



Don Davis, U.S. Navy, played a soul-stirring rendition of Taps during the ceremony at Sterling-White Cemetery in Highlands. See story in pages 1 & 6.

HIGHLANDS

CROSBY

# Star Courier

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THURSDAY, JUNE 4, 2026

HIGHLANDS, TEXAS 77562

## Annual Crosby Fair & Rodeo Parade

By David Taylor  
Managing Editor

The Crosby Fair and Rodeo kicked off with a concert Friday night with fan favorites Bag of Doughnuts and then the annual parade Saturday morning.

Parade winners in the Best Float category were First Place—Crosby FFA, Second Place—St. Francis Creative Farms, and Third Place—Trusted Insurance Group. In the Best in Show category, Crosby High School Junior ROTC took First Place, followed by Rancho Gaviria in Second Place, and Crosby Volun-



Crosby FFA, First Place, Best Float

teer Fire Department Fire/Water Rescue in Third Place.

To learn more about festivities, visit their website at [www.crosbyrodeo.com](http://www.crosbyrodeo.com).



Crosby High School Junior ROTC, First Place, Best In Show

Continued. See CROSBY RODEO OPENS WITH CONCERT, PARADE, Page 2

### IN THE STARS

#### EVENT: Biz & Bubbly Networking Mix

Join the Highlands-Lynchburg Chamber of Commerce for an evening of networking, conversation, and community connection. This casual social mixer encourages professionals to bring their business cards and a friend to enjoy an evening of good company and local flavor.

##### WHEN:

Thursday, June 11th  
5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

##### WHERE:

Daniel's Meat Market

##### WHAT TO EXPECT:

Networking

- Conversations
- Community Connections

##### INFO & RSVP:

For more information, visit [allabouthighlands.org](http://allabouthighlands.org). Come see what the buzz is about!

## Taps, Tribute and Tradition Mark The Memorial Day Ceremony

By David Taylor  
Managing Editor

HIGHLANDS — The mournful notes of Taps drifted across the 80-acre grounds of Sterling-White Cemetery on Monday morning as community members gathered to honor the nation's fallen service members during a Memorial Day ceremony in Highlands.

The solemn observance featured the reading of dozens of names of veterans who died during the past year and were buried at Sterling-White. Veteran Don Guillory of the Crosby American Legion read each name aloud, while fellow veteran Dois



The cemetery was splashed with the nation's colors and flags on several of the avenues and throughout the cemetery on the graves of veterans.

Sutton rang a bell after every name, creating a moving cadence of remembrance across the cemetery.

"As we begin this service, may we take a moment to reflect on the courage, dedication and selflessness of those we honor today," said Isabelle Dion, owner of Sterling-White Funeral Home in Highlands. "And may we also keep



Veteran Dois Sutton, from the Crosby American Legion, rang the bell at the announcement of each name of a veteran who was buried this year at Sterling-White Cemetery.

Continued. See VETERANS, SCOUTS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS GATHER, Page 6

## Unearth a Story: Summer Reading Program Brings Fun-Filled Lineup to Families in Highlands Libraries



Cathy and Astro swag winner



Stratford Library Branch Manager Lisa Blackwell, left, assists a new user of the library with a new library card and invites her to this year's summer reading program. (Photo by David Taylor)

HIGHLANDS - Families in Highlands and surrounding communities are enjoying a summer full of learning and entertainment as the Harris County Public Library 2026 Summer Reading Program continues with an exciting lineup of interactive events for children and families.

The program officially kicked off May 28th with a special appearance by the Astros' mascot, Orbit at

the San Jacinto Community Center. Children and families enjoyed an afternoon filled with stories, games, activities, and plenty of Astros spirit as Orbit helped launch the summer celebration of reading. There was plenty of fun had by all during the high-energy opening event, where children also received Astros-themed door prizes donated by the Friends of the Stratford

Library. One photo accompanying this article features AJ, who won an Astros player bobblehead. His father smiled and commented, "The player was on the team when I was your age."

Throughout June and July, the Summer Reading Program will continue to offer a wide variety of edu-

Continued. See STRATFORD LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY, Page 5

### CROSBY SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

## Graduation: A Team Event

Every year, Crosby ISD has the honor of graduating another remarkable group of Cougars and sending them into the world a little more prepared than they were before. The pride I feel for our students is immeasurable, but graduation is never the result of one person, ten people, or even one hundred people. It truly is a team effort.

Helping a group of ever-growing and ever-changing five-year-olds learn, grow, and progress from one grade level to the next until they take that final walk across the stage requires years of dedication from countless individuals. One group that often goes unnoticed during this magical season is our Crosby ISD counselors and graduation committee. These educators and staff members carry much of the responsibility for ensuring graduation night is a success.

On average, our counselors and graduation committee, made up of



Dr. Paula Patterson  
Crosby Superintendent

registrars, secretaries, assistant principals, and many other essential team members, spend nearly 100 hours preparing for this milestone event each year. Yet their work goes far beyond organizing chairs, gowns, and cords. Their work is about students, and it is driven by numbers that represent years of effort and achievement.

5 — The number of EOC exams students must pass in order to graduate.

11 — The number of times the graduation committee has revised and re-worked the lineup for the big day.

26 — The number of

credits each student must earn before graduation.

409 — The number of industry certifications earned through our CTE programs by members of the graduating class at the time this letter was written.

494 — The number of Cougar seniors who will walk across the stage on May 29.

All of these numbers come together to create a three-hour celebration honoring our students and their accomplishments. Not a single moment of that evening could happen without the dedication of our graduation committee. From monitoring transcripts beginning in middle school to hand-calculating GPAs for the Top 5% of students, this team works tirelessly to ensure graduation night is as seamless and meaningful as possible.

During this school year

Continued. See CROSBY SUPERINTENDENT, page 2

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***Behind every graduate is a team dedicated to student achievement,***

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



alone, the Crosby High School Counseling Office has welcomed and supported members of the senior class 1,941 times as counselors worked to help 471 seniors remain on track for graduation. These senior student visits included 395 transcript reviews, 401 meetings focused on college and career planning, and 424 conversations centered on academic progress, career pathways, and graduation goals, along with many more daily conversations in which counselors provided guidance, encouragement, and support to our

students.

Graduation has always been, and will always be, a team event. The work required to make a single evening successful begins long before the stage is constructed. In many cases, it begins nearly six years earlier, when students first start earning high school credits in seventh grade. From that moment forward, our counselors and graduation committee walk beside them every step of the way.

