



Visitors stop at the Texas Department of Transportation's interactive Be Safe, Drive Smart. Speeding Awareness Campaign exhibit outside Buc-ee's in Baytown, where the TxDOT traffic safety street team shared educational materials, quizzes and videos encouraging motorists to slow down and drive safely. See more information in page 3.

HIGHLANDS

CROSBY

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THURSDAY, JULY 30, 2026

HIGHLANDS, TEXAS 77562

IN THE STARS

Highlands Backpack Giveaway

Harris County Sheriff's Office is coming to Highlands with 200 backpacks filled with school supplies to give away!

When: August 5 at 10:00 AM
Where: San Jacinto Community Center
604 Highland Woods Dr.
Highland, TX 77562
This will be a drive-through giveaway.

School-aged children must be present in the vehicle.

Supplies are limited and will be available while supplies last!

San Jacinto Community Center is excited to host the Harris County Sheriff's Office during their BackPack giveaway, and grateful they chose our little town.

Back-to- School Fair

BAYTOWN — Goose Creek CISD students will have the opportunity to receive free school supplies and connect with community resources during the annual Back-to-School Fair on **Saturday, Aug. 8.**

The event will be held from 8 a.m. to noon, or until supplies are exhausted, at the Baytown Community Center, 2407 Market St. Baytown, TX 77520. For Goose Creek CISD students, and families must provide proof of student registration during check-in.

Students attending the event will receive free backpacks and school supplies while supplies last. Families will also have access to a variety of community resources, including information and services designed to support students throughout the school year.

Additional offerings include laptop giveaways, child identification services, birth certificate assistance and free lunches.

The event is presented by the City of Baytown in partnership with Communities In Schools Baytown and is made possible through sponsorships from local businesses and organizations.

Organizers encourage eligible families to arrive early, as supplies will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis.

'Concert on The Water' Draws Record Crowd to Lake Houston Brewery

By David Taylor
Managing Editor

The Crosby-Huffman Chamber of Commerce's Concert On The Water more than met expectations Saturday night, drawing a packed crowd to Lake Houston Brewery for an evening of live music, community support and waterfront fun.

The chamber had hoped to build on last year's inaugural concert, which drew more than 150 people, and organizers had set a goal of about 250 attendees for this year's event. Instead, the crowd climbed even higher.

"We had, including children and volunteers, over 350 people," said Deanna Becker of the Crosby-Huffman Chamber of Com-



merce staff. "It was packed."

The July 25 concert featured Texas country-soul singer Sundance Head, the Porter-born artist who won season 11 of NBC's "The Voice" in 2016 after earlier appearing on "American Idol."

"Sundance Head was

our headliner," Becker said. "He played first, a nice acoustic set, and then he hung around and took pictures and signed autographs."

The Kingwood Dad Bods followed later in the evening, bringing what Becker described as an energetic party atmosphere

to the lakeside venue. Visiting Angels, one of the concert sponsors, helped add to the scene by handing out glow sticks and flashing light sticks to concertgoers.

"The whole crowd was electrified," Becker said. "The whole arena area was lit up with all kinds of lights."

Lake Houston Brewery, Becker said, proved to be an ideal setting for the summer concert. Although the event was held in late July, the waterfront location helped keep the evening comfortable.

"Lake Houston Brewery was the perfect setting," Becker said. "The weather was great. We can't complain about anything."

The lake itself became part of the atmosphere, with some concertgoers lis-

tening from boats pulled up near the pier. Becker said boaters are always welcome, and some come ashore to order food, buy tickets and stay for the show.

"Being there on the water, it always had a nice breeze," Becker said. "Sometimes we had to hold stuff down because a breeze would come through there."

The turnout also made for a busy parking lot, but Becker said the venue had enough space to handle the crowd.

"Parking was crazy, but they have plenty of space," she said. "You just might have had to walk a little bit further."

Continued. See SUMMER CONCERT EXCEEDS CHAMBER, Page 5

DAR Chapter Seeks Crosby Partners for American Revolution Traveling Exhibit

By David Taylor
Managing Editor

CROSBY, Texas — The Old Three Hundred Chapter of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution is asking local businesses, schools, civic groups, churches, veteran organizations and community leaders to help bring a national traveling museum exhibit on the American Revolution to Crosby.

The chapter will host a community planning meeting at 6 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 18, 2026, at David H. McNerney American Legion Post 658 in Crosby. The goal is to organize sponsors, volunteers and com-



Calling All Community Partners
— Help the Old Three Hundred Chapter Welcome the —
American Revolution Experience to Crosby
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We are seeking local businesses, organizations, churches, civic groups, and individuals to partner with us.

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★ Event Set-Up	★ Decorations
★ Hospitality	

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munity partners ahead of the American Revolution Experience, which is scheduled to be in Crosby from Feb. 8-13, 2027.

Created through a collaboration between the American Battlefield Trust and the Daughters of the American Revolution, the

American Revolution Experience began as an award-winning online exhibit and has since been expanded into a traveling pop-up mu-

seum. The exhibit is designed to help visitors explore how ordinary people were affected by the Revolutionary War and the difficult choices faced by the Revolutionary generation.

Rather than focusing only on generals and political leaders, the exhibit introduces visitors to a range of historical figures whose lives intersected with the war, including Patriots, Loyalists, women, African Americans, Native Americans, soldiers, civilians and international participants. Its

Continued. See CROSBY PREPARES TO HOST, page 2

Man Charged with Capital Murder After NE Harris Double Homicide

By Gerardo Hernandez
STAFF WRITER

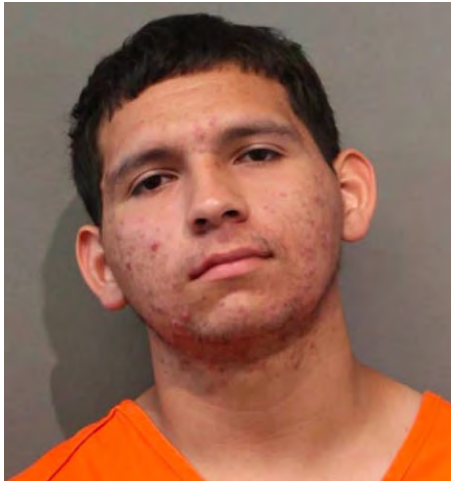
NORTHEAST HARRIS - A 19-year-old man has been charged with capital murder following a double homicide last Sunday morning in northeast Harris County that left a teenage girl and her older brother dead, authorities said.

According to the Harris County Sheriff's Office, Angel Javier Rodriguez, 19, was taken into custody and booked into the Harris County Jail in connection with the shooting deaths that occurred in the 200 block of West Canino Road.

