from your friends at

Sterling-White Funeral Home

11011 Crosby Lynchburg Rd, Highlands, TX 77562
(281) 426-3555
www.sterlingwhite.com

Christmas with Friends

Join us as we worship the newborn King!

DECEMBER 24 7 p.m.

CHURCH OF THE RESURRECTION
5202 First Street, Crosby

Barbers Hill Press

Dayton

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

VOL. 30, NO. 48

© Copyright 2025

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2025

MONT BELVIEU, TEXAS 77580

ON THE HILL

Mont Belvieu Annual Breakfast with Santa on Dec. 13

Don't miss Breakfast With Santa! You can start your day with a delicious meal and some one-on-one time with the big man himself.

This popular event is held at The Hilltop on December 13. This is a ticketed event; get your reservations in early! Get ALL your holiday information, updates, and tickets at www.montbelvieu.net/Christmas

Middleton Launches Campaign for Texas Attorney General

TEXAS - Mayes Middleton has formally entered the race for Attorney General, filing campaign paperwork this week alongside his family. After months of traveling the state outlining his platform, the candidate says he is now fully committed to seeking the position as Texas' chief law enforcement officer.

In announcing his run, the candidate emphasized themes that have become central to national conservative politics. He said he intends to continue efforts to "secure the border," "stand up for Texas," and "Deporting Undocumented Immigrants" noted that his approach aligns closely with former President Donald Trump's policy priorities.

His stated agenda includes supporting expanded immigration enforcement, protecting ICE Agents, and opposing sanctuary cities, and adopting a tough-on-crime posture.

According to his campaign, these issues will form the core of his message as the race for Attorney General moves forward.

The candidate also highlighted his financial commitment to the race, stating that he has invested \$10 million of his own resources into the campaign.

He described the contribution as evidence of his independence, saying he "can't be bought," "can't be bullied," and "can't be compromised."

He framed the campaign as an effort to crushing the Democrats onslaught in the state and to preserve what he described as a "freer, safer, and stronger" Texas for future generations.

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

Commissioner Dagley Files to Run for Chambers County Judge

By David Taylor
Managing Editor

Incumbent Chambers County Commissioner and former Beach City Mayor Ryan Dagley has officially filed to run for Chambers County Judge, pledging to build on his record of community service, fiscal responsibility, and conservative values. With over two decades of residency in Chambers County and a career marked by public service and business leadership, Dagley's candidacy comes at a pivotal time for one of the fastest-growing counties in the nation.

"I am proud of all we have accomplished during my tenure as County Commissioner, from supporting our law enforcement officers and lowering the tax rate to enhancing the quality of life with better roads, drainage, and amenities," said Dagley.

On Monday afternoon, Dagley found out that he would have no opponent in his race from any other party.

"In effect, I'm the county judge-elect, but I still plan on campaigning to let everyone in the county know who I am and the values I stand for," he said.

Dagley also said he would be making plans, but not re-

veal any of that until after the March primary.

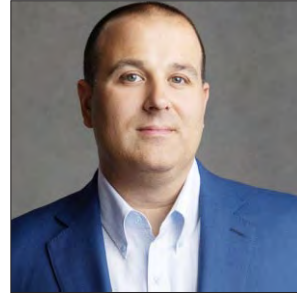
"My family and I have lived in Chambers County for over 20 years, and with Judge Sylvia's retirement, I am eager for the opportunity to continue serving our community as the next Chambers County Judge.

Dagley's public service began in Beach City, where he served as Alderman and then Mayor before being elected as County Commissioner for Precinct 4. Throughout his time on the Commissioners' Court, Dagley has overseen significant improvements in infrastructure and public safety, consistently pursuing fiscally responsible growth. He was instrumental in lowering the county tax rate below the no new revenue rate, providing relief to local property owners while maintaining essential services.

"Chambers County is one of the fastest growing counties in the country and needs experienced, conservative leadership to ensure the community is a place for families and businesses to thrive for generations to come," Dagley emphasized.

Dagley's campaign pledges to center on four key priorities.

"Public safety is the foundation of a strong and thriving



Ryan Dagley is running for County Judge in Chamber's County and currently has no opponents.

community, and it must remain our top priority. Fully funding our law enforcement agencies ensures they have the staffing, training, and resources necessary to protect our families, neighborhoods, and businesses. As County Commissioner, I have worked closely with our sheriff's department and first responders to identify critical needs and direct resources where they make the greatest impact. As County Judge, I will continue to fight to make sure our officers are fully supported, fully equipped, and fully funded to keep our county safe," he said.

Fiscal responsibility was next on his list.

"I am proud to have lowered the county tax rate below the no-new-revenue rate, directly relieving some of the burden on our taxpayers while still funding essential

services. By making smart, strategic financial decisions, we can invest in critical infrastructure and services without overburdening families and businesses. I will continue to champion responsible budgeting that protects both our community's needs and our taxpayers' wallets."

Dagley says he also has an eye on infrastructure considering the monumental growth in Chambers County.

"I have already taken action to improve our roads and drainage systems, ensuring they meet the needs of our growing community. These projects are not just short-term fixes—they are part of a long-term strategic plan to modernize infrastructure, reduce flooding risks, and improve safety for drivers and pedestrians. By investing in durable materials, smarter engineering, and preventative maintenance, we are building systems that will serve residents for decades to come."

His final tenet focuses on quality-of-life measures.

"I am committed to funding and building family-friendly amenities that keep our community vibrant and attractive for generations to come. Parks, trails, playgrounds, and recreational fa-

cilities are more than just extras—they are essential investments that bring families together, encourage healthy lifestyles, and strengthen community bonds."

Dagley is a business owner with over 25 years in the real estate industry and is a founding member of Saturn Equities, an investment firm focused on helping families build wealth through real estate investments. His dedication to Chambers County is further highlighted by his membership in the Rotary Club, Barbers Hill Lions Club, and as a director for the Cody Stephens Go Big or Go Home Foundation.

Dagley and his wife have lived in Chambers County for 20 years with their two children, and the family attends Second Baytown Church.

With Judge Sylvia's retirement, Dagley's campaign positions him as a candidate ready to continue the county's trajectory of growth and improvement.

"I am eager for the opportunity to continue serving our community as the next Chambers County Judge," Dagley said.

For more information about Ryan Dagley's campaign and platform, visit RyanDagleyforTexas.com.

Eagles' Fierce Comeback Falls Short in Playoff Thriller

MONT BELVIEU — In one of their grimmest performances of the season, the Barbers Hill Eagles pushed undefeated Port Arthur Memorial to the brink Saturday night, rallying from a halftime deficit to briefly seize the lead before ultimately falling 48-35 in the Class 5A Division I regional playoff.