It is with tremendous pride that I congratulate the Class of 2026. I also

want to recognize and celebrate the incredible team of individuals who helped make this achievement possible. While the graduation committee may pack away the caps and gowns the day after commencement, they will quickly return to preparing the next class of Cougars for their own moment to shine.

They are truly committed to students, each and every student, each and every day.

With warmth and pride, Dr. Paula Patterson-Superintendent of Schools, Crosby Independent School District

***Crosby fair and rodeo opens  
with concert, parade and  
community celebration,***

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



**St. Francis Creative Farms. Second Place. Best Float**



Trusted Insurance Group, Third Place, Best Float



**Rancho Gaviria. Second Place. Best In Show**



Crosby Volunteer Fire Department Fire/Water Rescue. Third Place. Best In Show

**LITTLE  
WRANGLER  
RODEO**

AGES 0-8  
**FREE EVENT!**

REGISTRATION  
BEGINS AT 9:30 AM

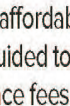
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# Barbers Hill Dayton Press

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

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THURSDAY, JUNE 4, 2026

MONT BELVIEU, TEXAS 77580

## ON THE HILL

### Chambers County GOP Meeting Will be Held on June 18th

#### Save the Date!

The Chambers County GOP Organizational Meeting will be held on June 18th.

During this meeting, we will:

- Swear in the County Chairman and Precinct Chairs
- Elect officers
- Fill committees
- Review by-laws
- Conduct other official business of the party

We currently have three precinct vacancies to fill — Precincts 6, 8, and 19. Please see the map below for locations.

We look forward to seeing everyone there and continuing to build a strong Republican team across Chambers County!

MONT BELVIEU - The journey began in January with one goal: return to Austin and finish what was left unfinished.

On Friday afternoon at Red and Charline McCombs Field, the Barbers Hill Eagles did exactly that.

Fueled by the heartbreak of last season's state runner-up finish and driven by a year-long determination to get back to the biggest stage in Texas high school softball, Barbers Hill defeated Aledo, 11-0, to claim the UIL Class 5A Division I State Championship and bring home the program's second state title.

Junior ace Macie Bryant tosses perfect game with 9 strikeouts and sophomore Maddi Ray ends the five-inning title game in grand fashion, hitting a walk-off grand slam in the run-rule rout.

The championship victory was a fitting ending for a team that never lost sight of its mission after falling 4-2 to Melissa in last year's title game. From the first day of practice, the Eagles carried the disappointment of that



loss as motivation.

Mission accomplished.

Barbers Hill entered the state tournament as one of the most complete teams in Texas, combining dominant pitching, timely hitting and championship experience. The Eagles arrived in Austin with a 39-5 record and a postseason run that showcased their talent and resilience.

Leading the way all season was Bryant, one of the nation's premier pitchers. The LSU commit and Team USA U18 standout delivered

another remarkable postseason, piling up strikeouts and consistently shutting down opposing offenses. Bryant entered the state championship with 320 strikeouts on the season, including 93 during the playoffs, while posting five shutouts and a no-hitter in postseason play.

The Eagles' offense matched that dominance. Throughout the playoffs, Barbers Hill displayed the power that made it one of the most dangerous lineups in the state, launching 16 home

runs over a nine-game stretch and producing extra-base hits at a relentless pace.

Standing across from them was an Aledo team with a rich championship tradition. The matchup also carried history. The Eagles defeated Aledo to win the 2021 state championship, and four years later the two programs met again with a state title on the line.

This time, Barbers Hill once again emerged on top.

The championship capped a remarkable season for a

team that embraced high expectations from the start. The Eagles advanced to Austin after sweeping Leander in the state semifinals and finished the year by winning 11 of their 12 playoff games.

With the state championship secured, the Eagles leave Austin as champions once again, forever cementing their place in Barbers Hill softball history and delivering a title that the community will celebrate for years to come.(Source Barbers Hill ISD)

## NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING TO DISCUSS BUDGET AND PROPOSED TAX RATE

The Barbers Hill Independent School District will hold a public meeting at 6:30 pm, June 22, 2026 at J. Justin Jenson Conference Center, 9600 Eagle Drive in Mont Belvieu, TX. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the school district's budget that will determine the tax rate the school district will adopt. The school district invites public participation in the discussion.