Investigators said the shooting happened around 10:50 a.m. Sunday, July 26 during what deputies described as a domestic-related confrontation.

The sheriff's office said the 17-year-old girl was outside her trailer with her toddler when she was preparing to hand the child over to a family member. Authorities said her former boyfriend, identified as Rodriguez, arrived at the scene carrying a firearm.

The victim's 29-year-old brother then came outside and attempted to intervene and calm the situation, investigators said. According to deputies, Rodriguez alleged-



Angel Javier Rodriguez, 19-Year-Old

ly shot both siblings before fleeing the area in a vehicle.

The toddler was not injured during the incident, authorities said.

A description of Rodriguez and his vehicle was quickly provided to surrounding law enforcement agencies. Deputies with the Harris County Sheriff's Office

Continued. See MAN CHARGED WITH CAPITAL MURDER AFTER DOUBLE HOMICIDE, Page 5

Precinct 3 Bus Program Keeps Crosby Seniors Active, Connected



By Gerardo Hernandez
STAFF WRITER

CROSBY — What began as a single 15-passenger van more than three decades ago has grown into a popular program that helps thousands of Harris County seniors stay active, connected and engaged with their community.

The Harris County Precinct 3 Bus Program, launched in 1989, now operates a fleet of 19 buses providing free transporta-

tion for senior organizations and community groups to destinations throughout Harris County and beyond. The program, offered through the office of Commissioner Tom S. Ramsey, has become a favorite among seniors in communities such as Crosby, where participants say the trips provide far more than transportation.

"It's a program that brings seniors together," one Crosby senior participant said.

The program offers day trips for Precinct 3 residents ages 50 and older aboard wheelchair-accessible buses designed to accommodate passengers with mobility needs. A minimum of 10 participants is required for each scheduled trip, and itineraries are distributed when riders board.

For many participants, the variety of destinations

Continued. See BUS PROGRAM KEEPS SENIORS ACTIVE, page 5

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OPINION

By HC Pct. 2 Commissioner
ADRIAN GARCIA



Six questions we need still answered about ICE and Lorenzo Salgado

More than two weeks have passed since an Immigrations and Customs Enforcement agent shot and killed Lorenzo Salgado Araujo. The Houston community has called for clarity about what happened, and we have been promised transparency. But I remain concerned that whatever we get will be clear as mud.

I'm a former cop and sheriff whose agencies investigated officer-involved shootings. Here's what worries me.

Federal agencies — including the FBI and Department of Homeland Security — are investigating the shooting. But these days, it's hard to trust a federal agency to be independent if that could mean giving an answer President Donald Trump wouldn't like.

Also, on July 19, the New York Times reported that the FBI would “no longer investigate confrontations with immigration agents,” and that even when the agency does investigate, agents are instructed to focus on “claims of assaults against DHS security agents” — not on whether the agents themselves might be at fault.

Still, the people of Houston deserve certain answers. If I were investigating, here are six questions I would try to answer as quickly as possible.

Who are the agents involved in the shooting?

Whenever a Houston Police Department officer, Harris County sheriff's deputy, deputy constable or any other local law enforcement discharges their weapon and hits someone, the officer's identity is made public. Any previous disciplinary records should also be made publicly available for review.

So, we ask, who shot Lorenzo Salgado?

What are the agents' backgrounds?

People close to the ICE officer who recently killed a man in Maine have said that the officer has had serious mental health problems since childhood. In fact, the agent's ex-wife said that “he had a bad tendency of going out and looking for fights.”

When he told her he'd been hired by ICE, she said she “thought he was being delusional, and I didn't believe it.”

What are the backgrounds of the agents involved in the Salgado shooting? Do they have a history of mental health challenges? Do they have any previous criminal history? What was the vetting process that approved them?

When were the ICE officers first deployed?

We don't know how long the agent and his crew have been in the field and deployed in our city. Houston Chronicle reporter Jeremy Wallace recently asked how long it took me, as sheriff, to trust a new deputy to do their job well. That's a good question.

Just about any law enforcement commanding officer will tell you that it generally takes a full year (six months in the academy, and six months of field training with a veteran officer) for someone without experience to be comfortable and confident in the job. For most law-enforcement agencies, applicants with some experience still go through an abbreviated academy as well as a field training program.

Was this the agent's first day or their fifth year on the job?

Where was the weapon, and where were the other officers, when the gun was fired?

Since Salgado was shot, I've had a lot of conversations with former colleagues at HPD and the Harris County Sheriff's Office. One thing that continues to confound us is this: What position was the shooting officer in when he fired his weapon?

The details that are known through the media so far do not support the Department of Homeland Security's story. The argument that the vehicle was “weaponized” so far is not supported even by partial evidence. Additionally, law enforcement agents are trained to fire only in a direction that eliminates the risk of crossfire and avoids the possibility of innocent casualties.

At this point of the investigation, there should already be a very clear understanding of the chain of events, the positioning of the agents and the direction of the vehicle.

Which agent or agents discharged their firearms? How many times did they shoot? And in which direction? We ought to feel sure of this already.

Why is the federal government behaving this way?

Last week, a federal search warrant out of the Southern District of Texas was made public in an unusual way — one that an attorney who has practiced for decades said that he had never seen before. That warrant alleged that Salgado's vehicle might contain methamphetamine.

The family explained that the clear bags of white powder actually contained salt — part of a homemade electrolyte solution. But even so, without any testing made public, the new U.S. Attorney issued a statement saying there was possible narcotics trafficking.

Are the feds attempting to taint Salgado's reputation long after he was shot?

What training, equipment and resources did the agents have?

Since we don't know who killed Salgado, we don't know that agent's background, and we don't know what equipment, including body cams, that the agents had access to. DHS says it's hired 12,000 new officers since the first of the year. Were these officers part of that group? Have they completed a full training? We should know.

Based on the little that we know, here's the only conclusion I can draw: A lot of questions need answers, and every day that goes by without them erodes public confidence.

Adrian Garcia is the Harris County commissioner who represents Precinct 2. He was the sheriff of Harris County from 2009 to 2015.

Crosby prepares to host revolutionary war exhibit with community support,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

central question asks visitors to consider whether they would have pledged loyalty to the Patriot cause and the promise of a new nation or remained loyal to the British Crown.

The traveling version features interpretive panels and interactive digital kiosks that use storytelling, illustration, technology, artifacts and primary accounts to connect modern audiences with the people and places that shaped the birth of the United States. According to information from the American Revolution Experience, the exhibit is traveling to libraries, historical societies, museums and community venues across the country through 2027.

For Crosby, organizers hope the exhibit will become more than a walk-through display. Plans for the week include an opening night celebration, guided tours for school groups,

history presentations by guest speakers, genealogy workshops, Veterans Appreciation Night and a community Closing Night Gala.