What appeared early to be a comfortable Titans advantage—21-7 at halftime—turned into a shootout after the Eagles stormed out of the locker room with a fast-paced, precision offense that stunned Memorial. Less than a minute into the fourth quarter, Barbers Hill completed its charge, grabbing a 29-28 lead and ig-



niting the Eagle faithful who made the trip.

Quarterback Brady Barrier delivered a standout performance, carving up the Titans' secondary with 26 completions for 371 yards and two touchdowns, repeatedly finding receivers in stride and exposing holes in the defense. Head Coach Cody Simper dialed up an up-tempo attack that produced three straight



touchdown drives and had Memorial on its heels.

But the undefeated Titans (14-0) responded with key defensive plays late. Interceptions by Quarmaine Garlington and Darrod Jacobs halted Barbers Hill's momentum, the latter proving decisive with six minutes remaining. Jacobs' interception at the Eagles' 24 set up a short field that Memorial converted into

its final touchdown—one of three on the night by tailback Alex Eugene, who finished with 100 yards on 18 carries.

Despite the loss, the Eagles (10-4) forced Memorial into one of its sloppiest defensive outings of the season, repeatedly burning the Titans for big gains while drawing numerous missed tackles and penalties. It was a stark contrast to their October 10 meeting in Mont Belvieu, when the Eagles suffered a 34-6 defeat.

This time, Barbers Hill refused to fold.

The Eagles' defense battled through a relentless Memorial offense led by quarterback Amante Martin, who guided the Titans to 440 total yards,

seven touchdowns, and zero turnovers—a near-perfect outing that ultimately preserved their path to the state semifinals.

Port Arthur Memorial moves on to face Smithson Valley next Friday at Katy's Legacy Stadium, but Barbers Hill leaves the field with its head held high. The Eagles showcased resilience, firepower, and dramatic improvement, delivering a playoff performance that earned respect across the region.

For Mont Belvieu, this season ends not with disappointment but with pride in a team that fought to the final whistle.

Goose Creek CISD Awarded \$690,000 National Grant to Support Environmental Literacy and Community Resilience

Story by: Nancy Bonds,
GCCISD Director of
Communications

Goose Creek CISD has earned national recognition as one of only six awardees across the Gulf States selected for the Environmental Literacy for Community Resilience grant, a competitive funding opportunity supported by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine's Gulf Research Program (GRP) in partnership with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Environmental Literacy Program.

The district's project, *Empowering Youth for Urban Resilience: Hurricane and Stormwater Solutions in Baytown, Texas*, will receive \$690,000 over the next three years. Led by Project Director Ginger McKay, the initiative positions Goose Creek CISD students at the center of regional resilience efforts

by giving them opportunities to investigate the environmental challenges that directly affect the Baytown community.

Through hands-on research and fieldwork, students from the STEM Academy and Maritime programs will examine local flooding and stormwater issues using NOAA storm data, geographic information systems (GIS), and real-time environmental observations. Their learning experience will be strengthened through collaboration with long-standing community partners, including Texas A&M University at Galveston, the Baytown Wetlands Center, ExxonMobil, Lee College, and the University of Houston-Clear Lake.

Over the course of the project, students will create public service announcements focused on storm preparedness, help design an interactive resilience dashboard for the community, and



From left, Leia Miller, GCCISD Director of Career & Technical Education; Dr. Randal O'Brien, GCCISD Superintendent; Dr. Michelle Peters, University of Houston Clear Lake; Cameron Jackson, GCCISD; Orjanel Lewis & Rebecca Matlock, ExxonMobil; Dr. Priscilla Sanchez, Lee College; Tracy Prothro, The Baytown Wetlands Center; Charles Johnson, Baytown Mayor; Richard Clem, GCCISD School Board Vice President; Dr. Susan Jackson, GCCISD Deputy Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction; and Ginger McKay, GCCISD Director of Federal Programs. (Photos by: Carrie Pryor-Newman)

plan a student-led Urban Resilience Summit to showcase their findings. The grant will also provide 50 \$1,000 scholarships to students who demonstrate exceptional civic engagement, leadership, and public communication skills during project events.

This work supports Goose Creek CISD's continued commitment to integrating

STEM learning with civic responsibility and environmental literacy. By engaging students in authentic problem-solving to address Baytown's vulnerability to flooding, the project strengthens both students' career readiness and the community's long-term resilience. The national grant is part of a broader \$4 million invest-

ment supporting place-based education projects across Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida.

Goose Creek CISD extends its appreciation to the many partners whose support and collaboration helped bring this award to fruition: Mayor Charles Johnson and the City of Baytown; Tracey Prothro with the Baytown Wetlands Center; Connie Tilton of ExxonMobil; Dr. Dini Adyasari of Texas A&M University at Galveston; Dr. Priscilla Sanchez of Lee College; Dr. Michelle Peters of the University of Houston-Clear Lake; and district contributors Richard Clem, Dr. Susan Jackson, Ginger McKay, Leia Miller, and Cameron Jackson.

Goose Creek CISD celebrates this exciting milestone and looks forward to the meaningful student leadership, community partnerships, and innovative solutions that will emerge as the project unfolds.

★ OPINION PAGE ★

The Christmas Story

Luke 2:1-20,

King James Version

1: And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.

2: (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)

3: And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

4: And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)

5: To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

6: And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

7: And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

8: And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

9: And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

10: And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

11: For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

12: And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

13: And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

14: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

15: And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

16: And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

17: And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

18: And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

19: But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

20: And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.



★ THE POSTSCRIPT

By Carrie Classon

Gratitude Time



We are heading into the holiday season—already.

This year it seems like I have been running and racing and making it to places in the nick of time all year. I tend to overschedule—although I'd like to point out that my sister crams far more activities into less time than I would ever attempt.

Just when I think she couldn't possibly do another thing, she'll say, "I'd like to try weaving." Weaving! That sounds like an activity I would be sentenced to do if I had committed some kind of crime.

I have zero patience for fiber arts, and I feel a little guilty about it. I made a total of one quilt, and it took me nine years. I was not, I'm happy to tell you, working on it for nine years. I bought the fabric, cut out the pieces and assembled some of them. Then I stuck them in a box and then let guilt work on me for eight-and-three-quarter years until I decided I would finally finish the quilt for a Christmas present for my mother. I did.

Someone offered to teach me to knit once, and I bought needles and red yarn. I completed a thumb, and then it was explained to me what I would have to do next. I abandoned the project in terror.