The tax rate the school district ultimately adopts at this meeting or at a separate meeting at a later date may not exceed the proposed rate shown below unless the district publishes a revised notice containing the same information and comparisons set out below and holds another public meeting to discuss the revised notice.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                |                                     |              |                                  |                                  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Maintenance Tax                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | \$0.78450/\$100 (proposed rate for maintenance and operations) |                                     |              |                                  |                                  |
| School Debt Service Tax                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | \$0.26780/\$100 (proposed rate to pay bonded indebtedness)     |                                     |              |                                  |                                  |
| Approved by Local Voters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                |                                     |              |                                  |                                  |
| <b>Comparison of Proposed Budget with Last Year's Budget</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                |                                     |              |                                  |                                  |
| The applicable percentage increase or decrease (or difference) in the amount budgeted in the preceding fiscal year and the amount budgeted for the fiscal year that begins during the current tax year is indicated for each of the following expenditure categories.                                                                                           |                                                                |                                     |              |                                  |                                  |
| Maintenance and operations                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 6.9                                                            | % increase                          |              |                                  |                                  |
| Debt Service                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 4.3                                                            | % increase                          |              |                                  |                                  |
| Total expenditures                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 6.3                                                            | % increase                          |              |                                  |                                  |
| <b>Total Appraised Value and Total Taxable Value</b><br><b>(as calculated under Section 26.04, Tax Code)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                |                                     |              |                                  |                                  |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <b>Preceding Tax Year</b>                                      | <b>Current Tax Year</b>             |              |                                  |                                  |
| Total appraised value* of all property                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | \$ 22,834,230,553                                              | \$ 23,574,113,333                   |              |                                  |                                  |
| Total appraised value* of new property**                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | \$ 359,449,604                                                 | \$ 456,388,930                      |              |                                  |                                  |
| Total taxable value*** of all property                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | \$ 13,984,254,939                                              | \$ 14,736,421,290                   |              |                                  |                                  |
| Total taxable value*** of new property**                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | \$ 359,449,604                                                 | \$ 365,030,900                      |              |                                  |                                  |
| *Appraised value is the amount shown on the appraisal roll and defined by Section 1.04(8).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                |                                     |              |                                  |                                  |
| ** New property is defined by Section 26.012(17).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                |                                     |              |                                  |                                  |
| *** Taxable value is defined by Section 1.04(10).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                |                                     |              |                                  |                                  |
| <b>Bonded Indebtedness</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                |                                     |              |                                  |                                  |
| Total amount of outstanding and unpaid bonded indebtedness* \$561,700,000                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                |                                     |              |                                  |                                  |
| *Outstanding principal.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                |                                     |              |                                  |                                  |
| <b>Comparison of Proposed Rates with Last Year's Rates</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                |                                     |              |                                  |                                  |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <b>Maintenance &amp; Operations</b>                            | <b>Interest &amp; Sinking Fund*</b> | <b>Total</b> | <b>Local Revenue Per Student</b> | <b>State Revenue Per Student</b> |
| Last Year's Rate                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | \$0.80220                                                      | \$0.25010                           | \$1.05230    | \$21,143                         | \$899                            |
| Rate to Maintain Same Level of Maintenance & Operations Revenue & Pay Debt Service                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | \$0.79240                                                      | \$0.25620                           | \$1.04860    | \$21,229                         | \$882                            |
| Proposed Rate                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | \$0.78450                                                      | \$0.26780                           | \$1.05230    | \$21,374                         | \$882                            |
| *The interest and sinking fund tax revenue is used to pay for bonded indebtedness on construction, equipment, or both.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                |                                     |              |                                  |                                  |
| The bonds, and the tax rate necessary to pay those bonds, were approved by the voters of this district.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                |                                     |              |                                  |                                  |
| <b>Comparison of Proposed Levy with Last Year's Levy on Average Residence</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                |                                     |              |                                  |                                  |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <b>Last Year</b>                                               | <b>This Year</b>                    |              |                                  |                                  |
| Average Market Value of Residences                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | \$390,317                                                      | \$386,832                           |              |                                  |                                  |
| Average Taxable Value of Residences                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | \$130,675                                                      | \$128,599                           |              |                                  |                                  |
| Last Year's Rate Versus Proposed Rate per \$100 Value                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | \$1.05230                                                      | \$1.05230                           |              |                                  |                                  |
| Taxes Due on Average Residence                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | \$1,375.09                                                     | \$1,353.25                          |              |                                  |                                  |
| Increase (Decrease) in Taxes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                | \$-21.84                            |              |                                  |                                  |
| Under state law, the dollar amount of school taxes imposed on the residence homestead of a person age 65 or older or of their surviving spouse, if the surviving spouse was age 55 or older when the person died, may not be increased above the amount paid in the first year after the person turned 65, regardless of changes in tax rate or property value. |                                                                |                                     |              |                                  |                                  |
| Notice of Voter-Approval Rate: The highest tax rate the district can adopt before requiring voter approval at an election is \$1.05230. This election will be automatically held if the district adopts a rate in excess of the voter-approval rate of \$1.05230.                                                                                               |                                                                |                                     |              |                                  |                                  |
| <b>Fund Balances</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                |                                     |              |                                  |                                  |
| The following estimated balances will remain at the end of the current fiscal year and are not encumbered with or by a corresponding debt obligation, less estimated funds necessary for operating the district before receipt of the first state aid payment.                                                                                                  |                                                                |                                     |              |                                  |                                  |
| Maintenance and Operations Fund Balance(s)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | \$25,812,500                                                   |                                     |              |                                  |                                  |
| Interest & Sinking Fund Balance(s)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | \$32,000,000                                                   |                                     |              |                                  |                                  |
| A school district may not increase the district's maintenance and operations tax rate to create a surplus in maintenance and operations tax revenue for the purpose of paying the district's debt service.                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                |                                     |              |                                  |                                  |
| Visit Texas.gov/Property Taxes to find a link to your local property tax database on which you can easily access information regarding your property taxes, including information about proposed tax rates and scheduled hearings of each entity that taxes your property.                                                                                      |                                                                |                                     |              |                                  |                                  |
| The 86 <sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature modified the manner in which the voter-approval tax rate is calculated to limit the rate of growth of property taxes in the state.                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                |                                     |              |                                  |                                  |

★

OPINION PAGE

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OPINION

By BILL KING



# Whitmire’s Budget Proposal Buys the City Time

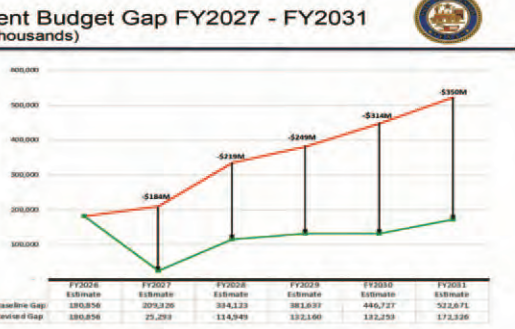
You may have seen my **op-ed in the Houston Chronicle**, regarding my views on Mayor Whitmire's budget proposal for the upcoming year. Because the paper has limited space for an op-ed, I wanted to provide my regular readers with some additional details and context.

My basic takeaway is that it buys us a couple of years to address the City's more fundamental financial challenges. It is not a permanent fix.

The City's finances are wickedly complex and involve several different funds. Its largest and most pressing challenge for the last two decades has been the General Fund. The General Fund pays for most of the services the City provides, such as police, fire, parks, etc. Importantly, it does not fund the water and sewer system, which in City lingo, is the Combined Utility System ("CUS"). State law requires that utilities, such as water and sewer, be accounted for and operated separately. Think of it as a separate entity or subsidiary of the City.

The City entered the current budget cycle, needing a little over \$200 million to balance its General Fund. Its **five-year projection** shows that number ramping up to over \$500 million by 2030 (see p. 51).

Current Budget Gap FY2027 - FY2031  
(\$ in Thousands)



| Fiscal Year | General Fund Gap | Combined Gap |
|-------------|------------------|--------------|
| FY2027      | \$100,000        | \$100,000    |
| FY2028      | \$150,000        | \$150,000    |
| FY2029      | \$300,000        | \$300,000    |
| FY2030      | \$400,000        | \$400,000    |
| FY2031      | \$500,000        | \$500,000    |

Of course, a structural deficit in the General Fund is nothing new. Since the City's ill-fated decision to dramatically increase its pension benefits in the early 2000s, a succession of City Controllers have been warning that the deficits would ultimately become unsustainable, either requiring massive property tax increases or a reduction in expenditures.