“Our vision is to create a week-long community experience that brings history to life for people of all ages,” representatives of the Old Three Hundred Chapter said. “By working together with local organizations, businesses, schools and volunteers, we can provide educational opportunities that inspire pride in our nation's founding and make this exhibit accessible to everyone.”

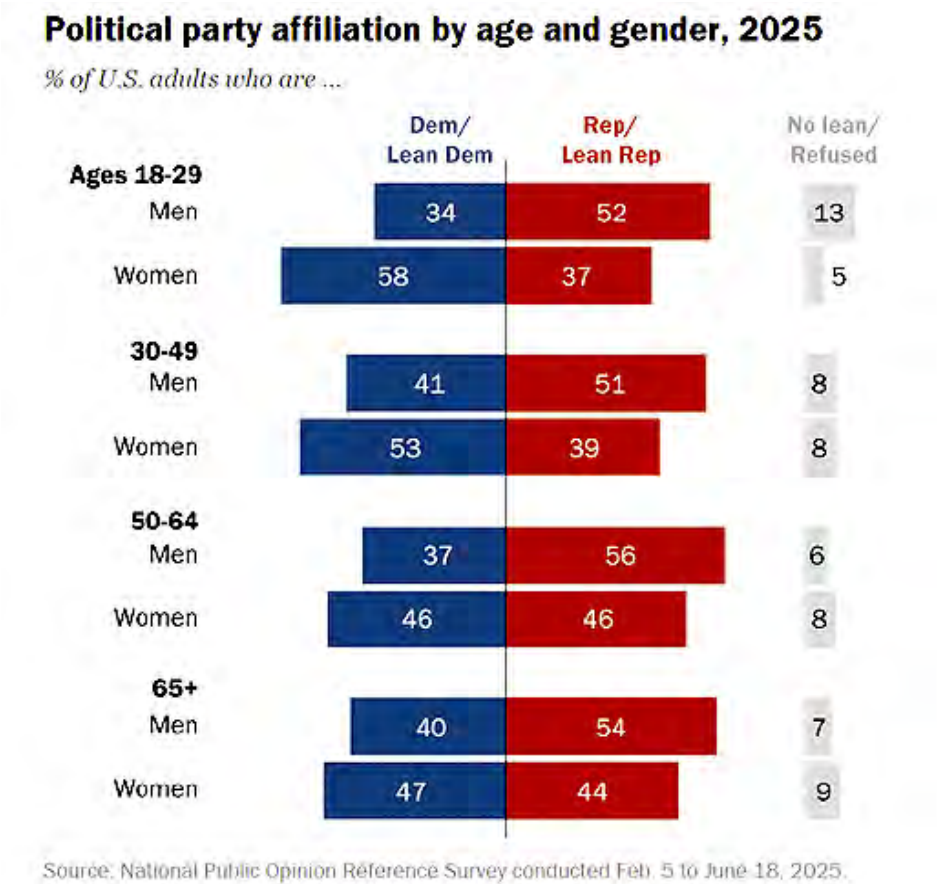
The chapter is seeking help from organizations and individuals interested in sponsoring events, providing volunteers, assisting with hospitality, supporting student programming or contributing services and resources. Educators and youth organizations are also encour-

aged to participate as organizers prepare programming for local students and families.

Chapter members said the effort builds on the momentum of the Crosby Community America 250th Celebration, which brought together businesses, organizations, volunteers and sponsors to commemorate the nation's history. They said the upcoming exhibit offers another opportunity for the community to work together as the country approaches the 250th anniversary period of the American Revolution.

Anyone interested in partnering with the Old Three Hundred Chapter is encouraged to attend the Aug. 18 planning meeting. For more information or to ask about sponsorship opportunities, contact the Old Three Hundred Chapter, NSDAR, at old300chapter@gmail.com.

Breaking Down the SAVE America Act: Voter Registration



By Bill King,

The SAVE America Act includes extensive provisions governing an individual's requirements to register to vote in a federal election. The Act is premised on a simple idea: anyone registering to vote in a federal election should provide proof of U.S. citizenship. On its face, that seems pretty reasonable. But this is definitely a case where the devil is in the details.

The Act requires that a person must present “documentary proof” of citizenship to register. That will generally be either a birth certificate, a passport, or a naturalization certificate.¹ For people with a passport or a naturalization certificate, the process of proving citizenship should be fairly straightforward, although the Act is silent on how the documentary proof is to be “presented.” Some commentators have suggested that it must be presented in-person.

According to the State Department, there are currently about 170 million passports in circulation and about 25 million Americans have been naturalized. There are about 235 million citizens who are over 18. So, at least 40 million citizens would have to rely on a birth certificate to register.²

Here is where the details begin getting a bit sticky. The Act requires that the birth certificate must be certified. I don't know about you, but I certainly do not have a certified copy of mine. I recently had to get a certified copy for a probate matter I was helping a friend with, and while it wasn't super hard, it was a bit of a hassle and required a visit to the County Clerk's office. Of course, if someone has moved to Texas and has to track a certified copy

from their home state, that would be even more of a hassle.

But here is the really important aspect of the Act. This requirement applies not only when a person first registers. ***It also applies when there is any change in a person's voter registration, such as a change of address or name.*** So, whenever you move, you will need to dig out your passport, naturalization certificate, or certified birth certificate to update the address on your voter registration. Most states, including Texas, allow voters to update their voter registration address online.

This burden will fall disproportionately on women, who are much more likely than men to have changed their legal names because of marriage or divorce. A woman whose birth certificate, passport, or other citizenship document is in a prior name may have to produce a certified marriage certificate, divorce decree, or other documentation — or sign an affidavit — to connect that document to her current voter-registration name. I have a feeling that Republicans would regret passing the Act with provisions that are disproportionately burdensome for women, especially considering they are already struggling with women voters. They might want to remember, “hell hath no fury ...”

Documented cases of noncitizens being registered to vote have been very rare.

There is certainly no evidence that noncitizens are registered to vote in sufficient numbers to affect election outcomes. Nonetheless, requiring a person to provide proof of citizenship when they *first* register to vote is not a bad idea, if only to reassure those who be-

lieve registration of noncitizens is widespread. **But requiring a person to prove their citizenship every time they update their address or name is absurd.** This requirement would likely spark widespread outrage across the political spectrum once voters realize the hassles they will face.

The other significant problem is that the Act would impose major new duties on local election officials while leaving many implementation questions for states and counties to work out under tight deadlines. There is simply no way to make contemplated changes to the registration process this late in the election season. If the bill were to pass, it would immediately face multiple legal challenges, almost certainly delaying its implementation well after the 2026 election.

