

Rotary Scholarships



Two sisters, Daniela and Camila Garza, are recipients of the Highlands Rotary Scholarship this year, along with 20 others. Scholarship Chair Dr. Larry White congratulates them. Story on 1, 6

IN THE STARS

Highlands-Lynchburg Chamber May 14

Thursday, May 14, 2026 at 12:00 p.m.
Location: San Jacinto Community Center, 604 Highland Woods Drive.
The luncheon will feature a presentation by Harris County 311. Ticket can be purchased at allabouthighlands.org or 281-513-7267.

Crosby-Huffman Chamber May 21

Thursday, May 21, 2026 at 11:30 p.m. at the Crosby Community Center, 409 Hare Road.
Speaker: Pct. 3 Commissioner Tom Ramsey, speaking on insights into our community. Lunch by Mezcales Mexican Fine Kitchen.

Mutton Bustin' Qualifier

Young rodeo fans age 8 and under, weighing 60 lbs or less, are invited to saddle up for the Mutton Bustin' qualifier at the Crosby Fair & Rodeo. The event takes place May 30, with registration required by May 27.

Rotary awards \$40,500 in Scholarships

22 students from area schools receive 2026 awards

HIGHLANDS – The Rotary Club held their annual Scholarship Banquet last Monday night, May 4th, and awarded 22 scholarships totalling \$40,500. This amount was due to the support of the community at the yearly Chili Feast, and exceeded last year's total of \$39,500.

The venue of the Highlands Community Center was festive and full with scholarship recipients, family and friends, and Rotarians and their families.

The emcee for the evening was past president Gaylynn Milliorn, and scholarships were presented by the Scholarship Chair, Dr. Larry White and Tricia Scott..

The scholarships are a result of the funds raised primarily at the club's Annual Chili Feast in Febru-



SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS AT LAST WEEK'S AWARDS BANQUET. THERE WERE 22 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS. See names of Recipients in the Article. (Photo by Denise Scott, Highlands Rotarian)

ary. At this event, a new vehicle is raffled off to a \$100 ticket holder, along with 13 other prizes, and the net proceeds are used for the scholarships and other community projects. Over the years, these projects have included supporting projects at the Elementary School, and such groups as the Bay Area Homeless, Baytown Youth Fair, Bras for the

U.S. Supreme Court upholds Texas' Newly Redrawn Congressional Map



By Eli Hartman
The Texas Tribune

AUSTIN - Texas' newly redrawn congressional map is officially cleared for use, after the U.S. Supreme Court formally overturned a lower court's ruling Monday.

In November, the high court allowed the map to be used temporarily. Mon-

day's ruling maintains that status quo permanently, ensuring the new lines will be used for the 2026 midterms and going forward. The ruling ends the lengthy legal battle over Texas' efforts to add as many as five more Republican seats to the U.S. House.

Texas took up this unusual mid-decade redis-

tricting effort over the summer, after President Donald Trump pushed the state to help shore up the GOP's narrow majority in what is expected to be a difficult midterm election for the party. The effort drew significant pushback, including from state House

Continued. See TEXAS REDISTRICTING MAP, Page 5

From Sidelines to Service: Goose Creek considers a Life-Changing Army Experience for Student-Athletes

By: Amanda Kennington,
GCCISD Healthy Schools Coordinator

It didn't start in a boardroom or through a formal proposal. There was no strategic plan, no long-term roadmap, just a conversation on the sidelines between a coach and a soldier assigned to recruiting duty. Nearly a decade later, that moment has grown into a full-scale, immersive U.S. Army Experience that includes a basic training challenge and a Career Expo, impacting hundreds of student-athletes each year.

Back in March 2017, at Harker Heights High School in Killeen ISD,



Coach Garson Skelton (of GCCISD Clark Elementary) received official challenge coins, symbols of respect typically reserved for exceptional service, from senior U.S. Army leadership honoring his contributions to initiating programming that now impacts hundreds of student-athletes each year. (Photo by: Amanda Kennington)

what began as a small initiative serving just 100 students quickly revealed its potential. Built around discipline, teamwork, effective communication, cohesion, and exposure to military careers, the program res

Continued. See STUDENT-ATHLETES GAIN, Page 2

Highlands Little League Reports Copper Theft at Ballpark, Games Canceled

By Gerardo Hernandez

HIGHLANDS - According to a statement posted on the Highlands Little League Facebook page, the Highlands Little League ballpark was recently broken into and thieves stole copper wiring used for electrical connections, leaving the facility without functioning field lights and forcing the cancellation of late games.

The organization shared the announcement on social media, saying the theft comes at a difficult time as the season nears its end and All-Star activities approach.

"With the end of our season, closing ceremonies, and All-Stars approaching this is a horrible time for us to have this happen," the league stated in its Facebook post.



Copper wiring hangs from a damaged electrical box at Highlands Little League after thieves reportedly broke into the ballpark and stole electrical connections. (Photo from Highlands Little League facebook page)

Continued. See HIGHLANDS LITTLE LEAGUE REPORTS COPPER THEFT, Page 5

NS Rotary Club Celebrates a Double Win at Conference



The North Shore Rotary Club was honored at the District 5890 Conference, with two incredible recognitions:

- PDG Bill Palko was recognized as **Rotarian of the Year**
- Mini Izaguirre was recognized as **The Large Club President of the Year**

Rotarians are very proud to be part of a club that continues to lead, serve, and make a difference in our community. Here's to the amazing members who make achievements like this possible



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Abbott Opens First New Texas State Park In Nearly Two Decades



AUSTIN — Governor Greg Abbott today celebrated the grand opening of Palo Pinto Mountains State Park, the first new state park to open in nearly two decades. Located between Abilene and Dallas-Fort Worth, the new park offers more than 4,800 acres of land for Texans to explore and enjoy.

“The Palo Pinto Mountains State Park is one of the most majestic of them all,” said Governor Abbott. “Preserving our lands is crucial. It allows communities to reconnect with the land that made Texas, Texas. We are going to live up to our commitment to preserve our state parks so that future generations have access to the beauty of Texas that was originally seen by Sam Houston and Davy Crockett.”