The plan that the Whitmire administration laid out involves three basic elements. The one that has gotten the most attention, but is by far the least consequential, is an entry-level garbage fee of \$5 per month. The City currently has only 393,000 garbage customers, so at \$60 per year, the fee will only bring in about \$23-24 million. After collection losses and exemptions that Council will likely add for seniors and potentially others, the real number will probably be closer to \$20 million.

The real General Fund relief comes from transferring all garbage collection to the CUS and imposing a fee on the CUS for use of the City's rights-of-way. Transferring the Solid Waste Department to the CUS will transfer about \$100 million in expenses from the General Fund to the CUS.

State law dictates that a municipality cannot make a "profit" from its utilities to use for other purposes. However, it does allow municipalities to charge a utility for various items. Specifically, cities are allowed to charge a utility for the right-of-way it uses to run its lines. Every major city in Texas imposes such a charge on its water and sewer utility, and other utilities, such as Comcast and CenterPoint, pay similar fees. They are generally set as a percentage of the utilities' revenues. Whitmire's budget proposal calls for a 5% charge, which is toward the lower end of what other Texas cities charge their utilities (see p. 19). This will move about \$100 million from the CUS to the General Fund.

So, moving the Solid Waste expenses to the CUS and charging it for the rights-of-way will generate about \$200 million in relief for the General Fund. Because this is a permanent change and not a one-time fix, it reduces the projected General Fund deficit in 2031 to under \$200 million.

The principal question that this proposal raises is whether the CUS can afford this \$200 million hit. My judgment is that it can in the short- to medium-term, but whether it can in the longer term is an open question.

There was a time when the CUS was in dire straits. During the early 2000s, it was technically insolvent as its liabilities exceeded its assets. However, since then, water and sewer increases under Mayors Parker and Turner in 2010 and 2021, respectively, have dramatically improved the CUS's finances. From being insolvent in the early 2000s, it reached a fund balance of \$4.4 billion last year, with almost \$2 billion in liquidity. In addition, over the last three years, it has invested \$2.4 billion in capital improvements to the system and reduced its bond debt by almost \$1 billion.

Also, last year the City obtained a **\$1 billion loan from the Texas Water Development Board** on favorable terms to repair the dilapidated East End Water Plant. According to my sources, more help from the State may be on the way. Which, by the way, is one of the reasons that poking the Governor in the eye over 33 people being turned over to ICE was such a stupid idea.

So, the CUS is flush for now. However, in the longer term, it faces significant challenges. Our wastewater system leaks like a sieve, which means we regularly dump untreated sewage into our bayous and streams. The City has been under a series of consent decrees with the EPA since the 1980s for violating the Clean Water Act. And, of course, we have all heard reports that the freshwater system loses billions of gallons each year through leaks. So, there is still a lot of work to be done. Some estimates put the amount of investment needed in the \$14 billion range.

Although not officially part of this year's budget, the Whitmire administration has signaled its intent to begin to increase the garbage fee in 2028 by \$5 per year, eventually raising it to \$25 per month. If that were to happen, it would take about half of the burden off the CUS.

The Whitmire administration is also promising to use the new resources to improve garbage pickup. You will have to excuse me for being skeptical. I have heard a similar promise from every mayor in my lifetime. None has succeeded.

This is primarily because the City's operations do not operate on a viable economic scale. The City picks up only a relatively small portion of the total garbage. It does not service apartments or businesses, and about a quarter of households have already fled the City's abysmal service in favor of private haulers. I suspect that many others will follow suit as the fee begins to ramp up.

This leaves the City with a patchwork of fewer than 400,000 customers spread over 600 square miles. That means routes are impossibly long and inefficient. The only logical solution is to outsource the entire thing, which I suspect will ultimately be the case. Indeed, the imposition of the garbage fee may accelerate that day. But if the City insists on continuing to operate a fundamentally inefficient garbage model, it will ultimately need to ramp up the garbage to keep from impairing the CUS fund.

On balance, I think the proposal is a reasonable stopgap. But make no mistake, this is not a permanent solution to the City's financial woes. And they are not problems we can tax our way out of. To cover the currently projected General Fund deficit, not to mention catching up on our woefully antiquated infrastructure, would require nearly a 60% increase in property taxes over the next five years. That would violate the city charter and state law and prompt a taxpayer revolt.

We will eventually have to face some difficult choices. I do not believe that dramatically increasing property taxes is the answer, and that it would only serve to drive more Houstonians to the suburbs.

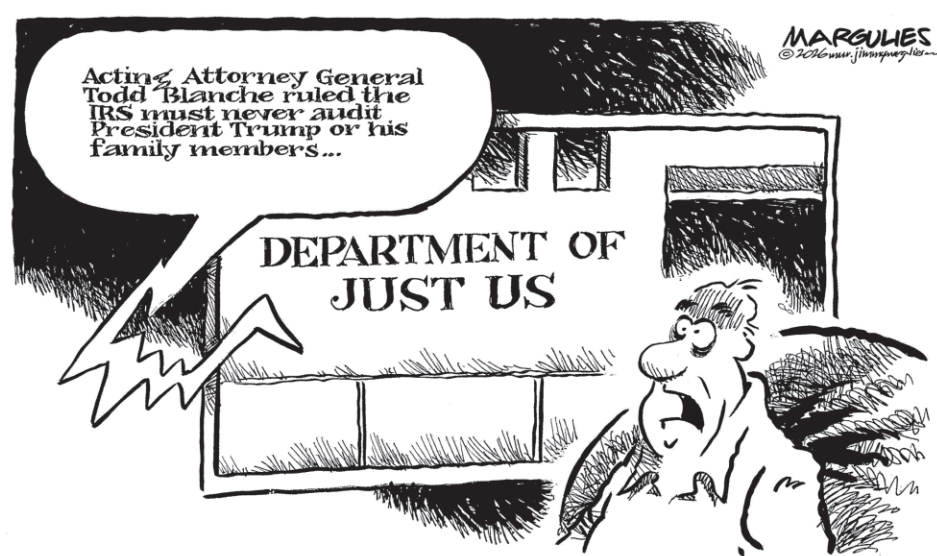
Instead, we need to reconsider giving away half of our sales tax (~\$1 billion) to a transit agency that carries fewer riders than it did in 2004 and giving away \$200 million in our property taxes to TIRZs that mostly lavish projects on wealthy neighborhoods.