Most Americans support the concept that a person should provide proof of citizenship before being allowed to register to vote. It is a common-sense notion. And it could be implemented rationally. But that is not what these provisions are. Quite the opposite; they are poorly drafted, with little thought given to their practical effect on voters or election administration. That is why it is unlikely the SAVE Act will ever be passed in its current form.

Note 1 — There are some other documents that are acceptable, but they are held by very few Americans.

Note 2 — Because some passports are issued to children under 18, the State Department double-counts passports and passport cards, and because many naturalized citizens have passports, the number is likely quite a bit higher.

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THURSDAY, JULY 30, 2026

MONT BELVIEU, TEXAS 77580

ON THE HILL

Barbers Hill ISD Bans on E-Bikes



MONT BELVIEU - Barbers Hill ISD will prohibit the use of e-bikes and electric scooters on all district property beginning with the 2026-2027 school year.

The decision comes in response to the growing number of e-bikes and electric scooters being used by students and the increasing safety concerns associated with their operation near campuses, parking lots, side-walks, and roadways.

"Our first responsibility is to protect the safety of our students, staff, and visitors," Superintendent Greg Poole said. "The popularity of e-bikes and electric scooters has increased dramatically, but so have the risks. After carefully evaluating the situation, we believe prohibiting these devices on district property is the best way to help prevent a serious accident."

The ban applies to all Barbers Hill ISD campuses and facilities. Students and visitors are asked not to ride or bring e-bikes or electric scooters onto district property.

Annual "Meet the Bus Driver" Event Set for Aug. 4



Barbers Hill ISD's annual "Meet the Bus Driver" event is scheduled for 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Tuesday, August 4 at the Barbers Hill ISD Field House.

Come meet your bus driver, ask questions, tour your bus and more.

Please see the attached flyers for additional event details. If you have any questions, please contact the Transportation Department at 281-576-2221 ext. 1279.

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

Former Anahuac Area Chamber Director Charged in Gatorfest Financial Investigation

By Gerardo Hernandez
STAFF WRITER

ANAHUAC — A former executive director of the Anahuac Area Chamber of Commerce has been arrested following an investigation into suspected credit card activity connected to the Texas Gatorfest event, according to the Chambers County Sheriff's Office.

Katelynn Smith, 32, was arrested on a charge of **misapplication of fiduciary property or financial property between \$30,000 and \$150,000**, a third-degree felony. She was booked into the Chambers Coun-



Katelynn Smith, 32. Former Executive Director of the Anahuac Area Chamber of Commerce

ty Jail and released on July 25, officials said.

The charge stems from an investigation into suspected financial activity involving credit cards associated with the Texas Gatorfest and the Anahuac Area Chamber of Commerce, authorities said.

According to investigators, concerns were raised regarding credit card transactions linked to the annual festival, which has served as a major community event and fundraiser in Anahuac for decades.

The Chambers County Sheriff's Office said the investigation remains ongoing as officials continue reviewing financial records

and related documents. Authorities have not announced whether additional charges or arrests are expected.

Smith previously served as executive director of the Anahuac Area Chamber of Commerce before resigning in May as questions surrounding the organization's finances came under review.

The investigation also comes as organizers announced the cancellation of the 2026 Texas Gatorfest. The festival, which celebrates the area's connection to the American alligator and local culture, has been a longtime tradition in Chambers County.

TxDOT Promotes Safe Driving During Speeding Awareness Event at Baytown Buc-ee's

By Gerardo Hernandez
STAFF WRITER

BAYTOWN — The Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT) traffic safety street team spent the weekend at Buc-ee's in Baytown promoting safe driving habits as part of the agency's **Be Safe. Drive Smart. Speeding Awareness Campaign**.

The outreach event featured an interactive exhibit designed to educate motorists about the dangers of speeding and the importance of driving safely. Visitors participated in educational quizzes and viewed video presen-



tations highlighting how excessive speed can increase the risk of crashes and reduce a driver's ability to react to changing traffic conditions.

The campaign also encouraged motorists to slow down and remain alert while driving in a variety of traffic situations.

TxDOT thanked its



traffic safety outreach team for engaging with the public and helping spread the campaign's message of responsible driving.

The **Be Safe. Drive Smart.** campaign is part of TxDOT's ongoing effort to reduce speed-related crashes and improve roadway safety across Texas.

United Way Awards Over \$1M to Local Nonprofit Partners

Baytown, TX — June 18, 2026 — The Board of Directors of United Way of Greater Baytown Area & Chambers County has approved the distribution of \$1,075,000 in Community Impact funding for Fiscal Year 2027, investing in programs that strengthen health, education, financial stability, and community resilience throughout the region. These investments reflect United Way's commitment to advancing opportunities for individuals and families across Baytown, Chambers County, and surrounding communities. Funding decisions were made following a comprehensive community investment process designed to ensure donor dollars are directed toward programs that demonstrate measurable impact and address critical local needs.

"United Way's strength comes from bringing people together to create lasting change," said Jeff Bolton, 2025 – 2026 President of the



United Way Board of Directors. "On behalf of our Board of Directors, we are proud to invest in these outstanding organizations whose work improves lives every day and helps build a stronger community for all." The following organizations have been awarded Community Impact funding for Fiscal Year 2027:

FY27 Funded Community Partners
Bay Area Homeless Services
Communities In Schools – Baytown
Bay Area Rehabilitation Center
DePelchin Children's Center
Bay Area Turning Point
Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council
Baytown Meals on

Wheels
Habitat for Humanity
Bridgehaven Child Advocacy Center
Hearts and Hands of Baytown
CASA of Liberty & Chambers Counties
Love Network of Baytown
Chambers Community Health Center
The Bridge Over Troubled Waters
Church Women United Child Care Center
The Education Foundation of Harris County
Coastal Gateway Health Center

A Rigorous Community Investment Process
Funding awards were determined through United Way's annual grant application and review process. Community agencies submitted

detailed applications outlining program objectives, measurable outcomes, financial stewardship practices, and alignment with United Way's focus areas of Healthy Community, Youth Opportunity, Financial Security, and Community Resilience.

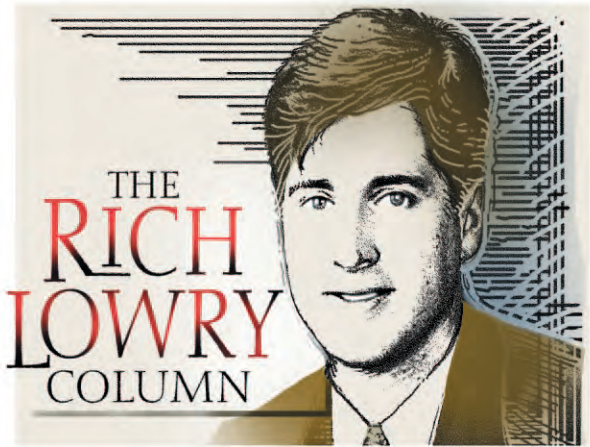
Applications underwent a thorough evaluation conducted by trained volunteer reviewers and Community Impact & Investments Committee members. Reviewers assessed each proposal based on community need, program effectiveness, organizational capacity, fiscal responsibility, and anticipated impact. Recommendations were then presented to the Community Impact & Invest-

ments Committee and ultimately approved by the United Way Board of Directors.

