



Lucia Bates Elected District 10 Director of Texas JPCA

By David Taylor
Managing Editor

East Harris County, Texas — Harris County Justice of the Peace Lucia Bates has been elected District 10 director of the Justice of the Peace and Constables Association of Texas during the association's 82nd Annual Education Conference in Sugar Land, Texas.

Bates, who serves Precinct 3, Place 2, was elected during the association's 82nd annual education conference in Sugar Land.

"As the newly elected District 10 Director for the Justices of the Peace and Constables Association, my mission remains rooted in public trust, collaborative leadership, and



Judge Lucia Bates,
newly elected District 10 Director for the Justices of the Peace

unwavering service. True justice is a collective effort, and I look forward to uniting our region's courts to better protect and empower every person across our communities."

As District 10 director, Bates will help represent a 27-county region in Southeast Texas and support JPCA efforts involving policy, education and advocacy for justices of the peace and constables across the state.

Bates joined JPCA in 2019 after winning her primary election and has remained active in the organization. She has served on the Court Personnel Education Commit-

Continued. See JUDGE BATES
ELECTED JPCA DISTRICT 10, Page 5

East Lake Houston District Seeks Wastewater Permit

By David Taylor
Managing Editor

HIGHLANDS, Texas — The East Lake Houston Management District is seeking state approval to discharge treated wastewater from a proposed domestic wastewater treatment facility near Highlands, according to a notice filed with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.

The district has applied for a Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit that would allow the release of treated wastewater at a daily average flow of up to 50,000 gallons per day. The application, listed as proposed Permit No. WQ0017011001, was received by TCEQ on June 29 and issued for public notice July 29.

The proposed facility would be about 2,300 feet

southwest of the intersection of Highland Shores Drive and North Main Street in Harris County, according to the notice. From the plant site, treated discharge would flow to an unnamed tributary, then to George White Lake, which TCEQ identifies as part of the San Jacinto River Tidal system.

Robin Butcko, senior wastewater consultant with Permitting Services LLC, said the plant is connected to the planned Highland Shores subdivision and is being built to serve that development.

"The plant is just for the subdivision that they're building," Butcko said, clarifying that the subdivision is called High-

Continued. See TCEQ REVIEWS
PROPOSED HIGHLANDS, Page 7

IN THE STARS

Thursday, Aug. 13
Baytown City Council

Public Hearing

The Baytown City Council is scheduled to hold a public hearing at **6:30 p.m.** and consider an ordinance concerning a development application at 3710 Crosby Cedar Bayou Road. Residents may participate during the public hearing

Friday-Saturday, Aug. 14-15
"12 Angry Jurors"

Baytown Little Theater, 2 E. Texas Ave., Baytown. Performances begin at **8 p.m.** The production is a dramatic courtroom story involving 12 jurors deliberating a murder case. Admission is \$20.

Abbott pauses Texas data center projects pending state audit

By David Taylor
Managing Editor

AUSTIN — Gov. Greg Abbott has directed the Public Utility Commission of Texas and the Electric Reliability Council of Texas to halt proposed data center projects from moving forward until state regulators verify critical details about how the facilities would operate, from their electricity and water demands to their ownership and community impacts.

The directive, issued Monday, Aug. 3, requires PUCT and ERCOT to conduct a comprehensive verification and audit of all data centers advancing through ERCOT's interconnection process before any additional projects are



approved. Projects that do not comply with requirements set by the agencies or state law will be denied connection to the Texas grid.

"Our top priority is to protect Texans' safety and quality of life," Abbott said. "Any project that fails to comply with the requirements set forth by the PUCT and ERCOT, and by state law, must be denied connection to the Texas grid. Simply put, Texans must come first."

ERCOT is reviewing more than 474 gigawatts of requests to connect to the state grid, a figure more than five times Texas'

Continued. See GOVERNOR ABBOTT HALTS, Page 5

In Honor of Susan Lynn Hoffman

Summer Pet Care In 2026



Jacinto City citizens with their pets... L - R: Angelica Torres (*The Sourdough Girl) with Kasper & Maria Torres holding Luna their family pets.(Photo by Allan Jamail)

By Allan Jamail

Jacinto City, TX. ~ I dedicate this article to Susan Lynn Hoffman, the daughter of the North Channel Star Editor and Publisher Gilbert Hoffman. She died unexpectedly May 23, 2023 at the age of 64, from Cardiac Arrest suffered during a scheduled heart procedure.

Susan's interests included taking care for every conceivable stray animal she encountered.

She cared for many stray animals, including cats, dogs, and birds. She kept some, but found Foster homes when possible. She supported animal shelters and encouraged others to

do the same. Susan, Sgt. Pierson and I love dogs and cats, we have this in common.

On July 30, 2026 at the Jacinto City Park I met pet loving citizens Angelica Torres (The Sourdough Girl) and her mom Maria Torres along with their pet dogs Kasper and Luna. (see photo)

EXTREME HEAT WAVE CONCERNS: Angelica and Maria were anxious to help with my article in hopes readers would take notice of it and take some special care and extra steps this

Continued. See PROTECT PETS
FROM EXTREME SUMMER, Page 2

ExxonMobil Foundation Grants \$180,000 to Boost STEM Education in Goose Creek CISD

BAYTOWN, Texas — The ExxonMobil Foundation has awarded Goose Creek Consolidated Independent School District (GCCISD) a historic \$180,000 grant to strengthen Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) education, improve elementary science achievement and expand learning opportunities for students and families throughout the district.

The grant represents the largest contribution the ExxonMobil Foundation has ever provided to GCCISD and will support two district-wide initiatives focused on student achievement



Joe Rodriguez (GCCISD Superintendent), Emilie Olivier, (GCCISD Associate Director of Science and Health), ExxonMobil Baytown Area, Mercedes Smith (Public Affairs Manager), Orjanel Lewis (Socioeconomic Manager), Anna Espinoza (GCCISD Education Foundation Executive Director), James Campisi (GCCISD Board of Trustees President), Helen Berrot-Tims (GCCISD Board of Trustees Member).

and STEM engagement.

Funding will help launch the Elementary Science Achievement

Initiative, which will provide enhanced science curriculum resources

and instructional support for fifth-grade students preparing for the State of Texas Assessments of

Academic Readiness (STAAR) Science exam. The initiative is designed to improve science learning outcomes across the district while supporting measurable growth for all student populations, including emergent bilingual learners.

The grant will also support the GCCISD STEM Exploration and Family Engagement Initiative, which aims to connect students and families with STEM careers, educational pathways and hands-on learning experiences. A districtwide STEM Night planned for this fall is expected to engage more than 3,000 students and family members through

interactive activities, demonstrations and career exploration opportunities.