So, no. I don't have a terribly busy life—if working on a million projects is what constitutes busy. But I'm usually working hard on something or another, and I'm usually on some kind of deadline. And honestly, I prefer it that way. I'm a person who likes to check off little boxes on a to-do list and estimate when a project will be finished and arrive at the finish line two days early.

"Hurray for me!" There is no one who knows I had this deadline but me, and no one to join in the celebration except my long-suffering husband, Peter, but it is still a nice feeling.

But now the holidays are coming, and I am trying to remember to make time to do nothing but be grateful. Because I think being grateful actually takes more time than I used to think.

I had this idea that being grateful was a momentary pause: "Geel! This is great!" before rushing onto the next thought, the next activity, the next challenge. I am reexamining this idea.

I think what I was calling gratitude might just have been a quick identification of all the things I have to be grateful for—not really experiencing what it is to be fully grateful.

I have so much. My life is so full. I know that if I started listing off all the things that are beautiful and wonderful all around me, the sun would be setting, and I'd still be working on my list. But making a list isn't really experiencing gratitude. Gratitude, I now think, takes a little time.

It means paying attention when I get the chance to talk with my parents. Being fully present when I take my walk on a cold afternoon. Savoring the foods I love. Listening—just listening—to the season, without always trying to make sense of it. Just feel. Just listen. Just pay attention.

This is hard for me to do sometimes. I am so programmed to make sense of everything that it is a challenge to sit still long enough to allow the season to seep into me. And be grateful.

It might be easier if I were knitting—but I'm not going to try it.

Till next time,
Carrie

★ STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

By Gary Borders



Older Texans Face Steep ACA Price Hikes

About 1 million Texans over the age of 45 who receive health insurance coverage through the federal Affordable Care Act will likely face monthly premiums of more than \$1,000, the Austin American-Statesman reported. That accounts for one-fourth of the state's 4 million ACA enrollees.

The Republican-led Congress has thus far refused to extend pandemic-era subsidies that reduced ACA premiums, a factor in the recent government shutdown. Part of the deal to reopen the government includes a promise to hold a vote on the issue in December, but it appears unlikely to pass.

Texas insurers have raised ACA premiums by an average of 35%, but the hikes have been even higher for older enrollees.

"So price impacts tend to hit older folks the hardest," said Laura Dague, who is the James M. Griffin professor of health policy at Texas A&M University. That is because insurance companies consider them higher risk, she added.

ABBOTT DEMANDS ACTION ON MEXICO'S VIOLATION OF WATER TREATY

Gov. Greg Abbott and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality have demanded Mexico address its failure to meet the minimum requirements to deliver water to the United States under a 1944 water treaty.

"Mexico must be held accountable for (its) continued breaches of our long-standing water agreement," Abbott said. "Because of their pattern of neglect, Texas farmers are enduring preventable hardship and an erosion of the agricultural viability of the Rio Grande Valley."

Abbott said Mexico has failed to supply more than two years' worth of water — almost 2 million acre-feet. He said that has had a severe negative impact on the state's agricultural industry.

"Economic losses from delayed water deliveries cannot be recovered," said TCEQ Commissioner Tonya Miller. "Texas communities across the lower Rio Grande Valley will continue to suffer unless Mexico starts meeting their treaty obligations."

Under the treaty, the United States has consistently met its delivery obligations on the



By Gary Borders

Cornyn, have proposed a bill that would hold Mexico accountable for failing to provide water to South Texas under the 1944 treaty.

FINAL RULES ON STATE'S VOUCHER PROGRAM ARE RELEASED

The comptroller's office has finalized rules for the state's \$1 billion school voucher program, the Houston Chronicle reported. Applications for families are scheduled to open in February.

Among the features:

- Families seeking pre-kindergarten services will be able to access accounts worth \$10,500, which can be spent at private pre-K schools or child-care centers that have pre-K classes.
- A clarification in the rules means that private schools or charter school networks already established in other states can open new campuses in Texas. The law says private schools must have been accredited for at least two years. The new rules mean this includes operating a campus in another state.
- The application window opens on Feb. 4 and will last around six weeks.

Students approved for vouchers will not need to re-apply in the following years.

POWER PLANT LOAN PROGRAM MAKING PROGRESS

After a rocky start, a state plan to boost the construction of natural gas plants has begun loaning money two years after the \$7 billion Texas Energy Fund was created, The Dallas Morning News reported. That comes after one of the original loan applicants chosen for the program possibly committed fraud in their application and

was selected despite the company's head having been convicted of a federal crime. Other companies pulled their applications, citing supply chain issues in procuring the large turbines needed to produce electricity.

However, since June, the Public Utility Commission of Texas has approved about \$1.5 billion in loans for six power plant projects. When completed, they will have the capacity to power at least 875,000 homes.

The Legislature created the Texas Energy Fund after the February 2021 blackouts killed more than 200 people. The fund was created to build power plants that can produce electricity on demand. One of the companies receiving a loan is Houston-based Calpine.

"This 460-megawatt, state-of-the-art facility is designed to start within minutes and will deliver safe, reliable power exactly when Texans need it most," Caleb Stephenson of Calpine said in a news release.

\$1.2 BILLION HEADED TO TEXAS BROADBAND ACCESS

Federal funding included in the 2021 infrastructure law passed during the Biden administration has been slow to reach states, The News reported. But the Trump administration announced recently that it has approved a plan to spend more than \$1.2 billion in federal funds to improve broadband access in Texas, delivering high-speed internet to rural areas.

That amount is considerably less than the \$3.3 billion allocated to Texas under the original infrastructure law passed in 2021. Texas is the 19th state to win approval of a final plan.

Acting Texas Comptroller Kelly Hancock said the approved plan will make it possible for nearly every Texas location to connect to high-speed internet.

"The Texas broadband plan reflects our state's commitment to responsible stewardship and to creating an environment where families, students and businesses can continue to thrive for generations to come," Hancock said.

PUC PROVIDES MONEY-SAVING TIPS AS WINTER NEARS

The Public Utility Commission of Texas has launched a new website, Ways to Save, to help Texans conserve energy and save money during frigid weather.

"Small changes at your home or business can make a big impact on your electric and water bills," PUCT Executive Director Connie Corona said. "It's important to prepare ahead of the cold winter months, especially ensuring you are enrolled in the electricity plan that is right for your home and family."

The page includes tips on how consumers can prepare their home or business for cold weather and reduce energy and water use to save money on utility bills. Tips range from small lifestyle changes to physical updates consumers can make to prepare their homes for winter.

You can find the site at: puc.texas.gov/waystosave.