During the ribbon cutting ceremony, Governor Abbott reflected on his childhood experiences ex-

ploring the outdoors and traveling to state parks with his Boy Scout Troop. He noted the importance of preserving Texas’ natural landscapes and beautiful wildlife for future generations of Texans. The Governor also emphasized that state parks not only protect the land and wildlife that define Texas, but also serve as powerful economic engines that support a thriving tourism industry in local communities and allow Texans and out-of-state visitors to experience the majesty of Texas’ beautiful landscapes.

Palo Pinto Mountains State Park is expected to draw visitors from across the state and nation to one of the fastest-growing regions in the country. The new park offers Texans expanded opportunities for camping, fishing, and exploring the natural beauty of Texas.

The opening of Palo Pin-

to Mountains State Park builds on Texas’ historic investment in outdoor recreation. In 2023, the Legislature passed and voters overwhelmingly approved Proposition 14, creating the Centennial Parks Conservation Fund, which appropriated \$1 billion to expand and improve state parks statewide.

Editor’s Note: State Representative Armando Walle spearheaded the legislation that created the Park Fund.

The Governor was joined at the grand opening and ribbon cutting ceremony by Secretary of State Jane Nelson, Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPW) Commission Chairman Emeritus Lee Bass, Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation Chairman Michael Greene, TPWD Executive Director David Yoskowitz, and other state and local officials and outdoorsmen.



Governor Abbott speaks at the Park dedication, with a view of the park behind him.

High Gas Prices Eating into Texans’ Budgets

By Gary Borders,

TEXAS - The average price for a gallon of gasoline in Texas has risen from \$2.55 in early February to \$3.91 as of Sunday, according to AAA. Diesel prices hover around \$5 a gallon. The average Texan now spends \$233 a month on gasoline, according to a study reported in The Texas Tribune.

“It’s all crazy,” Victor Cortez, a 40-year-old Austin construction worker, said while filling up his pickup truck . “It depends on the day; some days I’m moving to three or four buildings and spending 100 bucks a day.”

The steep climb in prices



comes as a result of the war with Iran, which began in February. The closure of the Strait of Hormuz, through which 20% of the world’s oil passes, has caused a sharp increase in oil prices. The price of a barrel of Brent crude, the world benchmark, was \$114 on Sunday, up from about \$70 a barrel before the war began.

The rise in diesel prices,

which averaged \$3.30 a gallon in early February, is affecting everything from shipping costs to farming operations. About half the truckers in Texas are independent operators who buy diesel at gas stations and truck stops and don’t receive the discount that large companies with their own trucking yards get for buying in bulk.

Student-Athletes gain leadership through army partnership,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

onated deeply with student-athletes. By 2020, the effort had scaled across the district, reaching four high schools and roughly 600 students annually. Then, like many in-person programs, it came to an abrupt halt in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

What could have been the end turned into a reset. In March 2025, the program relaunched. It came back stronger, more intentional, and thriving. What makes this initiative stand out is its authenticity. This isn’t a classroom presentation or a one-day event. It’s a multi-day, boots-on-the-ground College, Career, and Military Readiness (CCMR) experience where student-athletes step into the rhythm and rigor of Army life.

Participants engage in team-building exercises, leadership challenges, and real-world simulations that mirror the demands of military service. For many, it’s their first exposure to a structured environment that pushes both physical and mental limits. The experience meets them where they already are: on teams, under pressure, and striving for something bigger than themselves.

The program’s success hasn’t gone unnoticed. Coach Garson Wayne Skelton, one of the initiative’s original champions, currently at Clark Elementary in Goose Creek CISD, received rare recognition from senior Army leadership. Both the Lieutenant General, Kevin D. Admiral, III, Armored Corps and Fort Hood commanding general, and the commander of the U.S. Army 5th Recruiting Brigade, Colonel Julian Perez, honored Coach Skelton’s contributions with official challenge coins, symbols of respect typically reserved for exceptional service. Those recognitions underscore something important: this isn’t just a school program with military support. It’s a true partnership.

Now, the next chapter is taking shape. Plans are underway to expand for the 2026-2027 school year to districts whose priorities align with emphasis on STEM pathways and CCMR. For district leaders, the program offers a rare opportunity: a proven model that blends physical development, leadership training, and career exposure into one cohesive ex-

perience.

To ensure alignment from the start, Sergeant First Class Leroy Betts III, 3rd Armored Corps and Fort Hood Public Affairs Office, emphasizes the importance of building relationships and shared ownership with district leadership. The proposed dates for the 2027 session are set for March 23rd-25th. The scheduling is intentional, avoiding conflicts with April testing windows and maximizing student participation. It’s a small detail that reflects a larger truth: this program works because it respects both worlds, education and military training, without compromising either.

In the short term, efforts to expand focus on communication and coordination. Introductions are being made to key district leaders, including Goose Creek CISD, to lock in a potential expansion. What started as a sideline conversation has evolved into a scalable model for student engagement, one that builds resilience, exposes career pathways, and strengthens connections between schools and the military.



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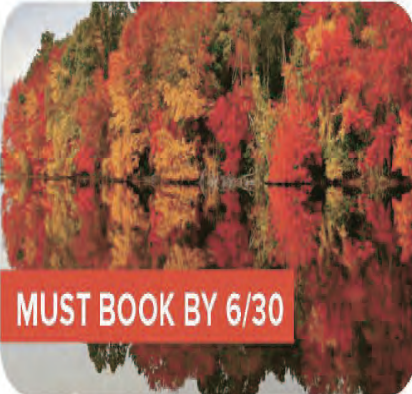
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Barbers Hill ★ Dayton Press

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THURSDAY, MAY 14, 2026

MONT BELVIEU, TEXAS 77580

ON THE HILL

City of Baytown, Lee College to Consider Proposed Land Swap

The City of Baytown and Lee College are working together on a proposed land swap as part of ongoing long-term planning and coordination efforts along the Market Street-Texas Avenue corridor.