This volunteer-driven process ensures transparency, accountability, and the responsible stewardship of donor investments while prioritizing programs that create meaningful, measurable change in the community. Investing in Local Impact.

Every dollar invested through United Way's Community Impact Fund represents the generosity of local donors, workplace campaign partners, corporate supporters, and community members who believe in creating a stronger future together. (source; Kaci Pena United Way GBACC)

Through these investments, United Way and its partner agencies will provide essential services, educational opportunities, health resources, housing support, crisis intervention, and other critical programs that help individuals and families thrive.



Workers of the world aren't uniting behind the DSA

What did the country ever do to white college graduates to make them feel so disaffected from its economic and political system? The wave of socialist victories in Democratic primaries is being driven by well-educated white voters who are more extreme than the rest of the Democratic coalition.

The latest evidence is a new poll in the closely watched Democratic primary for a Senate seat in Michigan. The AOC-endorsed, Israel-hating insurgent, Abdul El-Sayed, has had momentum, but is now narrowly trailing the establishment candidate, Haley Stevens. According to a Detroit News survey, Stevens is ahead by about seven points, with demographic advantages that are very telling.

Stevens, a goofy white lady, leads El-Sayed by a 3-to-1 margin among black voters. On the other hand, El-Sayed, a person of color fully vested in the left's Third Worldist agenda, leads among white voters, 51-39%. Stevens, a career apparatchik and politician, leads among non-college-educated voters, 56-34%, whereas El-Sayed, who has been endorsed by the Working Families Party, is ahead with college-educated voters, 48-41.

The respective strengths of the two candidates run against the grain of what you might expect in a race between a conventional Democrat and a radical, yet accord with what we've seen in campaign after campaign.

Socialists may imagine themselves the champions of people of color and of workers, but their movement is, by and large, most attractive to caucasian associate professors of sociology who think they haven't achieved the station in life that they deserve.

It's less a proletarian phenomenon than a project of frustrated Ph.D. candidates and medium-level professionals. Because many socialist candidates have immigrant backgrounds, it can be tempting to consider the movement as fundamentally a function of immigration, when that's not true.

A 2021 survey of DSA members found that they were disproportionately white, at 85%, and disproportionately had college degrees (80%) or a higher degree (35%). This leaves them in a similar predicament to pioneering communists and socialists in Europe who talked up the prospect of a worker revolution, and then looked around the room and saw no workers, only intellectuals and activists like themselves.

The good news for DSA-aligned candidates is that college-educated white people are very reliable voters who can make a big difference in the kind of low-turnout primaries where anti-establishment, left-wing candidates thrive. A recent analysis in The New York Times noted that Zohran Mamdani-endorsed socialist Darializa Avila Chevalier defeated Rep. Adriano Espaillat in a marquee New York City congressional primary while winning high-education and higher-income areas; Espaillat, in contrast, won in majority-Hispanic and lower-income areas.

Another Mamdani pick, Brad Lander similarly wiped up in high-income and high-education areas while crushing Rep. Dan Goldman, whose strong performance in low-income parts of the district didn't save him. Socialistic economics may have appeal to working-class voters in theory, but the DSA couples its economics with extreme views on cultural issues that have very little appeal with non-college-educated voters. Tax the rich? Sure. Transcend the gender binary? No, thanks — whatever that means.

That the average black Democrat is more moderate and pragmatic than the average white Democrat may prove the ultimate check on whether an AOC-type candidate can claim the big prize of the Democratic presidential nomination in 2028. It's one thing to appeal to the so-called Commie Belt in New York City, the young, highly educated, diverse neighborhoods in Queens and Brooklyn that so strongly backed Zohran Mamdani; it's quite another to win over the older, religious African American voters in, say, South Carolina's I-95 Black Belt.

In the 2020 primaries, Bernie Sanders ran a campaign of great verve and ideological energy, while Joe Biden stumbled from one early setback to another — yet, black Democrats decided that the former vice president was the safer choice, and that was the end of Sanders. In short, the workers of the world may one day unite, but not behind a socialist vessel for the grievances of ideologically exotic, college-educated white people.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.
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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



Flooding Batters Hill Country Once Again

A massive amount of rain once again engulfed the Hill Country, causing widespread flooding in several counties, including Uvalde, Kerr, Kendall and Gillespie. At least two fatalities were reported near Comfort and Uvalde.

More than 270 people were rescued. Damage was widespread from rains bringing as much as 25 inches to parts of Kerr County and 10 to 15 inches in other counties. That is much lower than the toll from last summer's flooding, which killed more than 130 statewide, the San Antonio Express-News reported.

Officials and residents credit improved warning systems, including text alerts and flood sirens, and fewer people clustering on riverbanks, since it was not a holiday weekend — unlike the July 4, 2025, flood.

Law enforcement officials fanned out to campgrounds, hotels and RV parks as the floodwaters began to raise, though this time the flooding built up over a few days.

"We weren't caught off guard by something nobody expected," state Rep. Wes Virdell, R-Brady, said at a news conference Friday. "We had a lot of critical, key people that were in the proper locations that were very instrumental in helping us. Residents were very aware of the possibility of what's going to happen when that river floods."

Gov. Greg Abbott signed a major disaster declaration seeking federal assistance for rebuilding efforts in 28 affected counties.

STATE AGENCIES ASKED TO CUT SPENDING BY 3% IN NEXT BUDGET CYCLE

Abbott, Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick, and House Speaker Dustin Burrows announced their top four priorities for the 2028-2029 budget cycle last week, including requiring state agencies to reduce base spending requests by 3%. Other priorities include addressing affordability concerns, fully funding public education, supporting teachers, and advancing property tax reform.

In a news release, Abbott said the budget guidance "protects our historic investments in public education and teachers, delivers even more property tax relief, and makes the cost of living more manageable for Texas families through strict standards of efficiency and accountability from every state agency."

The 90th legislative session



begins in January.

MORTGAGE DELINQUENCIES UP AMONG FIRST-TIME HOMEOWNERS

First-time homeowners in Texas are increasingly failing to make their mortgage payments on time, the Houston Chronicle reported. Increasing homeowner insurance costs are the primary culprit, according to data from the Federal Housing Administration.