TOP ten

Most Popular Christmas Movies of All Time

1. The Santa Clause 2 (2002)
2. The Nutcracker and the Four Realms (2018)
3. The Santa Clause (1994)
4. The Holiday (2006)
5. Elf (2003)
6. The Polar Express (2004)
7. A Christmas Carol (2009)
8. How the Grinch Stole Christmas (2000)
9. Home Alone (1990)
10. The Grinch (2018)

Source: ScreenCrush

HIGHLANDS CROSBY

Star Courier

USPS 244-500

Barbers Hill Dayton PRESS

NORTH CHANNEL STAR

Editor & Publisher..... Gilbert Hoffman
 Associate Publisher..... Mei-Ing Liu Hoffman
 Managing Editor..... David Taylor
 Assignment Editor..... Julieta Paita
 Website Editor..... Kristan Hoffman
 Production Manager..... Gerardo Hernandez

Entered as Periodicals Class at Highlands Post Office, Highlands, TX 77562. Under the Act of Congress of March 3, 1879. Published 50 weeks per year, on Thursday, by Grafikpress Corp., 5906 Star Lane, Houston, TX 77057. Opinions in this paper are those of the authors, and not necessarily this newspaper's. Any erroneous statement which may appear will be corrected when brought to the attention of the publisher. Liability for errors is limited to the reprinting of the corrected version. Submissions are encouraged, in person, by mail, by Fax, or by email, to grafikstar@aol.com.

GRAFIKPRESS is publisher of community newspapers, including Highlands STAR-Crosby COURIER; Barbers Hill Dayton PRESS; Northeast NEWS; North Forest NEWS; North Channel STAR. Combined circulation of these newspapers exceeds 20,000. Readership exceeds 50,000 according to industry standards. We also print dozens of school, ethnic, and government publications on contract. Call for information to 713-977-2555.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: In-county, \$28.00 per year. Out of county, \$35.00 per year. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Star-Courier, P. O. Box 446, Highlands, TX 77562

News and Ad Phones....713-266-3444
 FAX Line....713-977-1188
 email: grafikstar@aol.com
 Member Texas Press Association

Holiday market raises funds for local students,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

vendors. Not all vendors were from Crosby, which helped boost funds because of vendors from outside the community.

"When people come and shop and do their thing here, from wherever they are, helps support us and our beneficiaries," noted McBride.

For Lane Sutton and his girlfriend Addison Riden, the price was right.

"I just started my own business called The Craft Boutique," she said.

The 18-year-old has a myriad of things for sale, including t-shirts on Saturday.

"We're located in Conroe, which is only about a 40-minute drive from here. We can also ship anywhere or meet you to deliver products," she said.

They have friends in Crosby who told them about the market. With a new business they are trying to hit as many pop-up markets as possible.

The owners of Cimimen's Bakery drove across the Beltway 8 bridge from Pasadena to participate and give back.

"I have been baking for 30-plus years and have had my little business for a while," she said.

Maria Fernandez is the



Lane Sutton drove down from Conroe with his girlfriend, Addison Riden of The Craft Boutique to participate in the Nutcracker Market.



Mansurat Abdulmalik Ali has a gift of crafting gourmet cookies as well as various flavors of cinnamon rolls. Her company is Cookies and Roll Alchemy, and they are in the Heights and found their way out to the Nutcracker Market.



Maria Fernandez owns Cimimen's Bakery and has been baking for 30-plus years. Fernandez and her husband Miguel are from Pasadena and came out to support the American Legion.

owner, and her specialties are Hispanic cookies like hojarascas (which means dry leaves and the cookies are like a shortbread) and pulborones (pulvo means dust and the cookies melt in your mouth), and pecan cookies.

"I also do wedding cakes, just about everything," she said.

She's assisted by her husband, Miguel.

"This was kind of a last minute [event]," she said. The previous host was no longer available.

"I worked really hard to get this up in a short time," McBride said, "and I think we're doing really good. We'll organize it ourselves moving forward."

The market ran Saturday and Sunday. Some Saturday vendors stayed on Sunday, but there were also several new vendors on Sunday with nice, unique wares.

With plans already in motion for next year, the Crosby American Legion's Christmas Nutcracker Market looks set to become a new holiday tradition—bringing together neighbors, supporting students, and spreading cheer throughout the community.

Letters to Santa

Dear Santa
I been good this year to my sis and my baby brother, Santa how are you Elf? I'm really looking forward to Christmas this year. I really want a puppy and hello kitty, I would really to get a puppy if you have room in your sleigh this year. How does your Sleigh fly?
Elena, 9 years old.
Highlands Elementary

Dear Santa
I hope the reindeer are all doing well. I have been good at school. I been getting good grades, I would really like to a Stanley and a Christmas blanket if you have room in your sleight. How does you give so much presents to good boys and girls in one night?
Cesar Vega, 9 years old.
Highlands Elementary

Dear Santa
I love Christmas season because it snow and we can stay home to open presents, I will leave milk and cookies for you when you come visit us.
Chloe,
Crosby Elementary

Dear Santa
May I get a Hello Kitty Lego. I wish you a merry Christmas and hope to catch you when you arrive here.
Natalie,
Crosby Elementary

Dear Santa
Hi Santa, I would like to have a Lie detector to test my dad, and some led lights, phone holder and any type of Star Wars legos. If you bring me that next year I will leave you some candy.
Jett Wells,
Crosby Elementary

FOOTBALL SEASON WEEK 16:

Texans look to continue playoff hunt against Cards:

Cowboys look to keep rolling against struggling Vikings

With just three weeks left in the regular season, things are getting mighty interesting in the NFL, especially with Texas' two teams.

The Texans were left for dead after losing their first three games of the season, but two weeks ago, they won their fourth straight game when they defeated the Colts in Indianapolis to improve to 8-5 and get back in the playoff hunt, thanks to a defense that has been playing lights out the last few weeks.

Up north, the Dallas Cowboys also struggled early, but after their 31-28 Thanksgiving Day win over the Kansas City Chiefs, and the Eagles loss at home to the Bears, they found themselves not only back in the NFC playoff hunt, but also in play to win the NFC East.

Both teams have very good chances to improve on their playoff chances this weekend as the Texans host a struggling Arizona Cardinals team on Sunday at NRG Stadium, while the Cowboys host a bad Minnesota team on Sunday Night Football at AT&T Stadium in Arlington.

This is also a huge weekend for other playoff contenders as the Week 15 schedule is loaded with key games.

In the AFC North, the Baltimore Ravens will head to Cincinnati to take on a Bengals team that has starting QB Joe Burrow back and upset Lamar Jackson and Co. on Thanksgiving night, 32-14. Cincinnati is a totally different team with Burrow back at QB and they would like nothing more than to play spoiler in the division heading down the stretch.