At a meeting next week, Lee College's Board of Regents is scheduled to consider approval of an agreement that would allow the College to transfer property located at 909 Decker Street to the City of Baytown in exchange for property adjacent to the College's site at 900 West Texas Avenue.

Under the proposal, the City and Lee College would exchange similarly sized parcels of land, allowing each organization to consolidate property on its respective side of the roadway. For the City, the new configuration would create a clearer framework for future infrastructure improvements, public spaces, and safer routes for students, residents, and visitors in the area.

City Manager Jason Reynolds said the proposal reflects a strategic approach to long-term planning.

"This proposal reflects the kind of coordinated planning that delivers long-term value for the community," Reynolds said. "By aligning land ownership with long-range goals, the City is better positioned to make thoughtful investments that improve safety, accessibility, and connectivity over time."

Mayor Charles Johnson said the proposed land swap highlights the City's focus on partnership and forward-looking development.

"This proposal helps the City put the right pieces in place for safer streets, better walkability, and stronger connections around the Market Street corridor," Johnson said. "At the same time, it supports Lee College as a key educational and economic partner in our community."

The City and Lee College will share additional details as the proposal moves forward through their respective governing bodies.

MB Traffic Signal Update - Effective Immediately

At the intersection of Eagle Drive & Perry Avenue, the flashing yellow arrow for left turns has been removed. This update is designed to improve safety and keep traffic flowing more smoothly through the intersection.

This change is ONLY at this intersection, all other signals and traffic patterns remain the same.

The 2026 Texas Gatorfest has been Canceled

ANAHUAC - After careful consideration and in light of recent circumstances, Texas GATORFEST organizers have made the difficult decision to cancel the 2026 Texas GATORFEST.

This decision was not made lightly. Texas GATORFEST has been a long-standing tradition in our community, and we understand how much this event means to the



residents of Anahuac and our many visitors each year. However, at this time, we believe it is in the best interest of the event, our partners, and the community to pause and allow for a thorough review and restructuring process.

Our priority remains transparency, accountability, and ensuring the long-term success and integrity of Texas GATOR-

FEST. We are committed to addressing current concerns and working toward a stronger future for the festival.

We sincerely appreciate the continued support, patience, and understanding from our community, volunteers, sponsors, and attendees.

Further updates will be shared as they become available.

Dayton ISD Boys Track Team Crowned 2026 Area Champions

Dayton ISD proudly congratulates the Bronco Boys Track Team on earning the title of 2026 Area Champions! In an exciting and highly competitive meet, the championship came down to the final mile relay, where our Broncos rose to the occasion and secured the victory through determination, teamwork, and perseverance.

This outstanding accomplishment reflects the hard work and dedication of our student-athletes, coaches, and athletic pro-



gram leaders who continue to build champions both on and off the track.

The team was also recently featured by KHOU 11, highlighting the heart, grit, and determination these athletes continue to display while representing Dayton ISD and Bronco Nation with excellence. If you have not had a chance to watch the feature, be sure to visit the district athletics homepage and view it near the bottom of the page: tinyurl.com/mr2ts5jy

District Launches Digital Trophy Archive in Hall of History

MONT BELVIEU - Barbers Hill ISD is proud to introduce a new interactive feature in the Hall of History that brings decades of achievement to life through a comprehensive digital trophy archive. This innovative addition allows students, staff, alumni and community members to explore the district's rich tradition of excellence by accessing a dynamic collection of championship trophies, honors, and milestone accomplishments spanning generations.

As part of this initiative, the district has digitized more than 100 trophies spanning from 1930s to the present, preserving and showcasing the accomplishments of Barbers Hill students



and programs across generations. Visitors to the Hall of History can now explore these trophies in a dynamic, user-friendly format, gaining deeper insight into the stories behind each award.

The project was spearheaded by Superintendent Dr. Greg Poole, who located and collected tro-

phies from campuses and facilities across the district, consolidating them into the Hall of History. Recognizing the challenge of displaying and interpreting such a large collection, Dr. Poole drew inspiration from museum technology to enhance accessibility and engagement.

To bring the vision to life, BHISD implemented the Kiosk Pro app on a mounted iPad, allowing visitors to interactively browse the collection. Users can select individual trophies to view detailed information, including close-up images, award titles, and the names engraved on each piece.

The initiative was a collaborative effort involving several district team members. Valerie Hull photographed each trophy, ensuring high-quality visual documentation. Kristen Davis developed a dedicated Google Site to house the digital archive, while Jef Farrell organized and numbered each trophy for accurate cataloging. The district is also enriching

the archive with historical images from yearbooks and other sources to provide additional context and storytelling.

The Hall of History itself reflects the broader heritage of the region—from its early roots as a rice farming community to the oil boom that helped establish Mont Belvieu as a major industrial hub. Created through a partnership between the City of Mont Belvieu and BHISD, the museum features rotating exhibits highlighting both the city's and the district's rich histories.

Located at the back of the BHISD Leadership Center, the Hall of History is open to the public Tuesday through Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Baytown Chamber of Commerce Celebrates Ribbon Cutting & Grand Opening for Bay Area Barber and Cosmetology College

BAYTOWN, TX – The Baytown Chamber of Commerce is proud to announce the Ribbon Cutting and Grand Opening celebration for **Bay Area Barber and Cosmetology College**, a new addition to the local business and educational community dedicated to shaping the next generation of skilled professionals in the beauty and barbering industry.

In addition to the ribbon cutting held on Thursday, April 29th, Bay Area Barber and Cosmetology College will host a Grand Opening celebration on Saturday, May 2nd, 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM and the public is warmly invited to attend, tour the



Co-Owners Daniel Cantu and Linda Cantu along with Baytown Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors

facility and learn more about the programs offered. They are located at **220 N. Main Street,**

Suite 150, Baytown, TX.

The college is also excited to announce that

classes will officially begin on Monday, May 4th, marking the start of hands-on training for its inaugural group pf students.