Most FHA borrowers are first-time homebuyers and typically have lower credit ratings and less money for a down payment, making them more vulnerable to rising monthly costs. Roughly 6% of FHA loans in Texas were at least 90 days past due, up from 3.7% a year earlier.

"This unfortunately positions Texas at the epicenter of the national affordability squeeze," Scott Norman, CEO of the Texas Mortgage Bankers Association, told state lawmakers in June.

Home insurance rates have increased by an average of 80% since 2020, according to the Texas Department of Insurance. Compounding the situation, homeowners with low credit scores are paying almost \$3,000 more annually for home insurance than those with high credit scores.

Late payments on conventional mortgages have remained flat, with less than 1% of borrowers seriously behind on their payments.

HOWDEN NAMED TEXAS SECRETARY OF STATE

Abbott has named Robert S. Howden to succeed Jane Nelson as Texas secretary of state, according to the Texas Standard. Nelson left office on July 17.

Howden has served as Abbott's legislative director since

September 2024. He will serve as interim secretary until the legislative session begins in January, when he will need to be confirmed by the Texas Senate.

"His experience in the legislative process and extensive public service have prepared him to protect the integrity of Texas elections and represent our state with strength on the global stage," Abbott said in announcing Howden's appointment.

The office's primary responsibility is overseeing elections and voter rolls. It also oversees business filings, such as limited liability corporations and other entities.

TALARICO HOLDS FUNDRAISING EDGE OVER PAXTON

With less than four months before the November general election, Democratic nominee James Talarico has vastly out-raised his GOP rival Ken Paxton in the U.S. Senate race, the Chronicle reported.

The Austin-area state legislator ended June with a bank balance of \$21.5 million, according to newly filed documents with the Federal Election Commission. After factoring in expenses, incumbent senator Paxton's campaign was left with a balance of just \$1.7 million.

Both candidates are heavily backed by so-called super PACs. The Talarico-aligned PAC has \$21.6 million in the bank, including \$10 million from LinkedIn co-founder Reid Hoffman. The Paxton-aligned PAC, which spent heavily in his successful runoff against incumbent U.S. Sen. John Cornyn, was left with just \$35,000 to start July.

Talarico hopes to break Texas Democrats' 32-year losing streak in statewide elections. He has raised more than \$68 million thus far, the most for any non-incumbent in a U.S. Senate race.

ABBOTT CAMPAIGN PAID \$25K TO RENT ELEPHANT

Gov. Greg Abbott's reelection campaign paid \$25,000 to rent Paige the elephant for the state GOP convention from an exhibitor that failed to register with the city of Houston before bringing the elephant to the George R. Brown Convention Center, according to the Chronicle.

A campaign finance report revealed the amount the campaign paid to East Texas Elephant Experience to parade her at the June convention. The city's regulatory division said it had no record of the company registered as a licensed exhibitor at least 20 days before the event as required by city code.

Klayton Rutherford of PETA said the payment rewards an exotic animal entertainment industry that has come under criticism over its treatment of elephants.

"The amount of money that is involved in this industry is staggering," Rutherford said. "The most prominent elected official in the state arranged this exhibit and it was done apparently in violation of the city's ordinances and that's alarming."

The Abbott campaign declined to comment.

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, Nacogdoches, Lufkin and Cedar Park. Email: gborders@texaspress.com

★

THE POSTSCRIPT

By Carrie Classon

Dose of Dog



I haven't been giving out dog treats for a while. Sometimes, I am the treat lady on my walks, and sometimes I do not carry dog treats. I love dispensing treats, but I hate getting turned down by owners. Getting turned down by dogs is also disappointing, but somehow easier to take.

So lately, instead of bribing dogs with treats, I've been doing my secret whistle, a high-pitched noise that dogs always hear and their owners usually do not, that makes the dog look my way. Then I tell the dog what a beautiful dog they are, and they usually come running over to me, and I delay whoever was trying to take them for a walk while we talk, and almost always, that person does not care.

I rub the dog's ears, and I scratch their nose, and sometimes they throw themselves on the sidewalk and I scratch their belly.

"You are such a good dog! Aren't you just a perfect dog?" I ask them. And the dogs agree that I am correct — they are all perfect dogs.

Sometimes their owners disagree. "Oh, I wouldn't say she's perfect..." And they may start talking about some totally inconsequential things the dog has done involving an expensive shoe or a piece of furniture or the cat — something that has no bearing whatsoever on the conversation.

The dog will look at me as I continue to scratch her ears, and she will know that I realize the owner is just being humble. They don't want to claim to be the owner of a perfect dog, and I understand.

"So she's 99.5% perfect," I reply, and usually the owner seems to think this is a little generous, but it's somewhere in the ballpark.

But I have had owners who, when I told them their dog was perfect, agreed wholeheartedly. I think they must have a very good relationship with their dog.

"Oh! Isn't he a perfect dog?" I'll say.

"Yes, he pretty much is," the owner will reply and shrug, as if they are not quite sure how they were fortunate to adopt — out of all the imperfect dogs in the world — the one perfect one. The dog never pretends he is not perfect. What would be the point of that? The dog nuzzles his owner and nuzzles my hand and lets me know that even perfect dogs have time to chit-chat on the sidewalk.

So I have not felt the need to carry treats. Lavish compliments, small talk, and lots of ear scratching seem to do just as well, and I don't run afoul of special diets and concerns that a dog might be "putting on weight," which is a myth that veterinarians spread, probably just so they can get more business.

Eventually, I say goodbye to the dog, and I thank the owner for letting me delay them on their walk, and I head off down the sidewalk. "You have a new best friend!" some of them say. And some of the dogs look back at me, a little disappointed that we are not all continuing the walk together.

I had a dog for years, and I miss having a dog. As much as I love my cat, Felix, there is something about a dog that pulls on my heartstrings. But having a dog is not practical for us right now. And so every day, I get my dose of dog. And while I may be holding things up for a minute or two, I don't think anyone is worse off for the time we spend together.

Till next time,
Carrie

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Bus program keeps seniors active, connected,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



is one of the program's biggest attractions.

"We go to museums, we go to the zoo, we go to plays," another senior said. "The quilt show is always a big deal, the Nutcracker Market, the dog show at NRG. We do a little bit of everything. We just like to hang out and have a lot of fun."

A recent outing took a group from Crosby to the Houston Museum of Natural Science.

"Today we went to the Museum of Natural Science," one participant said. "We had an awesome time there. It was a lot of fun meeting new people. Just had a great time hanging out."

Beyond visiting attrac-

tions across the region, many riders say the greatest benefit is the friendships formed along the way.

Others said they were surprised to learn the free service existed.