Whitmire should come down hard on overtime. Large recurring overtime is a management failure. Whitmire should make it clear to the managers of the departments where this has been a problem for years that their jobs are on the line if it continues.

In fact, we need to completely rethink our models for public safety. For years, we have just thrown more money at HPD and HFD, with little to show for it. Those departments are still about the same size today as they were 20 years ago. No "boots on the ground" have been added. HPD's clearance rates remain at abysmal levels. The Ernest & Young efficiency study indicated that HPD and HFD were, by far, the most top-heavy departments in the City.

These will be the real challenges. Hopefully, the City will use the time this proposal buys to do the hard, and sometimes unpopular work, to actually address the City's long-term financial viability.

**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.



★

STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

By Gary Borders



# Texas Oil Industry at War with Itself

The GOP runoff race for a seat on the Texas Railroad Commission is pitting oil industry leaders against each other. Many small-scale oil companies are supporting former Tarrant County Republican Party chair Bo French because of incumbent Jim Wright's efforts to lead reforms at the Commission, the Houston Chronicle reported.

"I can't support Jim Wright, because Jim Wright makes rules that are silly for lots and lots and lots of operators," said Lance Thomas, manager of Albany-based Stasney Well Service. His company is suing the Railroad Commission over new rules about how oil operators manage onsite waste pits.

A political action committee associated with oil billionaire Tim Dunn, a conservative megadonor, has contributed at least \$350,000 to French's campaign. On the flip side, Chevron, Exxon Mobil, and other major oil companies have contributed to PACs backing Wright.

French has drawn controversy for public comments he has made about Muslims and DEI.

**PAXTON STEPS UP INVESTIGATIONS AS RUNOFF NEARS**

Attorney General Ken Paxton has steadily increased his lawsuits, investigations, and public threats around many of the conservative causes that energize Republicans, The Dallas Morning News reported. More than 100 news releases announcing such actions have been issued since early January.

Critics say he is using the attorney general's office for political gain rather than enforcement. Supporters say Paxton is pursuing the issues Texas conservatives elected him to champion.

"He's been suing the pants off people. I like that," said Laura Oakley, president of the Grapevine Republican Club.

The topics since the March primary included immigration, Islam, China, visa fraud, election



maps, birthright citizenship and foreign influence, according to The News report. A spokesman for Paxton's campaign called the review of Paxton's investigations "garbage" and not "worth printing."

**LOTTERY COMMISSION, EX-DIRECTOR FACE CRIMINAL CHARGES**

Former Texas lottery director Gary Grief and the Texas Lottery Commission have been charged with misusing their positions in a 2023 Lotto Texas drawing worth \$95 million, the Austin American-Statesman reported. The criminal charges assert the agency helped international gamblers engineer a guaranteed win.

Agency officials helped professional bettors purchase nearly every possible six-number combination — more than 25 million tickets — assuring they would win the \$95 million jackpot, according to the charges. However, Grief's attorney issued a statement saying, in part, "When all facts are revealed in court, the public will see that Gary's leadership at the Lottery Commission generated millions of dollars for Texas schools and veterans and there was no crime."

Grief and the commission are charged with abuse of official capacity, a broadly worded offense alleging "intent to harm or defraud another" by misusing "government property, services, personnel or any other thing of value belonging to the government," the Statesman reported.

**TEXAS' MIGRANT DEPORTATION LAW LIKELY TO BE BLOCKED**

A new law allowing state officials to arrest and deport undocumented immigrants took effect last week, but it appears likely a federal judge will soon move to block it, according to the Houston Chronicle. U.S. District Judge David A. Ezra has previously called the law "patently unconstitutional," but delayed making a ruling.

Senate Bill 4 has been stymied since its passage by legal challenges arguing that immigration enforcement is under the purview of the federal government, not state governments.

"Gov. Abbott is the sovereign governor of the state of Texas. He is not the president of the United States," Ezra said. "DPS officers are not ICE agents."

The GOP majority in the Texas Legislature passed the law during an immigration surge during the Biden administration. That surge has since receded, and few GOP lawmakers have been pushing for the law to be implemented, according to the Chronicle.

**GRIMES COUNTY RESIDENTS QUESTION PROPOSED CHIP FACILITY**

Elon Musk's bid to build what he calls the world's largest computer chip manufacturing facility in Grimes County, southeast of College Station, is drawing opposition from some residents, according to the San Antonio Express-News. Musk is seeking tax breaks to build the facility, dubbed Terafab.

Supporters say the initial \$55 billion investment would later double in subsequent phases, which is too good to pass up. Opponents question the track record of Musk's businesses, such as SpaceX, and whether the huge company needs tax breaks.

"I believe it would be immoral to give this company tax abatement when we have serious concerns about health issues and safety issues," county resident Jacqueline Ross told Grimes County commissioners.

SpaceX was fined nearly \$150,000 in 2024 for breaking clean water laws after a fuel spill at its South Texas launch site. It also was cited for illegally discharging wastewater into wetlands near its Boca Chica facilities.

The company is seeking a \$1.75 trillion valuation when it goes public in a few months, prompting some residents to question why it needs a tax break.

Gary Borders is a veteran award-winning Texas journalist. He published a number of community newspapers in Texas during a 30-year span, including in Longview, Fort Stockton, Cadogan Park, Lufkin and Nacogdoches. Email: gborders@texaspress.com.

★

THE POSTSCRIPT

By Carrie Classon

# A Mother who reads



"I had a mother who read to me. Sagas of pirates who scoured the sea, Cutlasses clenched in their yellow teeth, 'Blackbirds' stowed in the hold beneath."

I am "up north," as people say, spending time with my parents at their cabin. My parents are spending more time in town, especially in the winter. But now it is spring, and to hear them tell it, being a nonagenarian is no reason to stay away from the place they love best.

I help out a little with things that are getting harder for them to do, but honestly, I don't do much more than enjoy their company and fold into their life for a few days, talking and running errands and sharing thoughts about the news of the day and memories of the past.

And I listen to my mom reading.

My mom has always read aloud. Reading was a daily habit for my mother, and she made it clear from the time I was small that there was nothing unusual about reading aloud — a children's story, an editorial or the Bible. My mom read aloud to us nearly every day, as I recall.