Bay Area Barber and Cosmetology College offers comprehensive training programs designed to equip students with the hands-on skills, knowledge and confidence needed to succeed in today's competitive beauty industry. With a focus on both technical expertise and professional development, the college aims to create career-ready graduates who will contribute to the local workforce and economy.

"We are excited to welcome Bay Area Barber

and Cosmetology College to Baytown", said Tammy Moyers Martinez, Member Services Director for the Baytown Chamber of Commerce. "Their commitment to education and workforce development aligns perfectly with our mission to support business growth and community advancement."

The Baytown Chamber of Commerce encourages the community to come out and celebrate this exciting new business and the opportunities it brings to the area.

For more information about Bay Area Barber and Cosmetology College, please visit their website txbayareabarbercollege.com.

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OPINION

By BILL KING

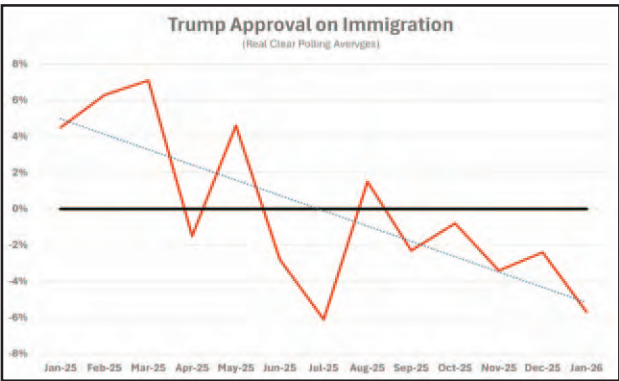


Trump has Blown his Immigration Advantage

Exit polling from the 2024 election showed that voters were most drawn to Trump for his promises to lower prices and control immigration. For his first two months in office, Americans mostly liked what they saw as border crossings dropped to a trickle. During that time, polling consistently showed a favorable rating in the double digits for his handling of immigration.

But by late spring, Americans’ mood began to change as Trump’s immigration policies evolved from controlling the border to making good on his promise of mass deportations. Trump clearly promised to deport all immigrants who were in the country illegally. Most polling at the time found that about half of Americans agreed with that stance. But as the reality of mass deportations began to roll out, Americans started having second thoughts. **Gallup** found that support for deporting all immigrants in the country illegally fell from 47% in late 2024 to 38% by late last year.

The reality of mass deportations and the ham-handed way in which ICE has conducted them has steadily taken a toll on Trump’s approval rating on the issue, dropping 13% from March 2025 to last month (+7%-6%).¹



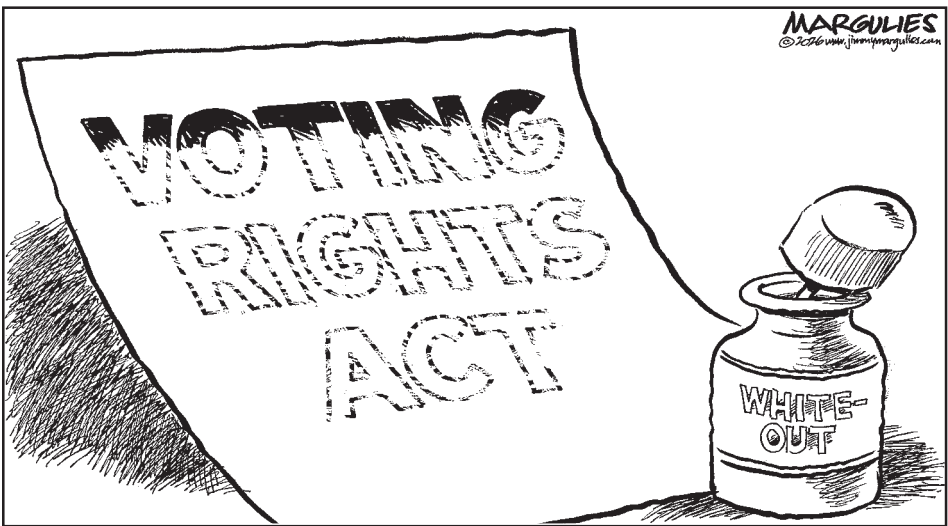
The drop-off is most dramatic with independents. According to polling by The Economist & YouGov, Trump’s approval rating **today** on immigration among independents has fallen 40 points since **March 2025** (+15%-25%). Support for his immigration policies among Hispanics, a group that swung significantly to Trump in 2024, has dropped 24 points (-5%-19%). Last March, every age group had a positive view of Trump’s immigration policies. As of last month, the only age group favoring his policies was the 45-64 age group. Ominously, for the first time, over-65s turned negative.

Americans have always had complicated views on immigration. Generally, they understandably recoil from people coming here illegally. However, few understand the complicated nuances of our immigration system, and when asked about specific situations, their views often soften. For example, the same Gallup poll found that 85% of Americans favor “allowing immigrants, who were brought to the U.S. illegally as children, the chance to become U.S. citizens if they meet certain requirements over a period of time.”

Trump could have been, and indeed could still be, “Nixon going to China” on immigration. Because of his strong views on immigration enforcement, he could forge a compromise on a rational immigration system that strictly controls who is allowed into the country but deals humanely with the millions enticed here by the American dream during a time when our immigration system was hopelessly broken. So far, he has shown little inclination to do so. But perhaps the electoral disaster that appears to be waiting for him in the fall will motivate him in that direction. It would be an enduring legacy.

Note 1 – There is an anomaly in the polling. **Morning Consult** has consistently found Trump’s immigration rating significantly more positive than those of the other pollsters over the last year. They were the only pollster in the last month to find a positive approval rating. Because Morning Consult polls frequently, their results significantly skew the averages. For example, in January, without Morning Consult’s polling, Trump’s average would have been -8.3% instead of -5.7%.