While the Ravens hit the road, the struggling Pittsburgh Steelers, who lost at home 26-7 to Buffalo two weeks ago, host a hot Miami team (winners of four of Monday Night Football). The AFC North is definitely up for grabs, and if the Bengals win out, they could very well surprise the league and win the division.

There's also a huge game in the AFC East, as the Bills visit the division-leading Patriots. A New England win would give the Pats two wins over Buffalo in the division, which might be too much for Josh Allen and Co. to overcome to repeat as division champs.

In the AFC West, the Chargers visit the Chiefs as both teams look to remain in contention for an AFC Wild Card slot. LA QB Justin Herbert suffered a broken left hand two weeks ago against the Raiders, but he is expected back for this game. The Chiefs are in desperation mode. After losing to the Cowboys, Andy Reid's team fell to 6-6 on the season and can't afford any more losses if they hope to make the playoffs for an 11th straight year.



Speaking of playoff hopes, the Detroit Lions' are on life support and they have a tough task Sunday when they take on the Los Angeles Rams, a team that was upset two weeks ago by the Carolina Panthers. The Lions suffered a big blow two weeks ago when they lost at home to the Packers and are in third place in the NFC North. Dan Campbell's bunch probably has to win out to have a sliver of a shot at the playoffs, and playing a Rams team that is in a tight race in the NFC West might be asking a bit much.

Speaking of the NFC North, the Packers face a tough test when they head to Denver to take on the AFC West-leading Broncos, while the Texans will be hoping for help from Seattle when they host a struggling Indianapolis team on Sunday.

We are still a week away from the first round of the College Football Playoffs, but this weekend does give us one of the best rivalries as Army takes on Navy in Baltimore. This game will have plenty of pageantry and patriotism, including a visit by President Donald Trump. While many who will play in the CFP will be looking at lucrative NFL careers, members of these two teams will serve a greater purpose once their football careers are over, namely serving this great nation. We should all salute these young men for the careers they have chosen and wish them God speed.

Before we take a look at this weekend's games, let's review last week's record. A 6-6 week brought the season record to 107-57 (65%).

Now, onto this weekend's games.

NCAA

Army vs. Navy - Army and Navy meet for the 126th time (Navy leads series 63-55-7) and both teams will enter with winning records and should earn bowl bids. Army enters with a 6-5 record, while Navy enters with a 9-2 mark. This game will feature a lot of running as both teams have solid rushing attacks. Army is led by QB Cole Hellums (504 passing yards, 3 TDs/1,078 rushing yards, 15 TDs), while Navy is led by QB Blake Horvath (1,390 passing yards, 9 TDs/1,040 rushing yards, 14 TDs). Hellums also gets help from running back Alex Tecza (772 yards, 9 TDs). As a team, the Midshipmen have rushed for an astounding 3,282

yards and has scored 61 TDs this season. Look for Navy to run to their 10th victory on Saturday. My pick, Navy 30, Army 23

NFL

Baltimore at Cincinnati - This is an important game for the Ravens and their chances to win the AFC North and they will have revenge on their minds when they visit the Bengals on Sunday afternoon. Two weeks ago on Thanksgiving night, the Bengals upset Baltimore 32-14 as Joe Burrow (450 yards, 4 TDs in 3 games) returned from a turf toe injury. Cincinnati is definitely a totally different team with Burrow under center. He will need another big game from running back Chase Brown (704 rushing yards, 2 TDs/48 receptions, 287 yards, 1 TD) and wide receiver Ja'Marr Chase (86 receptions, 971 yards, 5 TDs) if they hope to make it two in a row over the Ravens. In the loss two weeks ago, Baltimore QB Lamar Jackson (1,841 passing yards, 15 TDs/264 rushing yards, 1 TD) had a bad night losing three fumbles and throwing one interception. Look for Jackson to lean on running back Derrick Henry (931 yards, 10 TDs) as Baltimore picks up a big road win in Week 15. My pick, Baltimore 26, Cincinnati 20

Arizona at Houston - The Texans return home after two weeks on the road and will look to continue their late-season playoff run when they host a struggling Cardinals team on Sunday at noon in NRG Stadium. The Cardinals fell to 3-9 two weeks ago after their loss at Tampa Bay. Look for the Houston defense, led by edge rushers Danielle Hunter (11 sacks) and Will Anderson Jr. (10.5 sacks) to get after 'Zona QB Jacoby Brissett (2,188 yards, 13 TDs) early and often and make it a long afternoon for him. Houston got starting QB C.J. Stroud (1,978 yards, 11 TDs) back two weeks ago and he led his team to a 20-16 road win at Indianapolis. He will look to make plays downfield to wideout Nico Collins (57 receptions, 785 yards, 4 TDs). Look for rookie running back Woody Marks (486 yards, 3 total TDs) to have a big day as the Texans roll. My pick, Houston 31, Arizona 12

Buffalo at New England - A huge one in the AFC East pits the second-place Bills against the first-place Patriots as New En-

gland looks to pretty much wrap up the division with a second win over Buffalo this season. Mike Vrabel's Patriots upset the Bills 23-20 on Oct. 5 in Buffalo and a win on Sunday would give them a three-game lead with just three weeks left in the regular season. NE is perhaps THE surprise team of the 2025 season. Two weeks ago, they improved to 11-2 with a 33-15 win over the Giants, while the Bills won a big road game at Pittsburgh. Buffalo QB Josh Allen (2,832 passing yards, 19 TDs/409 rushing yards, 11 TDs) will face a stern Patriots defense. He will need a big day on the ground from running back James Cook (1,228 yards, 8 TDs/27 receptions, 236 yards, 1 TD) if Buffalo hopes to win at Foxborough. NE will once again count on another big day from second-year QB Drake Maye (3,412 passing yards, 23 TDs/319 rushing yards, 2 TDs), rookie running back TreVeyon Henderson (625 yards, 5 TDs) and veteran wide receiver Stefon Diggs (64 receptions, 705 yards, 3 TDs). The Patriots could very well be a team of destiny and a second straight win over the Bills could go a long way in giving them home field advantage in the AFC playoffs. My pick, New England 24, Buffalo 20

Los Angeles Chargers at Kansas City - A big one in the AFC West for both teams and their Wild Card chances, more so for the Chiefs who lost their sixth game of the season two weeks ago when they lost on Thanksgiving to the Cowboys. The Chargers might not have starting QB Justin Herbert (2,842 passing yards, 21 TDs/353 rushing yards, 1 TD) for this game after he broke his left hand two weeks ago in LA's win over Las Vegas. If he's out, that's a huge advantage for KC and QB Patrick Mahomes (3,238 yards, 22 TDs), who will use running back Kareem Hunt's (515 yards, 5 TDs) runs to set up play action passes to tight end Travis Kelce (59 receptions, 719 yards, 5 TDs) and his receiving corps. KC knows it can't afford to lose any more games this season, so look for the Chiefs to have a huge sense of urgency come Sunday. My pick, Kansas City 26, Los Angeles Chargers 20