"I didn't know that all this service was offered here," a lady who participated in a recent trip said. "Somebody pointed it out to me, and I pointed it out to everybody I know who's coming of age who can take these trips because I think it's really worth every effort to take them."

Participants say the program offers something different for everyone, whether it is social interaction, educational opportunities or simply

spending a day away from home.

In addition to individual day trips, Precinct 3 accepts bus trip reservations from organizations serving adults age 50 and older, including churches, assisted-living communities and social clubs. Reservations are currently being accepted through December 2026, while bookings for January through June 2027 will open Oct. 13.

Residents interested in participating or making group reservations may contact the Precinct 3 Bus Program at (832) 927-6820 or email transportation@pct3.hctx.net. More information is available at www.pct3.com/Services/Bus-Program.

Summer concert exceeds chamber expectations,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



While final fundraising numbers were still being tallied, Becker said the chamber expected to be pleased with the results. Proceeds from events such as Concert On The Water help support chamber programs and community activities, including the new educators luncheon and the chamber's Christmas festival, which is offered free to the community.

"It helps pay for events such as part of the new educators luncheon that we just had," Becker said. "It also helps to pay for things around the office," including expenses and utilities.

The event also relied on support from local busi-

nesses and volunteers. Becker thanked Tim with Skero's Furniture and Mattress for donating raffle prizes, Lake Houston Brewery for donating the location and the concert committee led by Tim Paterson of Skero's Furniture.

The evening included a raffle featuring prizes such as Adirondack-style chairs with a center table, a queen mattress and a recliner. Sponsorships also helped support the event, including major sponsorships from Trusted Insurance and Visiting Angels.

For the chamber, the strong turnout was a sign that Concert On The Wa-

ter is becoming a growing summer tradition for Crosby and Huffman.

Becker said the chamber already expects to bring the event back next year.

"Absolutely," she said. "We don't have a date yet, but we are already looking at lineups. If anybody would be interested in playing, contact the chamber office and we'll see if we can get something set up."

Tickets, sponsorship information and future event details are available through the Crosby-Huffman Chamber of Commerce.

Man charged with capital murder after double homicide,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

K-9 Unit and officers with the Humble Police Department later located the vehicle in the 8800 block of Will Clayton Parkway.

Rodriguez was taken into custody without incident, officials said.

Harris County Sheriff's Office homicide detectives

continue investigating the case and are working to determine the full sequence of events leading up to the shooting.

Anyone with information about the incident is asked to contact the Harris County Sheriff's Office

non-emergency line at 713-221-6000 or Crime Stoppers of Houston at 713-222-TIPS. Tips may also be submitted anonymously through Crime Stoppers.

Source: Harris County Sheriff's Office

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Precinct 2 Cooling Centers Open to Help Residents Beat the Heat

As high summer temperatures continue across the Houston area, Harris County Precinct 2 is reminding residents that free cooling centers are available for those seeking relief from the heat.

Through the **Reliant Beat the Heat** program, Precinct 2 operates seven air-conditioned cooling centers where residents can escape extreme temperatures during regular business hours.

The centers are open **Mondays and Wednesdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m., and Fridays from 8 a.m. to noon.**

Among the locations serving eastern Harris County are the **Martin Flukinger Community Center**, 16003 Lorenzo St. in Channelview; the **JD Walker Community Center**, 7613 Wade Road in Baytown; and the **East Harris County Activity Center**, 7340 Spencer Highway in Pasadena.

Additional cooling centers include the **Pep Mueller Activity Center** in Houston, the **Leonel Castillo Community Center** in Houston, the **Mangum-Howell Community Center** in Houston and the **Deputy Darren Almendarez Community Center** in Houston.

The cooling centers provide residents with a safe, air-conditioned place to stay during periods of extreme heat, helping reduce the risk of heat-related illnesses.

The program is offered through the office of Harris County Precinct 2 Commissioner Adrian Garcia in partnership with Reliant.

Residents are encouraged to check on elderly family members, neighbors and others who may be vulnerable to the heat and to take advantage of the cooling centers when temperatures become dangerously high.

LEGAL NOTICE

LEGAL NOTICE

LEGAL NOTICE

LEGAL NOTICE

Screenings to Identify Disabilities

CISD Special Education department provides screenings for children with suspected disabilities in an effort to identify every student with a disability who lives within the district’s boundaries. Crosby ISD is committed to providing excellence in education to all students, and the screenings are designed to help identify children who may qualify for the district’s special education programs. Eligible students with disabilities between the ages of 3 and 21 can be provided with services to ensure their successful participation in school. These services and supports may be provided through Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act or through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act. Special education services are also available starting at birth for eligible children who have a visual and/or auditory impairment.

If you know a child who may be challenged with a disability, please contact the Crosby ISD Special Education office at 281-328-9200, Extension 1108. If the child is already a student in Crosby ISD, please contact the counselor at the child’s school. The counselor will be happy to assist you.

The special education personnel will coordinate efforts to evaluate the student and, if eligible, ensure that the student is provided with supports and services needed to benefit from instruction.

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Mary Steenburgen, left and Jake Johnson stars in "The Dink."

"The Dink."

"Disclosure Day" (PG-13) — Three-time Oscar-winning director Steven Spielberg's ("The Fabelmans") latest directorial feat is now available to rent, following a box-office stint that barely made double its \$115 million budget. Spielberg signed on Emily Blunt ("The Devil Wears Prada 2") and Josh O'Connor ("Wake Up Dead Man") to respectively play his lead actors in the film — an NBC meteorologist (Blunt) and a cybersecurity analyst (O'Connor), who join forces against the government to reveal the hard-kept secret of extraterrestrial life. Colin Firth ("Young Sherlock") portrays a government contractor who attempts to stop the duo in their tracks, while Colman Domingo ("Euphoria") takes on the role of another contractor who switches sides to become an advocate for disclosure.