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, 5832 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.*



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STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

By Gary Borders



Talarico Leads Cornyn, Paxton in Latest Polls

A poll shows Democrat James Talarico leading both the Republicans who are locked in a fierce runoff to determine who will face him in November, the Houston Chronicle reported. Talarico led U.S. Sen. John Cornyn 40% to 33%, according to the University of Texas at Austin Politics Project survey. He holds a 42% to 34% advantage over Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton. In both scenarios, 19% of voters said they were still undecided.

“While the Democratic candidate leading two established Republicans in these matchups is sure to raise some eyebrows,” the pollsters wrote, the results “reveal a Republican electorate still registering the effects of the months-long, bruising, negative campaigning by Paxton and Cornyn, and the GOP divisions the race has exacerbated.”

Paxton and Cornyn face each other in a May 26 runoff because neither secured a majority in the March primary. Early voting runs from May 18 to May 22. Voters who cast ballots in the Democratic primary cannot vote in the GOP runoff. Only voters who participated in the GOP primary or did not vote at all can vote in the GOP runoff.

CAMP MYSTIC WILL NOT REOPEN THIS SUMMER

Camp Mystic announced last week that it had withdrawn its application for a camp license for this summer, according to the Austin American-Statesman. The decision followed a week of hearings before a joint Senate-House committee, which heard testimony from the loved ones of last summer’s flood victims. The July 4 flooding along the Guadalupe River killed 25 children, two counselors and the camp’s longtime owner, Richard “Dick” Eastland.



“No administrative process or summer season should move forward while families continue to grieve, while investigations continue, and while so many Texans still carry the pain of last July’s tragedy,” the camp wrote in a statement.

The Texas Department of State Health Services, which is responsible for issuing camp licenses, conducted investigations. The camp has been planning to reopen its Cypress Lake campus, which was not damaged by the flash floods. More than 850 children have already registered to attend that camp.

Camp Mystic said it would continue to “fully cooperate with all ongoing investigations.”

\$56 MILLION IN FED FUNDING FOR RURAL HEALTH CARE

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission is making \$56 million in federal funding available to rural health care providers. The “Infrastructure and Capital Investments for Rural Texas” initiative will support modernization of rural health care delivery by funding new equipment and minor facility renovations.

Health care providers can use the funds to “update lab, CT scan, ultrasound, or mammography equipment; stretchers, wheelchairs, patient

beds, telemetry units, nurse call systems, generators, defibrillators, crash carts, medication dispensing units, sleep labs, vital sign monitors, oxygen tanks, and other allowable equipment,” according to the HHSC news release.

The state is expected to receive about \$1.4 billion in federal funding over the next five years through the program supporting rural health care.

PATRICK AIMS TO CLOSE LOOPHOLE FOR PREDICTION MARKETS

Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick has directed state senators to explore ways to close gambling loopholes that allow online prediction markets to operate in Texas, according to The Tribune. He is concerned that state elections and sporting events could be manipulated for profit.

Prediction markets allow users to bet on outcomes of everything from sporting events to election winners, and even the weather. The Trump administration has blocked attempts by other states to regulate the prediction markets, such as Kalshi, claiming oversight belongs to federal agencies, not the states.

“We are regulated at the federal level, but of course, given now the popularity of prediction markets, we are doing a lot of educating on the state level,” said Sara Slane of Kalshi. “That’s the dialogue that we’ll envision having, certainly, in the state of Texas.”

While 39 state attorneys general signed on to a legal brief arguing the Commodity Futures Trading Commission doesn’t have sole authority to regulate the prediction markets, Paxton declined to do so.

TEXAS CITIES DOMINATE ANOTHER ‘BEST’ LIST

Several Texas cities dominated the top spots in Livability’s new ranking of the most affordable, desirable cities to live in the U.S., according to the Statesman. The list includes only cities with populations between 75,000 and 500,000 and median home values of \$500,000 or less.

Factors considered included economy and housing; amenities and environment; safety, health and education; and transportation.

Texas cities in the top 10 were Sugar Land at No. 3; Plano at No. 5; Round Rock at No. 9; and New Braunfels at No. 10.

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THE POSTSCRIPT

By Carrie Classon

Cause for Celebration



Last week, we went out to celebrate with my oldest and most curmudgeonly friend, Andrew.

Andrew is a tax preparer, so even if I hadn’t been in Mexico for the last three months, I still would not have seen much of him. He makes a good living by working insanely hard during the tax season and then teaching and taking a few classes the rest of the year. Andrew is very worn out by April 15th, so after he had recovered, my husband, Peter, and I took Andrew out to eat at a favorite Italian restaurant.

We had a lot to celebrate. Andrew had made it through another tax season. I had just signed the contract for “The Turnip House,” and “Loon Point” was doing well. Peter gave me a small stuffed loon that calls when you press its belly.

“Whoo-hoo!” the loon said. “That is so great,” I told Peter. “This will be my emotional support loon!”

“You are going to have to write more books,” Andrew said, cleaning his plate, “so we can do this more often.”

Peter and I used to have a neighbor, Joe, who made fun of us. “You two are always celebrating something!” Joe would say, and I knew he thought we were a little ridiculous.

But I think it’s important to celebrate the milestones in life. I don’t think a celebration needs to involve buying anything larger than a loon plush toy or anything fancier than a plate of spaghetti with an old friend, but I think it’s important.

Peter and I married late. Peter is 10 years older than me, and even though he solemnly promised when we married to live to be 105, we know that time is uncertain, and we can never know how much of it we will have together. We’ve now been married 11 years, and we have found things to celebrate throughout the year, every year. No matter what Joe thinks about it, we will continue to look for reasons to celebrate.

Andrew’s mother died right at the start of the tax season. I wrote to him and asked if it made it easier or harder for him, being so busy after such a big loss. He said it was good to be busy, but when a client came in who had just lost someone close to them, he said he would tell them about his own loss, and that was hard.

But most of Andrew’s clients have been coming to him for years. Doing their taxes, as he does, Andrew knows a lot about their lives and the changes that have happened over the years. Sharing his own loss with these people who trust him with their finances seems appropriate—even if it is hard.