"Strong STEM education programs help prepare students for future success while strengthening the workforce pipeline our communities and industries depend on," said Orjanel Lewis, Baytown Area Socioeconomic Manager. "We are proud to collaborate with Goose Creek CISD to provide meaningful learning opportunities that inspire curiosity, innovation and achievement." (Source: Exxon Mobile website)

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Community
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OBITUARY



Doris Claudine Marek

November 16, 1928 — July 29, 2026

Doris Claudine Marek, also known by family and friends as Mee-Maw/MawMaw, a beloved matriarch and cherished member of her community, passed away peacefully at home on July 29, 2026. Born on November 16, 1928, in Overton, Texas, Doris was the last of five children and treasured daughter of William Claude and Minnie Cheek Wallace.

She married Raymond Marek, on January 24, 1948. Together, they raised two children, Charlotte and Ray, Jr., in a home filled with love, laughter, and countless memories.

Doris was a dedicated and hardworking woman, and her life was balanced by her deep and abiding faith, rooted in her active membership at Crosby Brethren Church. Doris was also a proud member of the Christian Sisters, dedicating her time to serving the community in many ways.

Family was the cornerstone of Doris's life. She delighted in attending the myriad events of her grandchildren and great-grandchildren, whether it was a ball game, rodeo, graduation, or dance recital. Her presence was a source of warmth and encouragement, and her spirit will continue to inspire all who knew her.

Doris was predeceased by her beloved husband, Raymond, as well as her parents and all her siblings. She is survived by her daughter and son-in-law, Charlotte and Bill Miller, and her son and daughter-in-law, Ray Jr. and Pam Marek. She leaves behind a legacy of love through her grandchildren, Heidi and Coy, Bryan, Trey and Deana, Amanda and Fredrik, and Kurt and Lindsey, and her great-grandchildren, Katie and Cody, Maggie and Kyle, Kendall and Logan, Cameron, Audrey, Aiden, Kayson, Macie and Andrew.

Her family and friends will remember Doris for her gentle spirit, unwavering kindness, and the immense love she shared with everyone around her. She was a woman who never forgot the importance of family and community, and her memory will be cherished by all who were fortunate enough to know her.

Doris Wallace Marek may have left this earthly realm, but her legacy of love, faith, and family will forever remain in the hearts of those she touched.

Protect pets from extreme summer heat,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

summer to prevent the mistreatment of pets.

It's highly recommended instead of the normal summer care for pets pet owners this summer will change their outdoor pets water several times each day to insure they have plenty of cool fresh water and sufficient shade they can get out of the blazing hot sun light.

The Texas Safe Outdoor Act (TSOA) is a law which requires pet owners to adhere to and or conform to or risk prosecution. The law strikes the 24-hour waiting period so animal services and law enforcement can take immediate action for dogs in distress.

The TSOA in Texas will be enforced by local governments and law enforcement agencies and their officers. Cities and counties may appoint animal control officers to enforce animal-related laws and respond to complaints from the public. Law enforcement agencies can enforce laws relating to dangerous dogs that can attack people.

Patrol officers are on watch for outside pets being placed on a short leash less than 10 feet long in violation of TSOA. Also for anything that appears to be inflicting the mistreatment of a dog or cat.

Penalties for violating the new dog and cat laws include fines, seizure of the animal and even criminal charges and someone found guilty of animal cruelty could face jail time.

Some people take good care of their pets while at home indoors but then without thinking they'll take their dogs out for a walk not realizing the hot pavement is well over 150 degrees on their paws. They sometime fail to realize the pavement temperatures are as hot on the dog's paws exactly as it would be on their own bare feet. This is animal cruelty even though it's unintentional.

HEAT STROKE SYMPTOMS & TREATMENT

Texas law requires fresh cool water be made available to outdoor pets to prevent them from overheating and having a heat stroke and providing for their pets some shaded shelter out of the blazing hot sun.

Dogs or cats suffering from a heat stroke may have some of these symptoms; they'll lie down, pant when breathing, have excessive drooling, has a fast heart beat. FIRST AID TREATMENT: immediately cool down the pet by wetting it with cool water but not ice water put a fan on it and take it to a veterinarian.

ALL DOGS & CATS REQUIRED TO BE REGISTERED & LICENSED IN THEIR CITY EVERY 6 MONTHS

According to the Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 828, all dogs and cats must be registered with the local animal services agency by the time the animal is four months old.

NEW TEXAS LAW: Pet owners must now renew their pet's



Michi, an orange cat rescued from the streets of Monterrey, Mexico, was brought to his new life in Houston by the daughter and son of North Channel Newspaper staff writer Gerardo Hernandez. (Photo by Gerardo Hernandez)

registration every six months rather than annually. This change aims to encourage more frequent veterinary visits and ensure vaccinations stay up-to-date. Failure to register or renew a pet's license may result in late fees or civil penalties. However, some municipalities are using positive reinforcement by offering registration discounts for micro chipped pets.

TEXAS LAW MANDATES ALL DOGS & CATS MUST BE VACCINATED

In Texas, all dogs and cats over 3 months of age must be vaccinated against rabies by a licensed veterinarian. The rabies vaccine must be administered every 1 or 3 years depending on the type of vaccine used.

Failure to vaccinate dogs against rabies may result in fines and owners can face criminal charges for allowing unvaccinated dogs to expose others to rabies. The city may also impose quarantines on dogs without proof of rabies vaccination.

TYING OUTDOOR DOGS / 10 FOOT RULE / DOG CHAINING IS ILLEGAL

Texas passed the Safe Outdoor Dogs Act (TSOA) which establishes rules about tying and chaining dogs outdoors. Dog on chains is illegal. The main changes include:

All dogs must be kept on a leash or have a physical barrier separating them from the public when outside of their owner's property.

Dogs cannot be tied unattended outdoors with a restraint less than 10 feet long.

The leash must be attached to a proper collar or harness, not directly around the dog's neck. Tied up dogs must have access to drinkable water and adequate shelter from the sun, heat or freezing temperatures.

Under the TSOAct owners are now barred from tying up their dogs outside with chains or weighed-down restraints. The length of an outdoor restraint must be 10 feet long or five times the dog's length from nose to tail. A good walking leash length in

order to keep control of a dog is from four to six feet and not over ten feet.

Tying up a dog outside is prohibited when a heat advisory or hurricane, tropical storm, or severe thunderstorm warning has been issued. Tying dogs outdoors is banned when the temperature drops below 32°F for more than 4 consecutive hours.

These rules aim to prevent inhumane treatment and dangerous conditions for outdoor dogs in Texas. Violations are punishable under the state's animal cruelty laws.