The stories left an indelible mark. I remember the sweetness of Laura Ingalls Wilder describing Pa playing the fiddle by firelight in the middle of the Wisconsin woods, and I remember the horror of Hans Christian Andersen describing the house where the witch lived at the bottom of the sea, built with the bones of drowned sailors. My mom took me to all these places, my sister and I, and my father was listening, more often than not.

Perhaps for a while my mother read a little less. I honestly don't know if she read aloud as much when they were busy building their cabin in the woods. But not long after, perhaps even before my father's eyesight began to fade, my mother began reading aloud again every day.

My mother complains, "I read it, but your father remembers it!" And it's true, my dad listens carefully and has an excellent memory.

She reads a daily devotional aloud. She reads an essay by a nature writer. She reads a chapter in a book they are working through. She reads a meme she thinks is funny. She reads an article from the local paper. She reads to my dad, and when I visit, I hear her read.

Yesterday, I went to my mother's book club. There were nearly 20 women reading the poems of a local poet. And I realized that my beliefs about writing and the value I place on books come almost entirely from my mom.

She felt that books should be shared. She let me know that stories brought people together. She was honest if she didn't understand what a writer was trying to say or if they used a word she didn't know. There was no shame in that. Read the passage aloud. Talk about it. Look up the word. How else can you learn? Years ago, I helped organize a reading for Mother's Day. There were short stories about mothers and poems about a mother's love. I honestly don't remember what all we read. But one poem, "The Reading Mother," by Strickland Gillilan, stayed with me. Even though the poem was old and a little sentimental, it stuck in my mind because it was still so deeply true for me.

"You may have tangible wealth untold; Caskets of jewels and coffers of gold. Richer than I you can never be — I had a Mother who read to me." Till next time, Carrie

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# Stratford Library and community partners deliver full summer of educational entertainment,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



AJ ASTROS SWAG WINNER



ASTROS SWAG WINNERS



ORBIT TALKS ABOUT READING



ORBIT AUDIENCE AT SAN JACINTO COMMUNITY CENTER

cational and entertaining performances at the San Jacinto Community Center and Stratford Branch Library. Highlights include a theatrical presentation of “The Ballerina with the Webbed Feet” by Books Alive, a high-energy science show from Mad Science, and “Reading is Magic” with magician Magic Lanny.

Animal lovers and young scientists can also look forward to live wildlife presentations from Creature Teacher and Texas Snakes & More, along with an owl pellet dissection program presented by Sheldon State Park. Additional hands-on experiences include the Domino’s Dough Show, where children can learn pizza-tossing skills, and a prehistoric-themed presentation from the Houston Museum of Natural Science exploring a potential battle between Megalodon and Tyrannosaurus Rex.

The summer series concludes July 30 with an interactive reptile adventure at Stratford Branch Library.

The Harris County Public Library holds the Summer Reading Program each year designed to keep children engaged in reading and learning during the summer months through fun, family-friendly experiences that combine literacy, science, music, theater, and hands-on discovery. Readers of all ages are encouraged to sign up at [hcpl.beanstack.org](http://hcpl.beanstack.org) to begin logging your activities or reading minutes. There are many prizes to earn at each level of the challenge! Even a green “dinoduck!”

A special thanks to Precinct 3 and the San Jacinto Community Center for generously allowing the library to host many of the summer programs in their facility and helping make these community events possible.

Most programs begin at 2 p.m., with select events scheduled at 10 a.m. Community members are encouraged to attend and participate in the free summer activities. Please see our social media sites @stratfordbranchlibrary for Facebook and @highlandsstratfordlibrary on Instagram for exact dates or call the Stratford Library at 832-927-5400. [Here’s the text version of the events:](#)

Twirl into a World of Imagination with Books Alive!  
Thursday, June 4, 2026 — 10:00 AM  
[Stratford Branch Library](#)  
509 Stratford St., Highlands, TX 77562

Get Ready to Blast Off with Mad Science: “Up, Up, and Away!”  
Thursday, June 11, 2026 — 2:00 PM  
[San Jacinto Community Center](#)  
604 Highland Woods Dr., Highlands, TX 77562

Discover the Magic of Reading with Magic Lanny!  
Thursday, June 18, 2026 — 2:00 PM  
[San Jacinto Community Center](#)  
604 Highland Woods Dr., Highlands, TX 77562

Get Wild with Creature Teacher  
Thursday, June 25, 2026 — 2:00 PM  
[San Jacinto Community Center](#)  
604 Highland Woods Dr., Highlands, TX 77562

Turn Up the Music with Andyroo and the Andyrooniverse!  
Thursday, July 2, 2026 — 2:00 PM  
[Stratford Branch Library](#)  
509 Stratford St., Highlands, TX 77562

Stretch, Spin, and Toss into Fun with the Domino’s Dough Show!  
Thursday, July 9, 2026 — 2:00 PM  
[Stratford Branch Library](#)  
509 Stratford St., Highlands, TX 77562

Meg vs. T. rex: The Ultimate Prehistoric Show-down!  
Thursday, July 16, 2026 — 2:00 PM  
[Stratford Branch Library](#)  
509 Stratford St., Highlands, TX 77562

Owl Pellet Dissection: Nature’s Mystery Uncovered with Sheldon State Park!  
Thursday, July 23, 2026 — 2:00 PM  
[Stratford Branch Library](#)  
509 Stratford St., Highlands, TX 77562

Texas Snakes & More: A Wild, Hands-On Reptile Adventure!  
Thursday, July 30, 2026 — 2:00 PM  
[Stratford Branch Library](#)  
509 Stratford St., Highlands, TX 77562

## DPS Announces Changes to CDL Knowledge Testing

AUSTIN – The Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) announces changes to the state’s commercial driver license (CDL) testing process. **Effective today, all Texas CDL and commercial learner permit (CLP) knowledge examinations will be administered in English only.**

This change aligns Texas’ testing procedures with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration’s (FMCSA) English language proficiency requirements and will help ensure that all newly licensed commercial drivers have the communication skills necessary to operate these vehicles safely on Texas roads. Previously, CDL knowledge tests were offered in both English and Spanish. The hands-on CDL skills test, which includes pre-trip inspection, basic control skills and the road test, has always been conducted in English only.

**Applicants scheduled for CDL/CLP knowledge testing on or after June 1, 2026, should be prepared to complete all written and automated knowledge exams in English.** Interpreters for these exams are prohibited. Updated study materials for these exams, as well as the Texas Commercial Motor Vehicle Driver’s Handbook, are available to applicants free of charge on the DPS website.