Detroit at Los Angeles Rams - After getting off to a 4-1 start, the Lions have lost three of their last four games and are in danger of not making the playoffs. LA, on the other hand, has been one of the top teams in the NFC despite their upset at Carolina two weeks ago. The Rams are in a fight in the NFC West with the 49ers and know they must keep winning to remain in first place. Look for LA QB Matthew Stafford (3,073 yards, 32 TDs), running back Kyren Williams (868 yards, 10 total TDs) and wideouts Puka Nacua (86 receptions, 1,019 yards, 4 TDs) and Davante Adams (52 receptions, 689 yards, 14 TDs) to attack a beat up Detroit defense. Detroit will need a big day from QB Jared Goff (3,025 yards, 23 TDs), running back Jahmyr Gibbs (1,019

HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL SCORES/SCHEDULES

LAST WEEK'S SCORES



Port Arthur Memorial 48, Barbers Hill 35

FINAL STANDINGS FOR 5A-1, Region III, District 9

1. Port Arthur Memorial 14-0 (6-0)*
2. Barbers Hill 10-4 (4-2)
3. Lufkin 8-4 (4-2)
4. Beaumont United 7-5 (3-3)
5. West Brook 6-4 (2-4)
6. Baytown Sterling 5-5 (2-4)
7. Galveston Ball 2-8 (0-6)

*still playing in the semifinal round of the playoffs

rushing yards, 10 TDs/51 receptions, 397 yards, 3 TDs) and wide receiver Amon-Ra St. Brown (75 receptions, 884 yards, 9 TDs) if they hope to keep pace with the Rams offense. My pick, Los Angeles Rams 31, Detroit 23

Green Bay at Denver - An interesting intraconference game has the Packers visiting the AFC West leading Broncos on Sunday. Two weeks ago, GB picked up a big road win at Detroit, while Denver earned a hard-fought overtime win at Washington. GB QB Jordan Love (2,794 yards, 19 TDs), running back Josh Jacobs (731 rushing yards, 11 TDs/29 receptions, 245 yards) and wide receiver Romeo Doubs (45 receptions, 542 yards, 5 TDs) will have a tough time taking on a Denver defense that has recorded an NFL best 51 sacks through its first 12 games. While the Broncos defense is one of the best units in the league, the offense has struggled at times this season. Second-year QB Bo Nix (2,742 passing yards, 19 TDs/229 rushing yards, 4 TDs) will also be facing a stern Packers defense. Look for the Denver defense to make one or two more key plays late to help Denver to a win over the Packers. My pick, Denver 23, Green Bay 20

Indianapolis at Seattle - After jumping out to a 7-1 start, the Colts have sputtered as of late, losing three of their last four games and things don't get any easier this Sunday when they face a Seattle team that is solid on defense and very tough to beat at home. Indy QB Daniel Jones (3,041 yards, 19 TDs) is dealing with a fibula injury and his mobility has been limited. That's wonderful news to the Seahawks ferocious pass rush. He will need a big day from running back Jonathan Taylor (1,258 rushing yards, 15 TDs/35 receptions, 304 yards, 2 TDs) if the Colts hope to pull off the upset. Seattle QB Sam Darnold (2,913 yards, 19 TDs) and wide receiver Jaxon Smith-Njigba (82 receptions, 1,336

yards, 7 TDs) should have big days taking on a Colts secondary that could be without star cornerback Sauce Gardner, who suffered an ankle injury two weeks ago against the Texans. Look for the Seattle defense to make it a long day for Jones and Co. come Sunday. My pick, Seattle 31, Indianapolis 15

Minnesota at Dallas - This one is scheduled for Sunday Night Football, but could be flexed out for a more competitive game like GB-Denver. The Vikings are pathetic this year and fell to 4-8 two weeks ago after their 26-0 loss at Seattle. The Cowboys are one of the hottest teams going thanks to a loaded offense led by QB Dak Prescott (3,261 yards, 25 TDs), running back Javonte Williams (955 yards, 10 total TDs), big-play wide receivers George Pickens (73 receptions, 1,142 yards, 8 TDs) and CeeDee Lamb (51 receptions, 744 yards, 3 TDs in 9 games) and dependable tight end Jake Ferguson (70 receptions, 496 yards, 7 TDs). This one could get ugly, early. My pick, Dallas 34, Minnesota 12

Miami at Pittsburgh - Week 15 concludes with Monday Night Football as a hot Dolphins team visits a struggling Steelers team. Two weeks ago, the Dolphins won for the fourth time in five games, while the Steelers lost at home to the Bills. Miami QB Tua Tagovailoa (2,280 yards, 17 TDs/14 interceptions) will need help from running back De'Von Achane (1,034 rushing yards, 6 TDs/54 receptions, 370 yards, 4 TDs) if they hope to keep their winning ways going. The Steelers are in must-win mode if they want to remain in the AFC North race with Baltimore. Steeler QB Aaron Rodgers (2,086 yards, 19 TDs) is beat up, but something tells me he will rally the troops and lead the way to a crucial win on Monday night. My pick, Pittsburgh 23, Miami 17

O'Brien Earns ExxonMobil's top Honor,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



dous supporter of Goose Creek CISD and our community, Connie Tilton." Goose Creek CISD celebrates this recognition as a reflection of Dr. O'Brien's steadfast leadership, vision, and commitment to building a brighter future for students and families throughout the Baytown area.