(Fandango)
"Supergirl" (PG-13) — Another recently released film that didn't do so well in theaters will be available to rent starting on July 28. This superhero flick led by Milly Alcock ("House of the Dragon") follows David Corenswet's "Superman" as the second overall film within the new DC Universe. After Kara Zor-El, Superman's cousin, gets sent to Earth by her father to avoid Kryptonite poisoning, she adopts a new life on Earth as Supergirl with her dog, Krypto. As Supergirl reaches her 23rd birthday and has a party bender on different planets, Superman's concerned that she hasn't yet fully adapted to her life and role on Earth. But perhaps an intergalactic adventure is exactly what Kara needs to appreciate where she's been and where she'll go in the future. (YouTube)

"The Dink" (PG-13) — Jake Johnson ("New Girl") leads this new sports-comedy film that is out now to stream — right on time for it to compete with Will Ferrell's series "The Hawk" (which basically has the same plot but with golf). "The Dink" follows a cocky, washed-up tennis pro Dusty Boyd (Johnson), who suffers a hand injury before a big duel. When his doctor prescribes pickleball as a strategy to ease back into tennis, Dusty's very reluctant to grab a paddle and take his place alongside the older ladies on the court. But as he embarks on his pickleball journey, he also learns some important life lessons - undoubtedly thanks to his kind and wise teammate, Candace (Mary Steenburgen). Look out for former pro tennis players John McEnroe and Andy Roddick to make appearances throughout the film as well. (Apple TV)

"Ride or Die" (TV-MA) — This action-comedy series stars Octavia Spencer ("Smurfs") and Hannah Waddingham ("The Woman in Cabin 10") as two best friends who don't really know much about each other. One friend, Debbie (Spencer), is the wife of a member of Parliament, while the other, Judith (Waddingham), is secretly a deadly assassin. While Judith usually keeps mum about her job, the two besties are forced to go on the run with mercenaries hot on their trail after a hit gone wrong. With no other options but to put her faith — and life — in Judith's hands, Debbie succumbs to being an assassin's accomplice, hoping that she's still in one piece by the end of the mission. All eight episodes are out now to stream! (Amazon Prime Video)
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Q:When are the Emmy Awards, and who'll be hosting this year? I think Conan O'Brien should host them, like he does the Oscars. — S.H.

A:While former late-night host turned podcaster Conan O'Brien has hosted the Primetime Emmy Awards by himself in both 2002 and 2006, he's pretty much locked in as the permanent host of the Oscars. This isn't a guarantee, but we're all assuming that he'll be back to host cinema's most prestigious awards show for the third year in a row.

In recent years, the Emmys have been hosted by comedian Nate Bargatze, father-son duo "Schitt's Creek" stars Eugene and Dan Levy, and sitcom actor Anthony Anderson. Jimmy Kimmel has hosted three times, but there hasn't been a female solo host since actress Jane Lynch ("Only Murders in the Building") introduced presenters in 2011.

New York Knicks fanatic and "Law & Order: SVU" star Mariska Hargitay has been chosen by NBC to be this year's emcee when the ceremony airs live on Sept. 14, at 8 p.m. ET. However, a recent announcement stating that the live telecast would feature five fewer categories to make room for more musical performances and comedy sketches has the Hollywood community in an uproar.

Two of the categories that didn't make the cut are Supporting Actor and Supporting Actress in a Limited or Anthology Series or Movie. According to Variety, the two talents projected to win in these respective categories this year are David Harbour for "DTF St. Louis" and Constance Zimmer for "Love Story."

Q: Is it true that Robert Redford was supposed to star in "Yellowstone"? Was it the role that Kevin Costner played? — L.G.

A: Before "Yellowstone" found its home with Paramount, its creator Taylor Sheridan pitched the show to HBO. He suggested actor Kevin Costner in the lead role of John Dutton, but HBO wanted a "generational talent" of Robert Redford's stature, which Sheridan misunderstood to mean Robert Redford himself. According to the Hollywood Reporter, Sheridan personally visited Redford to make him an offer (which the legendary movie star accepted), only to have to rescind it when HBO clarified that



Host of the 2026 Emmys Mariska Hargitay ("Law & Order: SVU")

they wanted someone of Redford's type but not age.

Costner went on to play Dutton for five seasons before departing the show. Meanwhile, Sheridan went on to dedicate the first episode of his most recent hit series "The Madison" to Redford, in what's felt to be a fitting tribute.

Q:Are they still going to do an American version of "The Traitors" with noncelebrities? If so, when and where will it air? — C.C.

A:Yes, "The Traitors: New Blood" will launch its two-hour premiere episode on NBC on Thursday, Sept. 17, at 8 p.m. ET. This version featuring civilian contestants will also be hosted by Alan Cumming, the two-time Emmy-winning host of Peacock's "The Traitors." It'll be filmed at the Ardross Castle in the Scottish Highlands as well.

Twenty-two contestants, who were chosen from a nationwide search of more than 60,000 applicants, will compete for the \$250,000 prize — and what's sure to be a lucrative career on social media when it airs!

Send me your questions at NewCelebrityExtra@gmail.com.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Amber Waves



Weekly SUDOKU

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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

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Dog's leg is moved. 2. Woman's leg is moved. 3. Bush is reversed. 4. Arrows are higher. 5. Dog's ear is different. 6. Fence has more boards.

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King Crossword

ACROSS

1 Photo, for short

4 Senate staffer

8 Scoff

12 Rx overseer

13 Classic the-aters

14 Bohemian

15 Tunes from Trinidad

17 Pinta's companion

18 MSN rival

19 Acapulco native

21 NAACP co-founder W.E.B.

24 Collection

25 — Cruz Kayne of "Barbie"

26 D.C. basebal-ler

28 Serious

32 Overlook

34 Inherited

36 "Little Caesar" role

37 Group spirit

39 Rug cleaner, briefly

41 Buddy

42 Felon's flight

44 Arctic shoe

46 Bitter orange liqueur

50 French mon-arch

51 Unsigned (Abbr.)

52 All-important

DOWN

1 Cpl.'s subor-dinate

2 Wyo. neighbor

3 Utensil made from a gourd shell

4 Sturdy fabric

5 Billboards

6 Euclidean subj.

7 Relaxes

8 Custodian

9 Rocker

10 Sicilian volca-no

11 Vanna's "Wheel of Fortune" col-league

16 "— -hool"

20 Crosses (out)

21 Title for Judi Dench

22 One

23 Droop

27 "Mazel —!"

29 Scripture-based

30 Beige

31 Castle

33 Singer Knowles

35 Highland hat

38 Pouch

40 Actress Jamie Lee

43 PC shortcut

45 Japanese pond carp

46 Mama — Elliot

47 Golden Rule word

48 Den noise

49 Black-and-white cookie

53 Little rascal

54 Hollywood's Gardner

55 Sass

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Trivia test by Fifi Rodriguez

1. GAMES: What is the goal space in the board game Candy Land?

2. GEOGRAPHY: How many countries and territories border Spain?

3. TELEVISION: What are Captain Picard's two favorite catchphrases in "Star Trek: The Next Generation"?

4. FOOD & DRINK: What is brioche?

5. CHEMISTRY: Which metal has the highest melting point?

6. LITERATURE: Who is credited as the author of "The Odyssey"?

7. U.S. STATES: Which state is home to Acadia National Park?

8. MOVIES: What is the name of Dottie's team in "A League of Their Own"?

9. COMICS: Who is the archenemy of the Fantastic Four?

10. SCIENCE: What is the thickest layer of Earth?

Solution time: 25 mins.

Answers

King Crossword

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