As a patrolman before I became chief of police-city marshal I had the city's first official K-9 dog that was used on patrol in a police unit. My German Shepherd's name was Susan but called Susie for short. Susie helped me one night apprehend a criminal who broke into the office of the Houston Wiper & Mill Supply Co. When out at night patrolling Susie always gave me a sense of security. I kept her window down, when stopping a vehicle as I talked to a driver she would bark loud and the driver knew my K-9 was watching and nearby.

To review the Texas Laws: Chapter 821 of the Texas Health and Safety Code & Dangerous Dogs Chapter 822, Subchapters A & B, of the Texas Health and Safety Code.

REPORTING PET MISTREATMENT: The public plays a role by reporting violations. Call your local law enforcement agency any time you suspect an animal's basic needs are not being met. Phone numbers to keep in your cell phone for reporting any crime: Houston Police – 713-884-3131, Harris County Sheriff Office 713-221-6000, Jacinto City Police – 713-672-2455, Galena Park Police – 713-675-3471, Constable Pct. 2 Jerry Garcia - 713-477-4070, Constable Pct. 3 Sherman Eagleton - 713-274-2500.

**Angelica Torres (The Sour-dough Girl) the owner of the Dosey Dough Bakery, she takes orders through her website on Hotplate.com/angelicabakes.

LEGAL NOTICE

LEGAL NOTICE

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON TAX INCREASE

A tax rate of \$0.03 per \$100 valuation has been proposed by the governing body of **Harris County Emergency Services District No. 5**.

PROPOSED TAX RATE	\$0.030000 per \$100
NO-NEW-REVENUE TAX RATE	\$0.028214 per \$100
VOTER-APPROVAL TAX RATE	\$0.029859 per \$100
DE MINIMIS RATE	\$0.041879 per \$100

The no-new-revenue tax rate is the tax rate for the 2026 tax year that will raise the same amount of property tax revenue for **Harris County Emergency Services District No. 5** from the same properties in both the 2025 tax year and the 2026 tax year.

The voter-approval tax rate is the highest tax rate that **Harris County Emergency Services District No. 5** may adopt without holding an election to seek voter approval of the rate, unless the de minimis rate for **Harris County Emergency Services District No. 5** exceeds the voter-approval tax rate for **Harris County Emergency Services District No. 5**.

The de minimis rate is the rate equal to the sum of the no-new-revenue maintenance and operations rate for **Harris County Emergency Services District No. 5**, the rate that will raise \$500,000, and the current debt rate for **Harris County Emergency Services District No. 5**.

The proposed tax rate is greater than the no-new-revenue tax rate. This means that **Harris County Emergency Services District No. 5** is proposing to increase property taxes for the 2026 tax year.

A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED TAX RATE WILL BE HELD ON August 20, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. at EMS Station 3, 111 West Stroker Road, Crosby, Texas 77532. **Harris County Emergency Services District No. 5** shall take action on the proposed tax rate on August 20, 2026, following the hearing to be held.

The proposed tax rate is greater than the voter-approval tax rate but not greater than the de minimis rate and does not exceed the rate that allows voters to petition for an election under Section 26.075, Tax Code. If **Harris County Emergency Services District No. 5** adopts the proposed tax rate, **Harris County Emergency Services District No. 5** is not required to hold an election so that the voters may accept or reject the proposed tax rate and the qualified voters of **Harris County Emergency Services District No. 5** may not petition **Harris County Emergency Services District No. 5** to require an election to be held to determine whether to reduce the proposed tax rate.

YOUR TAXES OWED UNDER ANY OF THE TAX RATES MENTIONED ABOVE CAN BE CALCULATED AS FOLLOWS:

Property tax amount = (tax rate) x (taxable value of your property)/100

The members of the governing body voted on the proposal to consider the tax increase as follows:

FOR the proposal: **Brent Burley, Luther Brady, Larry Hall, James Blaha and Johnny Clark**

AGAINST the proposal: **None**

PRESENT and not voting: **None**

ABSENT: **None**

Visit [Texas.gov/PropertyTaxes](https://www.texas.gov/PropertyTaxes) 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 public hearings of each entity that taxes your property.

The 86th 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.

The following table compares the taxes imposed on the average residence homestead by **Harris County Emergency Services District No. 5** last year to the taxes proposed to be imposed on the average residence homestead by **Harris County Emergency Services District No. 5** this year.

	2025	2026	Change
Total tax rate (per \$100 of value)	\$0.030000	\$0.030000	Increase of 0.000000 per \$100 or 0.00%
Average homestead taxable value	\$203,084	\$206,692	Increase of 1.78%
Tax on average homestead	\$60.93	\$62.01	Increase of \$1.08 or 1.77%
Total tax levy on all properties	\$1,044,785	\$1,151,229	Increase of \$106,444 or 10.19%

For assistance with tax calculations, please contact the District Counsel for **Harris County Emergency Services District No. 5** at (713) 652-6500 or npierce@smithmur.com or visit www.hcesd5.org.

LEGAL NOTICE

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TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS AND PARTIES:

K-Solv Chemicals, LLC, has applied to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) for renewal of Air Quality Permit No. 129626, which would authorize continued operation of a bulk petrochemical storage terminal located at 1015 Lakeside Drive, Channelview, Harris County, Texas 77530. Additional information concerning this application is contained in the public notice section of this newspaper.

Current and Back Issues are available on our website: www.starcouriernews.com

Barbers Hill ★ Dayton Press

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THURSDAY, AUGUST 13, 2026

MONT BELVIEU, TEXAS 77580

ON THE HILL

MBTX takes on the Summer

Beat the Heat

High temperatures can quickly become dangerous if you're not prepared. Stay cool with these simple tips:

*Drink plenty of water throughout the day, even if you don't feel thirsty.

*Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing and don't forget sunscreen, sunglasses, and a hat.

*Limit strenuous outdoor activities during the hottest part of the day.

*Take frequent breaks in the shade or indoors if you're working or exercising outside.

*Never leave children or pets in a parked vehicle—even for a minute.

*Know the signs of heat-related illness, including dizziness, nausea, headaches, excessive sweating, or confusion. If someone appears to be suffering from heat exhaustion or heat stroke, seek medical attention immediately.

Conserve Water

Summer often means increased demand for water. Small changes at home can make a big difference.

*Only water when needed and avoid watering after it rains.

*Check for leaking faucets, sprinkler heads, or irrigation systems and repair them promptly.

*Sweep sidewalks and driveways instead of using a hose.

*Run dishwashers and washing machines only with full loads to maximize efficiency.

Keep Your Home Cool

Reducing heat inside your home can also help lower energy costs.

*Close blinds and curtains during the hottest part of the day.

*Use ceiling fans to circulate cool air, but remember to turn them off when you leave the room.

*Replace air filters regularly to help your air conditioner run efficiently.