Dear Santa
How are you doing Santa? I want a square trampoline that is green and orange to have it in my backyard.
Easton, 8 years old
Crosby Elementary

Dear Santa
Hey Santa if you gonna come to my house I would like you to help my mom because she is working super hard she always said that she is okay but she's not and I want her to be happy.
Chloe Sanchez, 9 years old
Crosby Elementary

Dear Santa
Can I have a Deadpool custom for Christmas and also I would love to

Dear Santa
I want you to bring me a PS5, dog toy, scooter and a cowboy hat.
Bhadey, 8 years old
Crosby Elementary

V

Dear Santa,
I am 8 years old. I live in Baytown. This year I have really been good. I would like you to bring me a dirt bike.
Love,
Josiah Mitchell
Highlands
Elementary

Dear Santa,
I am 7 years old. I live in Texas. I have been really trying hard to be good. I hope you will bring me a dirt bike and iphone.
Love,
Jayson Villalon
Highlands
Elementary

Dear Santa,
I am 7 years old. I live in Baytown, Texas. I have really been good this year. I would like it if you would bring me a barbie.
Love,

Dear Santa
This is what I want for Christmas I want a big slime for Christmas and some Nike shoes, Pants and a backpack.
Arizah, 8 years old
Crosby Elementary

Dear Santa
You are nice and kind, I've been good all year to be in your list. You can bring any toys to us and if I'm not in the good list I wish a marry Christmas.
James, 8 years old
Crosby Elementary

Dear Santa
I don't want a lot just a teddy bear and a neckless and a basslets that's all I want good bye.
Emma, 7 years old
Crosby Elementary

Dear Santa
I'm been good to my parents all year. I want an iPhone pro for Christmas
Ellis, 8 year old
Crosby Elementary

Crosby ISD showcases Semester of expansion,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

tion on October 4 and received straight 1s at their UIL competition on October 18. Our Cougar Football team showed incredible grit, advancing to the District Playoffs and giving a valiant effort that fell just one point short. We celebrate their determination and the spirit they bring to our district.

November brought our annual Veterans Day program at Cougar Stadium. Thanks to the dedication of our directors and students, we were able to honor our courageous veterans through song, dance, spoken word, and musical performances, an inspiring celebration of sacrifice and service.

This past fall also brought challenges, particularly with transportation. My cabinet and I developed a plan for a Three Tier Start System to take effect on January 6, 2026, designed to ease the strain



more than 860 families, supported by over 100 student and community volunteers. With two more Food Drives planned for this semester and 18 more in the spring, we are proud to continue working alongside partners like the Houston Astros Foundation and LyondellBasell to serve those in need.

on our transportation department while keeping student success as our top priority. In addition, our Board of Trustees approved a raise for our bus drivers, making Crosby ISD more competitive and strengthening our ability to recruit and train drivers, ensuring our students can get to school safely and reliably.

Our Student Services department has also made a tremendous impact on our community through the Houston Food Bank's School Market. So far this semester, we have served over 2,000 individuals and

The Fall Semester has flown by, and the excellence of our Cougar Community is undeniable. From academics to community service, I am incredibly proud of all that we have accomplished together. I am excited for what the rest of the school year will bring, and I know that one thing remains constant: Crosby ISD will always be **Committed to Students.**

Warm regards,
Dr. Paula Patterson Superintendent of Schools
Crosby Independent School District

GIVE A NEW CAR AS A CHRISTMAS GIFT!
CALL (OR TEXT) FOR A RAFFLE TICKET
713-906-2337 OR 832-262-6828



Highlands Rotary Club



51st Annual Chili Feast, Raffle & Auction

Saturday, February 7, 2026
11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
St. Jude's Catholic Church
808 South Main, Highlands
Live Auction Begins at 1pm



Win a new 2026 Chevrolet Trailblazer or Trax from Turner Chevrolet.
YOUR CHOICE!



Raffle Tickets \$100 Donation (includes 2 Chili dinners)
Meal Tickets at the Door \$10
Raffle Tickets purchased before Jan. 13, 2026 are eligible for the Early Bird Drawing for a \$300 Gift Card.
Winners Need Not Be Present to Win!
Payment of all local, state, & federal taxes will be responsibility of the winner

Tickets Available From Highlands Rotarians

- 1st Ticket Drawn: \$200 Gift Card
- 50th Ticket Drawn: 32" Smart TV
- 100th Ticket Drawn: Portable Ice Maker
- 150th Ticket Drawn: \$200 Gift Card
- 200th Ticket Drawn: Air Compressor/Battery Charger
- 250th Ticket Drawn: Beats Solo 3 Wireless Headphones
- 300th Ticket Drawn: \$200 Gift Card
- 350th Ticket Drawn: Air Fryer
- 400th Ticket Drawn: 65 Qt RTIC Cooler



Tickets Available At Many Local Businesses

- 450th Ticket Drawn: Shotgun
- 500th Ticket Drawn: \$200 Gift Card
- 550th Ticket Drawn: 28" Black Stone Cooker
- 600th Ticket Drawn: Outdoor Propane Fire Pit
- 650th Ticket Drawn: 22-250 Rifle
- 699th Ticket Drawn: 55" Smart TV
- 700th Ticket Drawn: 2026 Chevy Trailblazer or 2026 Chevy Trax

Call/Text or Patricia Scott 715-906-2337 or Gay Lynn Milliom 832-262-6828 for Tickets or information!