DPS personnel on Texas roads, along with other certified commercial vehicle inspectors, will continue to conduct English language proficiency evaluations during routine traffic stops and at weigh stations. These evaluations are a critical measure to ensure drivers possess the necessary communication skills for on-road safety and compliance with federal regulations, and any commercial vehicle driver who does not meet the proficiency standard will be placed out of service.

All these actions, and others like them, are part of the department’s continued efforts to make roads safer across the state and nation.

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# Atom X

# Veterans, scouts and community members gather to honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

their families and loved ones in our thoughts and prayers on behalf of every-one at Sterling-White.”

The ceremony’s featured speaker, Cadet Major Khailyn Hellweg, a recent graduate of Crosby High School who is preparing to enter the U.S. Marines, spoke of the personal meaning of service and sacrifice.

“Memorial Day is one of the most important days our nation observes because it reminds us that freedom is never free,” Hellweg said. “It is a day to remember the brave men and women who gave their lives so that future generations could live with the freedoms and opportunities we have today.”

Hellweg said she has been inspired by veterans, active-duty service members and members of her own family, calling service “more than just wearing a uniform — it’s about protecting others and standing for something greater than yourself.”

She also reflected on the rows of flags placed throughout the cemetery.

“Those flags are more than decorations,” Hellweg said. “They are symbols of remembrance, gratitude, and respect. Each one represents a life given in service to this



Each year, the Wall of Honor at Sterling-White Cemetery in Highlands receives two beautiful floral sprays placed by the Daughters of the American Revolution Old 300<sup>th</sup> Chapter and the Crosby High School Junior ROTC under the direction of LTC Toimu Reeves.



Cadet Major Khailyn Hellweg from the Crosby High School Jr. ROTC program was the speaker at the program. Hellweg ships out to basic training in August to the U.S. Marines.



The bell from the Crosby American Legion Hall was rung at the reading of each of the names of veterans who died this year and were buried in the Sterling-White cemetery.



Veteran Don Guillory read the dozens of names of veterans who died this past year and were buried in the Sterling-White cemetery.

country — a person who had dreams, family, friends and a future, but chose to sacrifice everything for their country.”

The ceremony also included a prayer from Rev. Keenan Smith of Crosby Church, who reminded attendees of the cost of the freedoms Americans often take for granted.

“Gathered on this hallowed ground, we stand here today with the freedom to worship, the freedom to pray, the freedom to gather,” Smith said. “Today we honor those who gave their lives and remember the sacrifices that have been made.”

He added, “May we walk in humility, stand in courage, and live worthy of the freedoms that have been purchased with a high price.”

Boy Scout Troop 264, Troop 1264 and Pack 264, under the direction of Mark Owen and Walter Mosley, also participated in the program, helping underscore the ceremony’s message of remembrance across generations.

From the ringing of the bell to the final notes of Taps, the Memorial Day ceremony at Sterling-White offered a powerful reminder that the nation’s fallen are not forgotten.

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Jennifer Lopez & Brett Goldstein star in "Forbidden Fruits."

“Forbidden Fruits”

“The Roses” (R) — This black-comedy film, led by Oscar winner Olivia Colman (“The Favourite”) and Oscar nominee Benedict Cumberbatch (“The Phenician Scheme”), is a reimagining of the 1989 film called “The War of the Roses.” The original film starred Michael Douglas, Danny DeVito and Kathleen Turner and was directed by DeVito; but the remake went under the radar during its theatrical release this past August. Colman and Cumberbatch, respectively, play Ivy and Theo Rose, an ambitious married couple whose marriage begins to collapse after Theo loses his job. Tension and resentment between the spouses build due to their different parenting styles and Theo’s jealousy of Ivy’s success, leaving viewers watching between their fingers as the Roses duke

it out in their own personal war. Out now. (Hulu)

“Off Campus” (TV-MA) — This romantic-drama series, based on Elle Kennedy’s books, premiered in May and has already generated a huge fan following online. Ella Bright, who once played a young Kate Middleton in “The Crown,” portrays music student Hannah at the fictional Briar University. When hockey team captain Garrett (Belmont Cameli) needs help studying, Hannah volunteers to help him under the guise that he pretends to be her fake boyfriend so she can impress the guy she truly likes. (Ah, young love!) Of course, anyone who’s seen anything with a similar plot knows where this is going. Steve Howey (“Shameless”) and Antonio Cipriano (“The Alto Knights”) co-star in the series, and all eight episodes are out now with a second

season already in the works! (Amazon Prime Video)

“Margo’s Got Money Troubles” (TV-MA) — This comedy-drama series has quite the cast to carry its interesting plot off the ground: Elle Fanning (“A Complete Unknown”) leads the series with Nick Offerman (“Parks and Recreation”), Michelle Pfeiffer (“The Madison”), and Nicole Kidman (“Scarpetta”) rounding out the rest of the main cast. Fanning plays the titular character — 20-year-old Margo — an aspiring writer and new mom who turns to OnlyFans for financial support after the birth of her baby. Although some people don’t approve of her stream of income, Margo is successful and suspends all logic of what she “should be” doing in life so that she can figure out who she really is inside. All eight episodes are out now to stream. (Apple TV+)

“Office Romance” (R) — This sexy rom-com hitting Netflix on June 5 stars Jennifer Lopez (“Kiss of the Spider-Woman”) and Brett Goldstein (“Shrinking”), who also co-wrote the screenplay. Lopez plays Jackie Cruz, president and CEO of the airline Air Cruz, and she’s a no-nonsense type of executive with most of her employees fearing her, a la Miranda Priestly. When new lawyer Daniel (Goldstein) starts working at the company, his warm, kind energy pierces the chilly ice queen in an impactful way. Because of this new relationship with Daniel, Jackie’s finally able to turn over a new leaf in life and learn that there’s more to it than work and financial success. (Netflix)

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**Q:What ever happened to actress Brooke Burns?** I saw her hosting a game show recently, but I don’t know if it’s a new or old show. — M.G.

**A:** Actress Brooke Burns went from “Baywatch” and “North Shore” to starring in a series of Hallmark Movies & Mysteries Originals, like “Gourmet Detective” and its sequels. The last of these TV films was in 2020, and she has since transitioned to a very successful career as a game-show host. You can find her hosting episodes of “Master Minds” and “Tic-Tac-Dough” on the GSN (Game Show Network) channel.