Next week, I will go to a celebration of life for Andrew’s mother. It will be another celebration—if a sad one. She lived to be 94, and she had become more infirm in the last year. She had talked with Andrew about dying, and she knew the time was getting near.

We will get together and hear stories about her life from the people who cared about her. It will be a small affair, Andrew says, and nothing fancy. Andrew is bringing the food.

But I will be there for Andrew because he has been there for me. What Joe doesn’t understand is that we celebrate everything—the good and the bad and the unusual, and the inevitable. We celebrate because, even if we live to be 105, life is short, and it is cause for celebration.

Till next time,
Carrie

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CCSO Investigators Arrest Two in \$70K Off-Road Vehicle Theft



CHAMBERS COUNTY – Two men are in custody following a months long investigation into the theft of three off-road vehicles from a Baytown business, according to the Chambers County Sheriff's Office.

On Jan. 25, 2026, deputies responded to an alarm call at Gene's Polaris on Interstate 10. Upon arrival, they discovered that three off-road vehicles, with a combined value of more than \$70,000, had been stolen, the sheriff's office said.

Over the following months, the agency's Criminal Investigations Division (CID) conducted surveillance, analyzed evidence, and interviewed multiple suspects and acquaintances, leading to felony theft warrants for Estevan Cruz of Baytown and Daniel Stanley Aguirre Urbina of Houston.

On May 4, 2026, deputies located both suspects during additional surveillance and took them into custody without incident, the sheriff's office reported. Both were booked into the Chambers County Jail. Investigators also determined that Urbina is an illegal alien unlawfully present in the United States.

"This case is a good ex-

ample of what can happen when deputies stay proactive and keep working a case long after the initial call," Sheriff Brian Hawthorne said in a statement. "I'm proud of the time and effort that went into this investigation over the last several months. I also want to thank the business owners in our community who continue to support law enforcement and trust us to help protect their businesses and livelihoods."

All suspects are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Texas redistricting map upheld by high court,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Democrats, who left Texas to temporarily deny the chamber the headcount needed to pass the map.

After the Democrats returned, the map passed, and legal challenges immediately followed. Several civil rights groups who were in active litigation over Texas' 2021 maps sued again, saying the 2025 map was racially discriminatory.

In November, Judge Jeff Brown agreed, writing in his 160-page opinion joined by Judge David Guaderrama that there was "substantial evidence" that this new map was racially gerrymandered. Brown, a Trump appointee, received a dressing down from the panel's lone dissenter, 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals Judge Jerry Smith, who said the opinion was the "most blatant exercise of judicial activism that I have ever witnessed."

Lawyers for the state asked the Supreme Court to block Brown's ruling and allow the map to be used for the fast-approach-



ing 2026 primaries. In early December, the court agreed, saying Texas was likely to succeed on the merits of the case.

Justices Elena Kagan, Sonia Sotomayor and Ketanji Brown Jackson dissented, saying the temporary ruling "disrespects the work of a District Court that did everything one could ask to carry out its charge — that put aside every consideration except getting the issue before it right."

Monday's ruling fell along similar ideological lines. Kagan, Sotomayor and Jackson again dissented; no additional comments from the justices were included in the summary ruling.

The 2026 election season is well underway with the map drawn last year, but this ruling guarantees that map can be used indefinitely, at least through the next redistricting cycle after the 2030 Census.

But whether it will generate the results Republicans are looking for remains to be seen. Some of the new GOP stronghold districts were drawn based on Latino voters' sharp swing to the right in 2024, but polling suggests that fragile alliance may be fraying over immigration policy and the economy. And both California and Virginia have approved maps aimed at generating more Democratic seats, potentially neutralizing any gains Texas has enacted.

Highlands Little League reports copper theft at ball park, games canceled,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

League officials said they are working with authorities to determine what happened and asked anyone with information to contact the organization or Harris County Constable Precinct 3. The post noted that a graphic accompanying the announcement mistakenly referenced the Harris County Sheriff's Office, but the case is reportedly being handled through the constable's office.

The theft disabled the ballpark lighting system, making it impossible to continue scheduled evening games. The organization announced that all late games were can-

celed while repairs and the investigation continue.

This is not the first time Highlands Little League has been targeted by thieves.

In 2015, multiple Houston-area news outlets reported that copper thieves repeatedly struck the Highlands Little League complex, stealing wiring and damaging lighting systems. Reports at the time indicated that more than 2,500 feet of copper wire had been stolen from the fields, causing thousands of dollars in damage and repairs.

A report by KPRC2 Houston stated the facili-

ty had been hit by copper thieves several times within only a few months, disrupting games and league operations. Another report noted community members later helped the league recover from the financial impact of the thefts.

More recently, in late 2024, ABC13 Houston reported that thieves stole thousands of dollars worth of maintenance equipment, including a tractor, from the same little league facility.

No arrests or official police statements regarding the newest copper theft had been publicly released yet.

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Rotary awards \$40,500 in Scholarships

22 students from area schools receive 2026 awards

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Cause, Cody Stephens Foundation, Crosby Fair & Rodeo, Highlands Food Pantry, Harris County Stratford Library, Harris County Seniors program, Highlands Horizons Miss Highlands Pageant, Highlands Little League, Highlands Volunteer Fire Department, Hurricane Relief, Methodist Church, Northshore Rotary, Partners in Education, Share Your Christmas, Stratford Library Summer Reading Program, Community Tree Lighting ceremony, Wreaths Across America, Thanksgiving Turkeys for needy families, and Precinct2gether, as well as many other projects.

The club estimates that since it started awarding scholarships, it has given out over \$600,000 in scholarships to college bound students. Awards are from \$1500 to \$2500 per school year.

The idea of a Chili Feast, and a raffle for a new car, came from 3 Rotarians almost 50 years ago, said Rotarian Johnny Gaeke. RL Creel, WL Herndon, and Chester Stasney came up with the idea of the Chili Feast to raise more money than their current projects, such as a Christmas tree sale.



Presenters at the head table included Rotarian Tricia Scott and scholarship chairman Dr. Larry White.