*Seal gaps around windows and doors to keep cool air inside.

Stay informed by monitoring local forecasts and signing up for our emergency alert system INFOrce so you're prepared for changing conditions. www.montbelvieu.net/inforce

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

Former Crosby Elementary Principal Arrested in Child Abuse Investigation

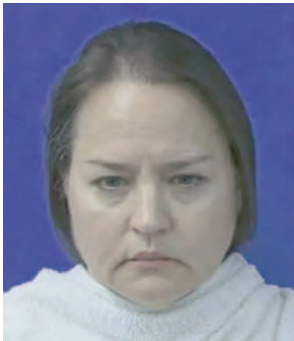
By Gerardo Hernandez
STAFF WRITER

FORNEY, Texas — Wendy Rachel Bailey, the former principal of Crosby Elementary School in Forney ISD, has been arrested in connection with an investigation into allegations involving a former special education teacher and students at the school.

Bailey was arrested July 28 and booked into the Kaufman County Jail. Jail records list charges of endangering a child and failure to report child abuse or neglect.

Bailey is accused of failing to report allegations involving a special education student and of previously knowing about the criminal history of a teacher she later recommended for employment, according to investigators and an arrest affidavit reported by Dallas-Fort Worth media.

Bailey is no longer employed by Forney Independent School District. The



Wendy Rachel Bailey

district previously confirmed that Bailey and several other employees were removed from Crosby Elementary following allegations involving former special education teacher Jonathan Michael, who previously used the name Michael Roell.

According to the investigation, Bailey became aware of Michael's previous legal history before he was hired by Forney ISD.

Michael had previously faced an indecency-with-a-child charge while working under his former name. He was acquitted of that



Jonathan Michael

charge. Investigators allege Bailey recognized him when she received his résumé and was aware of his previous case.

The investigation further alleges that Michael subsequently legally changed his name to Jonathan Michael and was later recommended for employment at Crosby Elementary.

Forney ISD said previously that Michael was hired in October 2025 after passing a DPS and FBI fingerprint-based background check and holding what the district described

at the time as clean certification. The district said it later learned that Michael had legally changed his name before applying.

The investigation also focuses on allegations made in April involving a special education student.

According to investigators, teacher's aides reported concerns about Michael's conduct involving a student and allegations that inappropriate comments had been made around students. Investigators allege Bailey moved the student and an aide to another classroom rather than reporting the allegations to law enforcement or Child Protective Services. Bailey allegedly told the student's parents that the classroom was experiencing behavioral issues and that the student had been moved for safety reasons.

The allegations involving Michael prompted a broader investigation by law enforcement and child-protection authorities.

Forney ISD notified families in April that a special education teacher had been removed from the campus after allegations of misconduct. The district said the teacher was immediately removed and that the aides involved were removed within 48 hours. The district also said it notified law enforcement and CPS and reported the matter to the Texas Education Agency.

Michael faces separate criminal charges stemming from the investigation, including allegations involving students at Crosby Elementary.

Bailey's arrest does not constitute a finding of guilt. The allegations against her have not been proven in court, and she is presumed innocent unless proven guilty.

The investigation remains ongoing.

As of Aug. 11, no conviction or final disposition in Bailey's case has been reported.

Hackberry Park Phase 3 Opens With Ribbon Cutting

By Gerardo Hernandez
STAFF WRITER

City of Mont Belvieu officials and residents recently gathered for a ribbon-cutting ceremony celebrating the completion of Hackberry Park Phase 3 and the park's new disc golf course.

The project adds new recreational opportunities



for residents and visitors, who are encouraged to explore the expanded park, enjoy the outdoors and play a round of disc golf.

Officials thanked everyone who contributed to bringing the project to completion and said they look forward to seeing the community make use of the new amenities.

MB Chamber's Casino Night Draws Local Crowd



By Gerardo Hernandez
STAFF WRITER

The Mont Belvieu Area Chamber of Commerce hosted its seventh annual Casino Night, presented by Gallant Industrial, bringing local business members and community supporters

together for an evening of entertainment.

The event featured dinner, drinks, casino-style games and prizes provided by event sponsors.

Kenjo Kelley of PK Industrial was named the 2026 Poker Champion.

Chamber officials thanked the event sponsors and everyone who attended the annual fundraiser and community gathering.

Safe Auto Repair Celebrates Mont Belvieu Area Ribbon Cutting



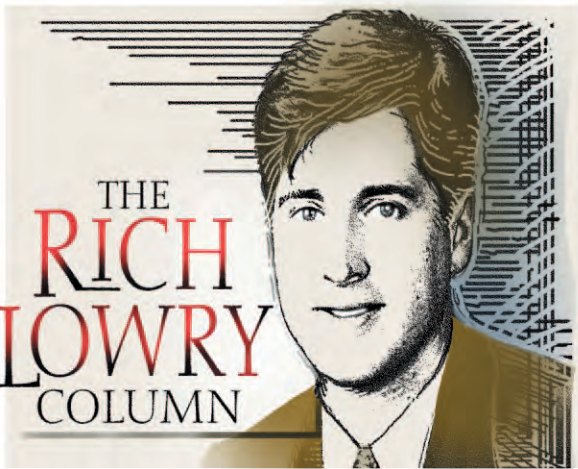
By Gerardo Hernandez
STAFF WRITER

MONT BELVIEU - Safe Auto Repair recently celebrated a ribbon cutting marking its arrival in the Mont Belvieu area, according to the Mont Belvieu Area Chamber of Commerce.

The business provides automotive repair and maintenance services, including oil changes, brake repairs, engine work and vehicle diagnostics. The company says its technicians are ASE certified.

Safe Auto Repair also offers a 36-month/36,000-mile warranty, shuttle service and loaner vehicles. The business is located at 11010 Eagle Drive in Baytown and can be reached at 281-299-0106.

The Mont Belvieu Area Chamber congratulated Safe Auto Repair and welcomed the business to the community. (Source MBA Chamber)



The Iran War is eating Trump’s presidency

An Iran war that was supposed to be brief, and then was supposed to be over, is imposing an increasing price on Donald Trump’s presidency.

We’ve seen a second term of a Republican administration go this way before. There are distinct echoes of George W. Bush’s Iraq War — the conflict that Trump has long excoriated —in the president’s predicament.

Now, the Iran War is different from Iraq. There is no ground invasion, no regime change, no occupation, no counterinsurgency. The casualties aren’t close to the same scale, and Donald Trump has been fighting Iran for months, whereas George W. Bush was embroiled in Iraq for years (and so were his successors).

Yet, the political trajectory looks similar. Then, as now, an unpopular conflict is putting downward pressure on a Republican president’s approval rating.