\*\*\*

**Q:Is it true that there’s going to be a “Real Housewives of Austin” on Bravo? What ever happened to the one in Dallas? — K.L.**

**A:** Most “Real Housewives” franchises have been successful. For example, “Orange County” will be celebrating its 20th season on the Bravo network this year. Others just never really caught on like “Dubai,” which was canceled after two seasons, and “Dallas,” which was placed on “indefinite hiatus” in 2021 after five seasons.

There have been rumblings of a possible franchise based in Austin, Texas, but nothing has officially been announced. Ronnie Karam, co-host of the podcast “Watch What Crappens” and resident of Austin, was asked about it at this year’s iHeart Podcast Awards. He believes that the show would excel if they simply cast housewives who’ve recently relocated from California with old-school Austinites and “just watch the sparks fly.”

Someone’s ears must have been burning because Bravo recently announced an upcoming reality show titled “Secrets, Lies, Texas Wives,” which will be set in the Texas Hill Country town of Boerne and follow its wealthy inhabitants. However, a big chunk of the population is opposed to seeing their town being given the Bravo treatment. In fact, there’s already a petition on Change.org from those who fear that it’ll harm the small town’s reputation.

As for “Dallas,” I don’t see it returning. Bravo has a new hit on its hands with



Brooke Burns in “Roux the Day: A Gourmet Detective Mystery

“Rhode Island” and is also redeveloping its “New York” franchise again.

\*\*\*

**Q: Is the “Yellowstone” spin-off “Marshals” coming back for a second season, or has it been canceled? I didn’t hear much talk about it when it was on. — B.E.**

**A:**Yes, despite season one ending in a cliffhanger for several of its characters, “Marshals” will be back on CBS this fall on Sundays at 8 p.m. ET. Its series premiere this past March was “the most-watched CBS original series debut without a football lead-in since ‘Young Sheldon’ premiered in 2017,” according to CBS Entertainment.

I’m not sure why you didn’t hear much buzz about the series throughout the season, but it finished just as strongly as its debut in terms of ratings. While it’s certainly not Emmy-worthy, “Marshals” has performed quite well for CBS and doesn’t appear to be in danger of a cancellation.

Send me your questions at NewCelebrityExtra@gmail.com.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Amber Waves



Weekly SUDOKU

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

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 ♦♦♦♦ HQO BOY!

HOCUS-FOCUS BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

References: 1. Candle is taller. 2. Arm is resting on table. 3. Back of chair is different. 4. Hat on table is removed. 5. Light is shorter. 6. Hair is different.

June 1, 2026 Posting Date

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Idle of Monty Python
- 5 Homer's lament
- 8 Grate
- 12 Sprint
- 13 Geological period
- 14 Intro studio class
- 15 Met melody
- 16 Knee cartilage
- 18 Cough drop flavor
- 20 Valerie Harper sitcom
- 21 Light brown
- 22 Fluffy neck-piece
- 23 Streep of "The Post"
- 26 Patching up
- 30 Lab eggs
- 31 Witty one
- 32 Wrigley product
- 33 Proteges
- 36 Accra's country
- 38 Stein filler
- 39 Zadora of "Hairspray"
- 40 Huge success
- 43 H.L. — (The Sage of Baltimore)
- 47 Cites
- 49 Comic actor Danny

DOWN

- 1 Dutch cheese
- 2 Exceptional
- 3 "The doctor —"
- 4 Talkative
- 5 Fiend
- 6 Pitcher Hersher
- 7 Solo in space
- 8 Actress Phylcia
- 9 With the bow, musically
- 10 Poker type
- 11 Galileo's birthplace
- 17 Pressing need
- 19 Actor Linden
- 22 Plead
- 23 Soccer —
- 24 Prior night
- 25 Campaigned
- 26 More, to Manuel
- 27 Polish tennis star Swiatek
- 28 Convent head
- 29 "Today" rival, briefly
- 31 Pint-sized
- 34 Flavors
- 35 K thru 12
- 36 Tom Collins liquor
- 37 Website invader
- 39 Green sauce
- 40 Urban haze
- 41 Apportion
- 42 Shortly
- 43 L-Q bridge
- 44 Designer Spade
- 45 Literary Jane
- 46 Must have
- 48 British singer Rita

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Answers

King Crossword

Solution time: 23 mins.

Weekly SUDOKU

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

Answer

Trivia test by Fifi Rodriguez

- 1. TELEVISION: What are the names of the three girls in the animated series “Powerpuff Girls”?
- 2. GEOGRAPHY: Which ocean lies between Australia and Africa?
- 3. MATH: What is the Arabic equivalent of the Roman numerals MMXXVI?
- 4. MUSIC: Who won Best New Artist at the 2026 Grammys?
- 5. U.S. STATES: Which state is an archipelago?
- 6. MOVIES: Which classic movie has the tagline, “From the moment they met it was murder”?
- 7. GAMES: How many basketball players can be on the court at the same time?
- 8. SCIENCE: What is the heliosphere?
- 9. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: What is vexilology?
- 10. HISTORY: Who was the only English king to be executed for treason?

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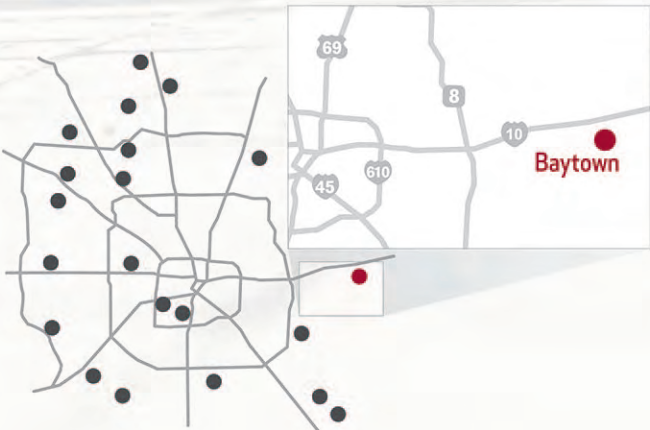
1. Blossom, Buttercup and Bubbles; 2. Indian Ocean; 3. 2,026; 4. Olivia Dean; 5. Hawaii; 6. “Double Indemnity”; 7. 10; 8. five from each team; 9. The Sun’s solar winds and magnetic fields create a protective bubble around our solar system; 10. Charles I in 1649

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