Scholarship recipient sisters Daniela Garza and Camila Garza, with Rotarians Dr. Larry White, Denise Smith, and Tricia Scott.



Guests, Rotarians and Families gathered at the Highlands Community Center for the 2026 Scholarship Banquet.

The Scholarship committee had a large field of 50 applications to review. The Review Committee consisted of 10 Highlands Rotarians, with Dr. Larry White as chair.

Committee members included Rotarians Denise Smith, Robert Woodall, Diana Weaver, Cora Lynn, Sheila MacDonald, Patricia Scott, Larry White, and Gaylynn Milliorn.

Dr. White explained

that they were evaluated on grades, an essay, extra curricular activities, and recommendations. At the banquet, scholarships were presented by Dr. White and Tricia Scott, with special presenters for the named scholarships.

Scholarship Awards this year went to the following:

From Goose Creek Memorial High School:
--Lisbeth Garcia

--Randy Gonzalez
--Vivian Montez
--Alexa Guerrero
From Chinquapin Preparatory School:
-- Camila Garza
-- Melissa Garza
From Crosby High School:
--Ayslin Alvarez-Juarez
--Aylene Martinez
--Payton Abernathy
College Students:
--Simran Singh
--Daniela Garza

--Adrian Molina
--Abraham Greene
--Dahfne Guerrero
--Lluvia Morales
--Oscar Vazquez
--Ethan Earls
Named scholarships are in honor of Highlands Rotarians who contributed to the club and the community, and that have passed away. They are presented by a person who was best friends or family to the Rotarian that is being hon-

ored.

This year, the following special named Scholarships were:

Dr. W.L. Herndon DDS Scholarship, presented by Patricia Scott to Jansen Poitras of Robert E. Lee HS;

Beverly Culbreath Scholarship presented by Tricia Scott to Emma Rosenkranz of Hargrave High School;

Jay E. Bird Scholarships, presented by Dr. Larry White to Daphne Dominguez of Chinquapin Prep;

Chester Stasney Scholarship, presented by his daughter Elaine Marshall to Madisyn Allen of the University of Arkansas; Chester passed away five years ago, but he was known for his famous Chili recipe that is served annually at the club's Chili Feast. This honor has passed to Rotarian, Johnny Gaeke.

Pat McPhee Scholarship presented by Barbara McPhee to Carys Murray of Crosby HS;

Tony Irwin Scholarship, presented by Karrie Torina to Ernest Roder of Crosby High School;

The Rotary Club of Highlands, and president Tricia Scott, say Congratulations to all!

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Lewis Pullman, left, and Sally Field star in "Remarkably Bright Creatures."

“Remarkably Bright Creatures”

“Ready or Not 2” (R) — The sequel to “Ready or Not” (2019), a comedy-horror film that catapulted Samara Weaving (“Borderline”) into “scream queen” territory, is out now to rent after pulling in three times its budget in theaters. (Not bad!) Weaving reprises her role as Grace MacCaullay, and the sequel picks up moments after the events of the last film. Grace has just survived the ritual where she was supposed to meet her end and reunites with her younger sister, Faith (Kathryn Newton), while she recovers in the hospital. However, a council including six elite families hears wind of Grace’s successful escape and manages to kidnap both Grace and her sister for another round of games. Sarah Michelle Gellar (“I Know What You Did Last Summer”) and

Elijah Wood (“Yellowjackets”) joined the cast this time around. (Apple TV+)

“Remarkably Bright Creatures” (PG-13) — This film, led by Sally Field (“80 for Brady”) and Lewis Pullman (“Wishful Thinking”), is based on the novel of the same name by Shelby Van Pelt. Although it’s dubbed a “mystery drama,” there’s a heartwarming human element to the film due to Field’s and Pullman’s endearing performances, as well as the subject matter at hand. Field plays Tova, an elderly widow who works the night shift at her local aquarium. When a young man named Cameron (Pullman) begins working alongside her, they form an unlikely bond as she helps him to find his father. Colm Meaney (“The Panic”) and Alfred Molina (“Harold and the Purple Crayon”) co-star in the

film, which is out now to stream. (Netflix)

“Lurker” (R) — We have a bit of horror this week, we have a tearjerker, and now we have this arthouse film starring Theodore Pellerin (“Beau Is Afraid”) and Archie Madekwe (“Saltburn”). “Lurker” follows retail worker Matthew (Pellerin), who’s working at a clothing store in Los Angeles when a popular musician named Oliver (Madekwe) wanders in. The two hit it off and become fast friends (not unlike the beginning of “A Star Is Born”), to the point that Oliver offers a spot to Matthew in his entourage as a documentarian. Infatuated with the idea of being adjacent to a celebrity, Matthew accepts, only to begin spiraling as Oliver’s infatuation with him loses steam just as quickly as it started. Premieres May 15. (HBO Max)

“Tucci in Italy: Season 2” (PG) — Back for another season is this National Geographic series hosted by Stanley Tucci, which is perfect timing considering that Tucci is currently on a roll with a bunch of press for “The Devil Wears Prada 2.” In this season, the 65-year-old actor explores five new regions in the country that his family has descended from, including Naples and Campania, Sicily, Le Marche, Sardinia, and Veneto. Tucci also visits the world’s smallest kingdom on Tavolara Island, whose king owns a seafood restaurant called Da Tonino. Tucci told People magazine, “In Italy, food is never just food. It’s memory, identity and, sometimes, a full-blown argument.” All episodes are available to stream on May 12. (Disney+)

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Q: When is the “Yellowstone” sequel series starting, and will it be on regular cable or just streaming? — A.M.

A: The wait is over! There have been prequels and spin-offs of the smash hit series “Yellowstone,” but the love story of Beth and Rip continues in the form of the new series “Dutton Ranch” on May 15. The two-episode premiere and remainder of the first season will air on both the traditional Paramount cable channel as well as the Paramount+ streaming package. The short season of just nine episodes will conclude with a season finale on July 3.