Mainstream pollsters routinely have Trump’s approval rating below 40%, and some put it below 35%; Fox News has him at 39%, while CNN (34%) and AP (33%) are lower. At this juncture of Bush’s second term, his average approval rating was a roughly comparable 38%, although he had further to fall as the war continued and the financial crisis hit.

If the Iran War is not exacting nearly the same price in blood and treasure as the Iraq War, it is inflicting a direct economic cost on Americans that wasn’t present during the Iraq war.

It was often said of violent clashes in the streets of the U.S. in the 1960s, “The Vietnam War has come home.” Well, the Iran War came home the first time the average price per gallon of gasoline went above \$4. Trump would have much more leeway to engage in a protracted operation to bring Iran to heel if the public could, in effect, forget about the war for a while, but there’s a reminder every day of what’s happening in the Strait of Hormuz on gas signs across America.

In the CNN poll, 28% approve Trump’s handling of Iran, while 25% approve his handling of inflation and 21% of gas prices. These issues are related. Trump wants his presidency to matter. So, rather than being content with doing whatever he could at the margins to lower prices, he went for big, legacy-defining initiatives — tariffs and the Iran War — that raised prices. In so doing, he forfeited his signature issue of economic stewardship. In the latest Fox News poll, 33% approve of his handling of the economy and 67% disapprove.

When the memorandum of understanding with Iran was signed, Trump boasted about how, by reopening the strait, it would avoid greater economic distress; he said he didn’t want to be another Herbert Hoover. Now, the strait is basically closed again. Absent another deal, he’s faced with the choice of escalation or an ongoing low-level conflict, neither of which is going to be palatable to the public.

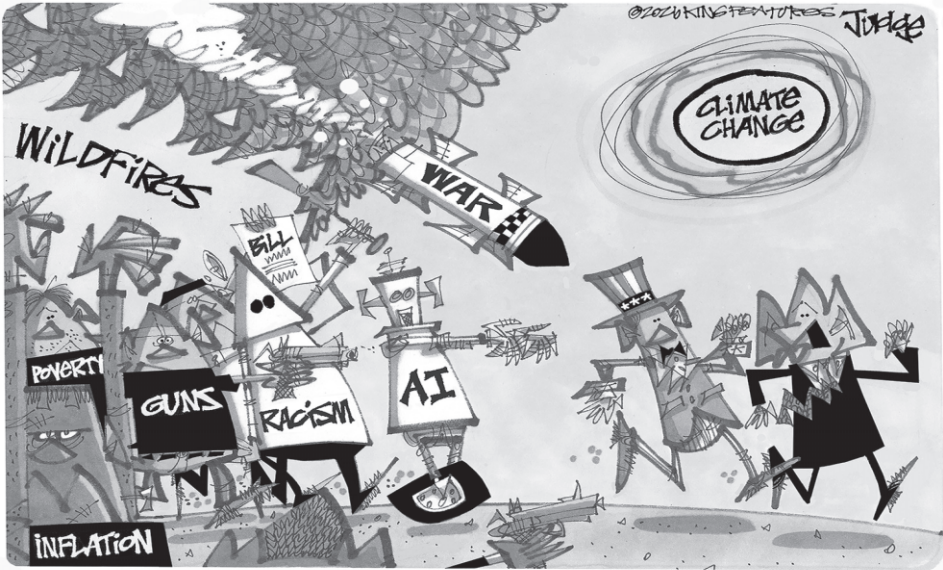
The CNN poll found that nearly three-quarters of Americans think Trump hasn’t paid enough attention to the country’s most pressing problems. The fact is that Iran wasn’t a priority for the public and there was no attempt by the White House to make it one until after it had already launched the war.

Just as Bush’s success in toppling the Taliban created the predicate for the Iraq War, Trump’s stunning capture of Nicolas Maduro made it easier to believe that the Iran war would be a cakewalk. The idealistic establishment Republican and the “America First” populist both got lured into overestimating the efficacy of American military power.

We still don’t know how the Iran war will end. Perhaps Trump will manage a satisfactory conclusion, and he has more room to bounce back up again politically than Bush did after years of the Iraq War. Still, the next Republican president would be well served to be more prudent and mindful of worst-case scenarios when launching major military operations than either of his two, otherwise very different, GOP predecessors.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.
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STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

By Gary Borders



Cyclosporiasis mostly in two regions in state

Nearly three-fourths of cyclosporiasis cases detected in Texas have been confined to two regions, The Dallas Morning News reported. The Texas Department of State Health Services provided numbers for each of the state’s eight public health regions. Most cases this year, from the beginning of May until late July, have been reported in two regions: Region 11 and Region 6/5S.

Region 11 includes Corpus Christi and the southernmost part of Texas. Of the 106 lab-confirmed cases statewide, 48 were reported from that region — or 45%. Region 6/5S includes the city of Houston and Harris County, and an additional 29 cases were reported in that region. Together, the two regions account for roughly 73% of the state’s cases.

The diarrhea-inducing parasite has hit other states hard. Michigan, for example, has reported thousands of cases. Texas thus far has seen cyclosporiasis cases at about the same level as in the past few years.

THC HEMP PRODUCTS ONCE AGAIN BANNED IN TEXAS

Effective July 31, products containing cannabinoids such as delta-8 THC, delta-10 THC and THCP are banned in Texas, following a years-long legal fight over state hemp regulations, the Austin American-Statesman reported.

The Texas Supreme Court on May 1 upheld the authority of the Texas Department of State Health Services to adopt rules that in effect ban those THC products.

The Texas Hemp Business Council warned businesses on July 15 to prepare for the change.

“Businesses should evaluate their inventory and prepare to remove or sell through products containing more than trace amounts of delta-8, delta-10, delta-6, THCP, and other cannabinoids that fall within the reinstated



definition before the July 31 effective date,” the council said.

Texas consumers are now largely limited to ingestible and topical hemp products made with compliant delta-9 THC. Gummies, edibles and beverages containing no more than 0.3% delta-9 THC by dry weight remain legal.

PAXTON SAYS HE WILL DEBATE TALARICO

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton said last week that he will debate state Rep. James Talarico, D-Round Rock, in the state’s U.S. Senate race, though no date has been set, The Texas Tribune reported.

Talarico, the Democratic nominee, said he had accepted invitations from Texas media groups for three debates. The Paxton campaign confirmed it had received the same debate invitations and said the attorney general plans to debate but did not commit to specific dates.

“Of course, we are going to debate James Talarico, and we look forward to engaging with potential debate hosts,” Paxton senior adviser Nick Maddux said in a statement.

Talarico has agreed to televised debates on Sept. 22 in the Rio Grande Valley; Oct. 6 in Dallas; and Oct. 13 in Austin.

Maddux said the Paxton campaign was “close to terms with one outlet now and expect an announcement to be forthcoming shortly.”