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

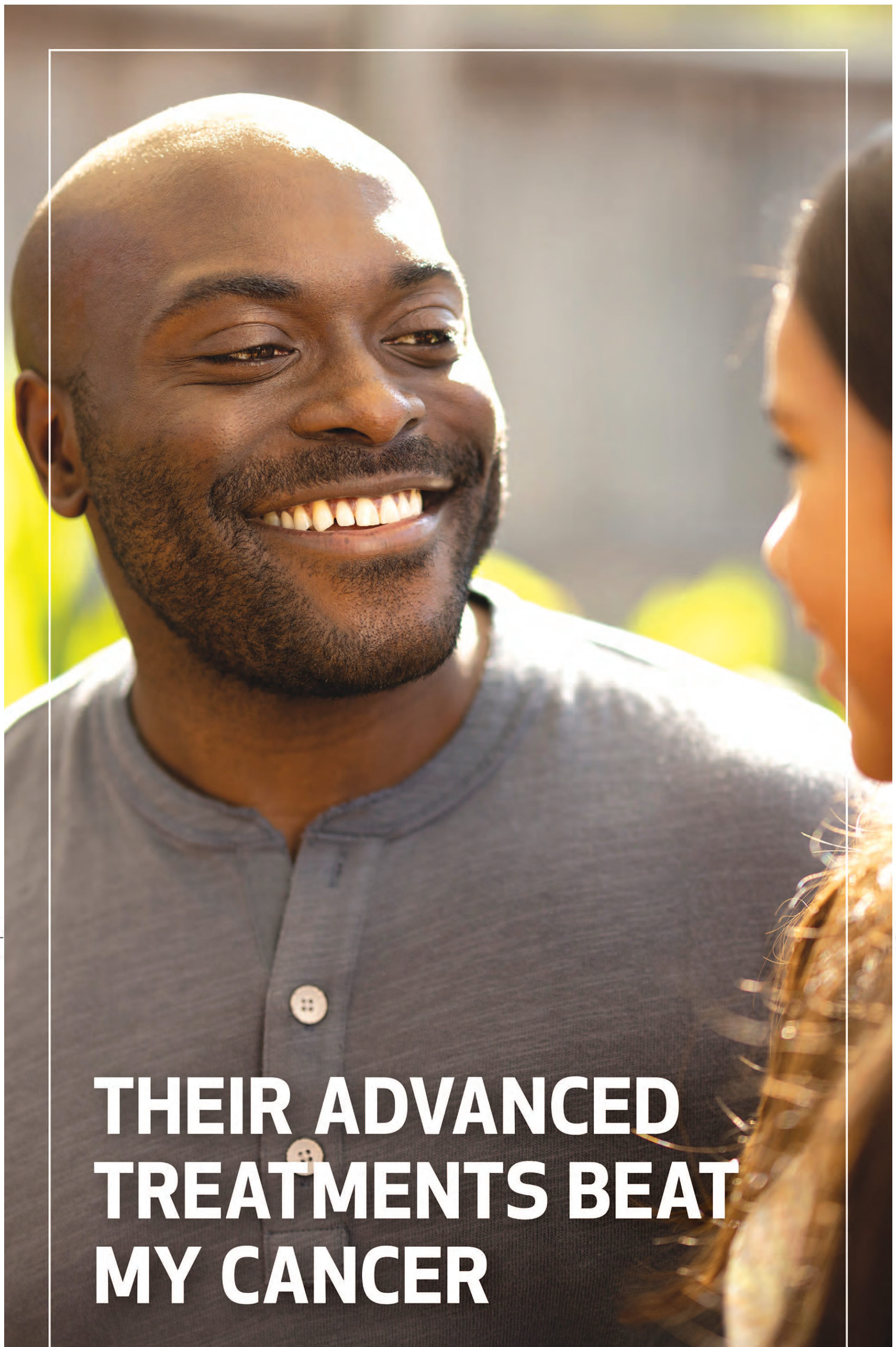


HILL MATERIALS
119 Listi Ln, Highlands
hillmaterials.com
WE DELIVER TO YOU
(281) 843-5000
residential • commercial • industrial

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

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



THEIR ADVANCED TREATMENTS BEAT MY CANCER

From diagnosis to treatment to recovery, your dedicated Houston Methodist cancer center team uses leading research, cutting-edge technology and the latest treatments to create a personalized care plan for you. At eight cancer center locations throughout the Greater Houston area, you'll find the cancer expertise to help you feel whole again.

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



HOUSTON
Methodist[®]
 LEADING MEDICINE

houstonmethodist.org/cancer
 713.790.2700

Santa draws crowds at Highlands holiday event,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



Escorting Santa and showing children their fire trucks were the Highlands Volunteer Fire Department and paramedics. From left, Matt Hathorn, Robert Morris, Taylor Green, Micael Weber, Steve Pearce, and Mark Mullins.



Staff at the San Jacinto Community Center were happy to welcome over 400 children and parents to their annual meet and greet with Santa Claus. From left, Donnie Victor, Brittany White, Tonya Kostka, and Emmalee Lopez.



The Horizons of Highlands were handing out bags of Teddy Grahams, Chips Ahoy, and Oreo Cookies to the children. From left, Tammy Earls, Pam White, and Kathryn Dunlop helped serve the children.



Working the table passing out cool firemen swag was firefighters Jennifer Pearce and Theresa Young.

The Highlands Rotary Club served gallons of hot chocolate, the Highlands Horizons handed out cookies and candy canes, the Highlands-Lynchburg Chamber of Commerce provided the pizza slices,

and Seniors Helping Seniors helped pay for Santa's flight expenses from the North Pole.

The Highlands Fire Department was also on hand to give out swag and show off their apparatus. Com-

missioner Tom Ramsey's team provided all the staple items, forks, spoons, cups, plates, and more.

The photos of children with Santa were provided free of charge by Pete and Georgiana Big Horse.

"It's a labor of love for us and we're so happy to be able to give back to the community," Pete said.

More than 400 people filed through the center in the two hour Christmas marathon.

Dear Santa, I am 7 years old. I live in Highlands, Texas. I have really been good this year. I helping my mommy. I would really like it if you could bring me a hoverboard and electric scooter. Love, Zy Angel Williams Highlands Elementary


Dear Santa For Christmas can I have Lena Shoes and a big Lego set and something for my baby sister can you give her a baby toy. Jayden, 7 years old Crosby Elementary

Dear Santa, I am 8 years old. I live in Baytown Houston, Texas. I have really been good this year. I would really like it if you could bring me a Ronaldo shirt and a puppy. Merry Christmas Santa and I hope I se you next year. Love, Lilyana Gonzalez Highlands Elementary Valerie Salinas Highlands Elementary

Dear Santa Can I have a blanket, and sweaters for each member of my family? Olivia, 8 years old Crosby Elementary

Dear Santa I like this time of the year because Santa is soon to come and its cold. Merry Christmas. Karen, 8 years old Crosby Elementary

Season's Greetings from the Highlands Volunteer Fire Department



Mike Carsner, Fire Chief
Station 17 - 123 San Jacinto St.
Highlands, Texas 77562
281-843-2466

Dear Santa I am 7 years old. I live in Highlands. This year, I have been really bored. I would like you to bring me a camera and Iphone.. I really want these things. Annaleah Pacheco Highlands Elementary

Dear Santa I'm been good to my parents all year. I want an iPhone pro for Christmas Ellis, 8 year old Crosby Elementary

Dear Santa I'm really looking forward to Christmas I help my brother and my mom. I would like to get a Computer if you have room in your sleigh. Tell your elves that my brother wants a drone. Joshua Mendoza, 7 years old. Highlands Elementary

Dear Santa I hope you are feeling good. I should have a gift because I help my mom do the dishes. I would really want to get a kitty and an iPhone 15 if you have room in your sleigh. Santa tell the Elves I said hi. Emma Lopez, 7 years old. Highlands Elementary

Dear Santa I am eight years old. I live in Baytown, Texas. I have been pretty good this year. Will you please bring me a dirt bike and PS5? Love, Cash Sanders Highlands Elementary

Dear Santa I want a Tv and a iPad, some video games and some stickers and a PS5. I been listen to my mom and helping her around the house. Nathanael, 7 year old Crosby Elementary

Dear Santa, I am 7 years old. I live in Highlands. I have been really helpful this year. I would like a Nintendo and Xbox if you could bring me one. Love Atticus Ochoa Highlands Elementary

UNITED IS THE WAY TO A Brighter HOLIDAY SEASON



Your year-end gift to United Way of Greater Baytown Area & Chambers County helps local students, families, and seniors get the support they need. Every dollar stays local and every gift—large or small—turns compassion into action.

Give by December 31 at unitedwaygbacc.org/give