In the new series, Rip (Cole Hauser) and Beth (Kelly Reilly) relocate to South Texas, where they feud with a rival ranch owner played by Annette Bening (“Apples Never Fall”). According to Deadline, Ed Harris (“Westworld”) will also star as “a weathered veteran and veterinarian who treats animals with compassion and understanding and possesses a good sense of humor.”

Country/rock singer-songwriter Morgan Wade will play a bartender at a local watering hole, “described as a character who ‘sees all.’” Wade follows in the footsteps of other singers like Lainey Wilson and Ryan Bingham who appeared on “Yellowstone.”

Q: I just saw a headline about Denzel Washington and Ellen Pompeo arguing on the set of “Grey’s Anatomy.” I don’t recall him being on the show, and he’s one of my favorite actors. — G.I.

A: Denzel Washington didn’t play a character on the long-running ABC series but instead directed an episode. It was a pivotal one during season 12 titled “The Sound of Silence,” where Pompeo’s character, Dr. Meredith Grey, was viciously attacked by a patient. On her podcast “Tell Me with Ellen Pompeo,” Washington scolded her after she improvised a line that wasn’t in the script. Her hackles were raised, and she yelled back, “Listen, [expletive], this is my show. This is my set. Who are you telling?”

When asked by Variety about the incident, Washington said, “It’s all good,” but he hasn’t been back to direct another episode.



Annette Bening as Beulah Jackson in “Dutton Ranch”

isode. It wasn’t his first time directing — he had previously directed two feature films and would go on to direct two more: “Fences” and “A Journal for Jordan.”

Washington got his start by playing a physician on one of the greatest medical dramas of all time — the multiple Emmy-Award-winning “St. Elsewhere.” Meanwhile, “Grey’s” has been renewed for its 23rd season on ABC.

Q: I read that there’s going to be a new sports-themed version of “Jeopardy!” Will it be syndicated on regular TV like the original? — D.L.

A: “ESPN Jeopardy!” will be hosted by sports commentator Joe Buck sometime this summer on streamers Hulu and Disney+. An exact premiere date hasn’t been announced. According to Deadline, the contestants will consist of “ESPN talent ... representing charities of their choice ... as they compete for a \$500,000 prize.” Another spin-off “Pop Culture Jeopardy!” with host Colin Jost moves to Netflix for its second season, beginning May 11.

Send me your questions at NewCelebrityExtra@gmail.com.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Amber Waves

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HOW THE HECK DO YOU WORK THE FIRE EXTINGUISHER?

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NOPE.

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UP AND OVER THAT TRASH CAN.

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NOW WE'LL DO HANDSTANDS.

NEXT, LEAP OVER THE PITCH.

LAST ONE, I QUIT!

YOU SURE KNOW HOW TO FOLLOW THE LEADER, HUGO.

THE MOON IS FULL TONIGHT.

ARE YOU SURE IT'S FULL?

I'M SURE... IT JUST "BURPED"

Weekly SUDOKU

6			7			3
	5				6	7
		7	6		5	
2				1	9	8
		8	9	7	6	5
6	9	5			8	
		9				2
	1			4	3	
8		6	5	1	2	

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

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Differences: 1. Leg is moved. 2. Vacuum is larger. 3. Back of chair is higher. 4. Drawer is moved. 5. Blinds are higher. 6. Blinds are different.

May 11, 2026 Posting Date

King Crossword

ACROSS

1 Cry

4 Vault

8 Daly and Allen

12 Common title start

13 Killer whale

14 Web addresses

15 Pithy joke

17 Legume

18 Suggests

19 TV guide abbr.

21 Wager

22 Expulsion

26 Errand runner

29 Whatever number

30 Hwy.

31 Caspian Sea feeder

32 Keats creation

33 Go caroling

34 Capitol VIP

35 Year in Madrid

36 Epic narratives

37 On/off switch

39 "You've got mail" co.

40 Documentarian Burns

41 Obligations

45 Beige

48 The whole crowd

DOWN

1 Halt

2 "It can't be!"

3 Hive population

4 Hang around

5 Painter Max

6 Expert

7 Series opener

8 Big brass

9 Rage

10 Org. with a style manual

11 Nine-digit ID

16 Slander in print

20 Purchase

23 Advanced math

24 Sicilian peak

25 Bylaws, briefly

26 Sudden wind

27 Disc-shaped cookie

28 Sharp tooth

29 Commotion

32 Penny

33 Like seawater

35 Boxing leg-end

36 Turned bad

38 Hog's "hello"

39 "Hello" singer

42 Illinois neighbor

43 Wife of Geraint

44 Fax

45 Clean air org.

46 Baseball fan's headwear

47 Tear

49 Compete

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6 9 4 7 2 1 9 6 3 8

5 9 3 4 6 8 7 2 7

8 2 1 3 9 7 6 4 9

7 1 4 8 3 2 5 6 9

2 3 5 9 7 6 8 1 4

9 8 6 1 9 4 3 7 2

1 6 2 5 4 9 7 8 3

7 9 6 8 3 2 5 1 4

3 5 8 7 2 1 4 9 6

Answers

King Crossword

Solution time: 26 mins.

Trivia test

by Fifi Rodriguez

- GEOGRAPHY: What is the capital of Belarus?
- LITERATURE: Which Ken Kesey novel is set in an Oregon psychiatric hospital?
- MYTHOLOGY: Who is the Greek goddess of discord?
- ANATOMY: What is the longest bone in the human body?
- U.S. PRESIDENTS: Which president was a commanding general in World War II?
- MATH: What kind of polygon has three sides?
- BIBLE: What is the last book in the Bible called?
- ASTRONOMY: Which planet in our solar system is closest in size to Earth?
- CHEMISTRY: What is the newest element on the Periodic Table?
- MOVIES: Which Canadian actor/comedian starred in the movie “Uncle Buck” and died of a heart attack at 43?

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1. Minsk; 2. “One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest”; 3. Elys; 4. Lemur; 5. Dwight Eisenhower; 6. Triangle; 7. The Book of Revelation; 8. Venus; 9. Organesson (Og); 10. John Candy

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