Meanwhile, a new Fox polls shows Talarico with

a slight lead, according to the Houston Chronicle. The poll shows him leading Paxton by three points, 51-48, boosted by strong leads among independent voters and other key constituencies.

VOTERS WRONGLY FLAGGED AS POTENTIAL NONCITIZENS

Election officials across Texas should immediately reinstate some voters who were incorrectly flagged as possible noncitizens through a federal program, according to The Tribune. Christina Adkins, the state elections director, told county officials in a phone call that Texas Department of Public Safety records have confirmed the citizenship of some of the 2,724 registered voters singled out as potential noncitizens.

The voters were flagged after the state checked its voter roll through a federal program called Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements, or SAVE, that is used to verify the citizenship of registered voters.

Former Secretary of State Jane Nelson sent a letter in April to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services that raised concerns about the accuracy of the SAVE program, after county election officials found citizens wrongly labeled noncitizens.

ABBOTT PLAN CALLS FOR LOWER HEALTH INSURANCE COSTS

Gov. Greg Abbott last week revealed plans to lower health insurance costs and drug prices by making it cheaper for small businesses to offer insurance to their workers, the Chronicle reported. He said state mandates have made it too expensive for many small businesses to offer health insurance for their employees.

Abbott called for legislation that would allow those businesses to offer plans that don’t meet all state mandates that exceed what is required by the federal government. That generally would mean thinner coverage for employees.

“Small businesses want to provide their employees with health care insurance. It’s just good policy, it’s a good strategy, but also, it’s essential for them to be able to compete with other employers,” Abbott said at a campaign event.

The state leads the nation in uninsured people, with some 5 million Texans lacking health insurance.

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: gbborders@texaspress.com.



Happy Anticipation



Since my niece, Isabelle, was little, she was always a planner. She was the only kindergartner I knew who laid out her outfit for the following day on her bed the night before.

“Which tights do you think I should wear?” she would ask me, very seriously. She would have her outfit laid out on the bed with two competing pairs of tights, and I would be tasked with determining which color would best complete the ensemble. I usually thought that either would work nicely. But I admired how Isabelle was ready for the next demanding day at kindergarten. At some point early on, Isabelle had grasped the idea that the future was something that could be planned, and she ran with it.

We would be on our way to a restaurant with my mom and dad, and Isabelle would be overwhelmed with excitement for what the day would bring. “After we have lunch, Grandpa, can we play downstairs? And after that, can we go swimming? And after that—”

This would go on and on. If she wasn’t stopped, Isabelle could easily have mapped out the rest of our lives on the drive to lunch.

“I’m not planning anything!” my father (Isabelle’s grandpa) would finally say.

I knew this was a lie; my dad has always been a planner. He always said that at least half the fun of a vacation was planning it. I come from a family of planners, and so the fact that Isabelle enjoyed anticipating the future so much should come as no surprise. And while it could get a little tiresome, having every moment planned out in excruciating detail, I understood where Isabelle was coming from. It’s nice to have something to look forward to.

Isabelle just got back from a year in Argentina. She loved it, she tells me. I wrote to her while she was still there and asked if she wanted to go to a musical when she got back. She said that she did. We went out to dinner and then we saw a musical together, just as we used to before she went away. I knew she was sad to leave Argentina, and the musical gave her something to look forward to.

I buy tickets to musicals months in advance and look forward to the event with happy anticipation. My husband, Peter, can tell you when we will travel to Mexico many months before we do. I have a reasonably good idea of what I will be working on for months in advance. The good part about this is that I always have something to look forward to. The trouble with it is that sometimes, by the time the event arrives, it is almost an anticlimax. I wonder if my life lacks spontaneity. I worry that I am falling into a rut.

But there is an old saying: “Man plans, God laughs.” And it’s true, much of my life does not turn out the way I expect. I never know what the future will bring. As good as Isabelle is at planning tomorrow’s outfit, the direction her life will take is still unknown. The same is true for all of us.

So maybe it is a good thing to have small plans to look forward to with happy anticipation. My big plans will often have to change, and life will hand out disappointments, no matter how well I plan. It’s good to have some small, sweet moments I can look forward to. And it’s important to be wearing the right color tights when they happen.

Till next time,
Carrie

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Governor Abbott halts Texas data center projects amid grid reliability,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



record peak electricity demand in the ERCOT region. State officials said about 90 percent of those new power requests are tied to data centers, raising concerns that rapid load growth could threaten grid reliability if projects are not fully vetted.

Abbott's latest order builds on his June 10 directive and requires state regulators to obtain detailed information from each data center project before allowing construction-related approvals to proceed through the interconnection process. The required information includes whether developers are paying their own way or relying on state or local financial assistance, including tax incentives, grants, abatements or other public support.

The governor also directed PUCT and ERCOT to determine whether each project will provide its own electricity or rely on the ERCOT grid, including projected annual and peak electricity consumption and any plans to build or procure on-site generation. Regulators must also review projected water use, anticipated water sources, cooling technology and whether facilities will use air-cooled, closed-loop or other water-efficient systems.

Projects must also dis-

close steps to reduce impacts on neighboring property owners and communities, including noise mitigation, light controls, setbacks, traffic improvements and emergency response coordination. Abbott's directive further requires information about ownership and controlling interests in each project.

Earlier directive sought to shield ratepayers

In his June 10 directive, Abbott told PUCT and ERCOT to take immediate steps to protect residential ratepayers from costs associated with data center expansion.

"Data centers must operate in ways that reduce costs for residential electricity customers, do not drain water needed for our communities, and take into consideration the needs of our neighborhoods," Abbott said at the time.

That earlier order required the PUC to make data centers fully fund the electric infrastructure needed to serve their operations so those costs are not shifted to residential ratepayers. It also directed the PUC and ERCOT to identify additional actions within their authority to safeguard residential and small business customers and submit a joint memorandum to the governor's office by July 17, 2026.

Abbott also directed the PUC to initiate action by July 31, 2026, to reduce residential transmission costs. He pledged to work with lawmakers next session to codify protections requiring data centers to add to Texas' electric capacity rather than simply increasing demand, use water-efficient cooling systems, report accurate electricity and water usage data, phase out outdated tax incentives and adopt practices such as setbacks and noise reduction to protect nearby communities.

With the latest directive, Abbott signaled that proposed data centers will face a more rigorous state review before they can move ahead in Texas' rapidly expanding technology and artificial intelligence infrastructure market.

Data centers are already a major presence in Texas, though estimates vary widely because public trackers use different definitions and reporting methods. Some industry databases count roughly 129 to more than 200 operating facilities in the state, while broader market estimates place the total above 600. Texas does not appear to maintain a single official historical inventory, and available public sources do not clearly identify the first data center built in the state.

Judge Bates elected JPCA District 10 director,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

tee and the Justice of the Peace Education Committee, helping develop training and resources for courts and their staff.

In her new role, Judge Bates will help guide JPCA's efforts across a district encompassing 27 counties in Southeast Texas. She will represent the interests of both urban and rural communities and assist in shaping policies, educational programs, and advocacy efforts affecting justices of the peace and constables throughout the state.

Bates was elected Justice of the Peace, Precinct 3, Place 2 in 2019 where she presides over civil, criminal, and community matters in accordance with Texas law and is serving her second term. She is up for re-election in November 2026.

LEGAL NOTICE

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TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY



NOTICE OF RECEIPT OF APPLICATION AND INTENT TO OBTAIN AIR PERMIT (NORI) RENEWAL

PERMIT NUMBER 129626

APPLICATION. K-Solv Chemicals, LLC, has applied to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) for renewal of Air Quality Permit Number 129626, which would authorize continued operation of a bulk petrochemical storage terminal located at 1015 Lakeside Drive, Channelview, Harris County, Texas 77530. **AVISO DE IDIOMA ALTERNATIVO.** El aviso de idioma alternativo en español está disponible en <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/air/newsourcesreview/airpermits-pendingpermit-apps>. This link to an electronic map of the site or facility's general location is provided as a public courtesy and not part of the application or notice. For exact location, refer to application. <https://gisweb.tceq.texas.gov/LocationMapper/?marker=95.102866.29.767682&level=13>. The existing facility and/or related facilities are authorized to emit the following air contaminants: hazardous air pollutants and organic compounds.

This application was submitted to the TCEQ on July 14, 2026. The application will be available for viewing and copying at the TCEQ central office, TCEQ Houston regional office, and the Harris County Public Library, North Channel Branch, 15741 Wallisville Road, Houston, Harris County, Texas beginning the first day of publication of this notice. The facility's compliance file, if any exists, is available for public review in the Houston regional office of the TCEQ. The application, including any updates, is available electronically at the following webpage: <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/air/airpermit-applications-notices>

The executive director has determined the application is administratively complete and will conduct a technical review of the application. In addition to the renewal, this permitting action includes the incorporation of permits by rule related to this permit. The reasons for any changes or incorporations, to the extent they are included in the renewed permit, may include the enhancement of operational control at the plant or enforceability of the permit. **The TCEQ may act on this application without seeking further public comment or providing an opportunity for a contested case hearing if certain criteria are met.**

PUBLIC COMMENT. You may submit public comments to the Office of the Chief Clerk at the address below. The TCEQ will consider all public comments in developing a final decision on the application and the executive director will prepare a response to those comments. Issues such as property values, noise, traffic safety, and zoning are outside of the TCEQ's jurisdiction to address in the permit process.

OPPORTUNITY FOR A CONTESTED CASE HEARING. You may request a contested case hearing if you are a person who may be affected by emissions of air contaminants from the facility. If requesting a contested case hearing, you must submit the following: (1) your name (or for a group or association, an official representative), mailing address, daytime phone number; (2) applicant's name and permit number; (3) the statement "[I/we] request a contested case hearing;" (4) a specific description of how you would be adversely affected by the application and air emissions from the facility in a way not common to the general public; (5) the location and distance of your property relative to the facility; (6) a description of how you use the property which may be impacted by the facility; and (7) a list of all disputed issues of fact that you submit during the comment period. If the request is made by a group or association, one or more members who have standing to request a hearing must be identified by name and physical address. The interests the group or association seeks to protect must also be identified. You may also submit your proposed adjustments to the application/permit which would satisfy your concerns.

The deadline to submit a request for a contested case hearing is 15 days after newspaper notice is published. If a request is timely filed, the deadline for requesting a contested case hearing will be extended to 30 days after mailing of the response to comments.

If any requests for a contested case hearing are timely filed, the Executive Director will forward the application and any requests for a contested case hearing to the Commissioners for their consideration at a scheduled Commission meeting. Unless the application is directly referred to a contested case hearing, the executive director will mail the response to comments along with notification of Commission meeting to everyone who submitted comments or is on the mailing list for this application. The Commission may only grant a request for a contested case hearing on issues the requester submitted in their timely comments that were not subsequently withdrawn. If a hearing is granted, the subject of a hearing will be limited to disputed issues of fact or mixed questions of fact and law relating to relevant and material air quality concerns submitted during the comment period. Issues such as property values, noise, traffic safety, and zoning are outside of the Commission's jurisdiction to address in this proceeding.

MAILING LIST. In addition to submitting public comments, you may ask to be placed on a mailing list for this application by sending a request to the Office of the Chief Clerk at the address below. Those on the mailing list will receive copies of future public notices (if any) mailed by the Office of the Chief Clerk for this application.

AGENCY CONTACTS AND INFORMATION. All public comments and requests must be submitted either electronically at www14.tceq.texas.gov/epic/eComment/, or in writing to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Office of the Chief Clerk, MC-105, P.O. Box 13087, Austin, Texas 78711-3087. Please be aware that any contact information you provide, including your name, phone number, email address and physical address will become part of the agency's public record. For more information about the permitting process, please call the TCEQ Public Education Program, Toll Free, at 1-800-687-4040 or visit their website at www.tceq.texas.gov/goto/pep. Si desea información en Español, puede llamar al 1-800-687-4040. You can also view our website for public participation opportunities at www.tceq.texas.gov/goto/participation.

Further information may also be obtained from K-Solv Chemicals, LLC, 16517 De Zavalla Road, Channelview, Texas 77530-4615 or by calling Mr. Philip Evans, Senior Vice President Technical Services, The WCM Group, Inc. at (281) 446-7070.

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON TAX INCREASE

A tax rate of \$0.050000 per \$100 valuation has been proposed by the governing body of HARRIS COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT NO. 80.

PROPOSED TAX RATE\$0.050000 per \$100

NO-NEW-REVENUE TAX RATE\$0.043154 per \$100

VOTER-APPROVAL TAX RATE\$0.067418 per \$100

DE MINIMIS RATE\$0.055656 per \$100

The no-new-revenue tax rate is the tax rate for the 2026 tax year that will raise the same amount of property tax revenue for Harris County Emergency Services District No. 80 from the same properties in both the 2025 tax year and the 2026 tax year.

The voter-approval rate is the highest tax rate that Harris County Emergency Services District No. 80 may adopt without holding an election to seek voter approval of the rate, unless the de minimis rate for Harris County Emergency Services District No. 80 exceeds the voter-approval rate for Harris County Emergency Services District No. 80.

The de minimis rate is the rate equal to the sum of the no-new-revenue maintenance and operations rate for Harris County Emergency Services District No. 80, the rate that will raise \$500,000, and the current debt rate for Harris County Emergency Services District No. 80.

The proposed tax rate is greater than the no-new-revenue tax rate. This means that Harris County Emergency Services District No. 80 is proposing to increase property taxes for the 2026 tax year.

A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED TAX RATE WILL BE HELD ON AUGUST 24, 2026, AT 6:30 PM AT 123 S. DIAMONDHEAD BLVD., CROSBY, TEXAS 77532.

HARRIS COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT NO. 80 SHALL TAKE ACTION ON THE PROPOSED TAX RATE ON AUGUST 24, 2026, AT 6:30 PM FOLLOWING THE HEARING TO BE HELD.

The proposed tax rate is not greater than the voter-approval tax rate. As a result, Harris County Emergency Services District No. 80 is not required to hold an election at which voters may accept or reject the proposed tax rate. However, you may express your support for or opposition to the proposed rate by contacting the members of the Board of Commissioners of Harris County Emergency Services District No. 80 at their offices or by attending the public hearing mentioned above.

YOUR TAXES OWED UNDER ANY OF THE RATES MENTIONED ABOVE CAN BE CALCULATED AS FOLLOWS:

Property tax amount= (tax rate) x (taxable value of your property)/100

The members of the governing body voted on the proposal to consider the tax increase as follows:

FOR the proposal:

Raymond St. Julian

Randy Foster

Chuck Murray

Derek Elkins

Buddy Brewer

AGAINST the proposal:

None

PRESENT and not voting:

None

ABSENT:

None

Visit Texas.gov/PropertyTaxes 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 public hearings of each entity that taxes your property.

The 86th 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.

The following table compares the taxes imposed on the average residence homestead by Harris County Emergency Services District No. 80 last year to the taxes proposed to be imposed on the average residence homestead by Harris County Emergency Services District No. 80 this year.

	2025	2026	Change
Total tax rate (per \$100 of value)	\$0.046106	\$0.050000	Increase of 0.003894 per \$100, or 8.45%
Average homestead taxable value	\$195,390	\$192,005	Decrease of -1.73%
Tax on average homestead	\$90.09	\$96.00	Increase of \$5.91, or 6.56%
Total tax levy on all properties	\$1,760,539	\$2,084,756	Increase of \$324,217, or 18.42%

For assistance with tax calculations, please contact the tax assessor for Harris County Emergency Services District No. 80 at 713-274-8000 or visit www.hctax.net for more information.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON TAX INCREASE

A tax rate of \$0.100000 per \$100 valuation has been proposed by the governing body of HARRIS COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT NO. 14.

PROPOSED TAX RATE\$0.100000 per \$100

NO-NEW-REVENUE TAX RATE\$0.082932 per \$100

VOTER-APPROVAL TAX RATE\$0.087671 per \$100

DE MINIMIS RATE\$0.117480 per \$100

The no-new-revenue tax rate is the tax rate for the 2026 tax year that will raise the same amount of property tax revenue for Harris County Emergency Services District No. 14 from the same properties in both the 2025 tax year and the 2026 tax year.

The voter-approval rate is the highest tax rate that Harris County Emergency Services District No. 14 may adopt without holding an election to seek voter approval of the rate, unless the de minimis rate for Harris County Emergency Services District No. 14 exceeds the voter-approval rate for Harris County Emergency Services District No. 14.

The de minimis rate is the rate equal to the sum of the no-new-revenue maintenance and operations rate for Harris County Emergency Services District No. 14, the rate that will raise \$500,000, and the current debt rate for Harris County Emergency Services District No. 14.

The proposed tax rate is greater than the no-new-revenue tax rate. This means that Harris County Emergency Services District No. 14 is proposing to increase property taxes for the 2026 tax year.

A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED TAX RATE WILL BE HELD ON AUGUST 24, 2026, AT 12:00 PM AT 2301 EAST WALLISVILLE ROAD, HIGHLANDS, TEXAS 77562.

HARRIS COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT NO. 14 SHALL TAKE ACTION ON THE PROPOSED TAX RATE ON AUGUST 24, 2026, AT 12:00 PM FOLLOWING THE HEARING TO BE HELD.

The proposed tax rate is greater than the voter-approval tax rate but not greater than the De Minimis Rate. However, the proposed tax rate exceeds the rate that allows voters to petition for an election undersection 26.075 of the Tax Code. If Harris County Emergency Services District No. 14 adopts the proposed tax rate, the qualified voters of Harris County Emergency Services District No. 14 may petition Harris County Emergency Services District No. 14 to require an election to be held to determine whether to reduce the proposed tax rate. If a majority of the voters reject the proposed tax rate, the tax rate of Harris County Emergency Services District No. 14 will be the Voter-Approval Rate.

YOUR TAXES OWED UNDER ANY OF THE RATES MENTIONED ABOVE CAN BE CALCULATED AS FOLLOWS:

Property tax amount= (tax rate) x (taxable value of your property)/100

The members of the governing body voted on the proposal to consider the tax increase as follows:

FOR the proposal:

JR Strouhal

Johnny Gaeke

Jerry Ickes

Elaine Marshall

AGAINST the proposal:

None

PRESENT and not voting:

None

ABSENT:

Mark Taylor

Visit Texas.gov/PropertyTaxes 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 public hearings of each entity that taxes your property.

The 86th 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.

The following table compares the taxes imposed on the average residence homestead by Harris County Emergency Services District No. 14 last year to the taxes proposed to be imposed on the average residence homestead by Harris County Emergency Services District No. 14 this year.

	2025	2026	Change
Total tax rate (per \$100 of value)	\$0.085000	\$0.100000	increase of 0.015000 per \$100, or 17.65%
Average homestead taxable value	\$194,766	\$203,751	increase of 4.61%
Tax on average homestead	\$165.55	\$203.75	increase of \$38.20, or 23.07%
Total tax levy on all properties	\$1,322,334	\$1,582,713	increase of \$260,381, or 19.69%

For assistance with tax calculations, please contact the tax assessor for Harris County Emergency Services District No. 14 at 713-274-8000 or visit www.hctax.net for more information.

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Sunny Sandler, Left, and Melanie Lynskey stars in "Don't Say Good Luck."

“Don’t Say Good Luck.”

“Camp Rock 3” (TV-G) — Almost 16 years after “Camp Rock 2: The Final Jam” premiered on The Disney Channel, the third film of the series is set to release on Aug. 14. The film was announced last fall, with news of the Jonas Brothers (“A Very Jonas Christmas Movie”) and Maria Canals-Barrera (“Wizards Beyond Waverly Place”) returning to reprise their roles. (Demi Lovato, who played lead Mitchie Torres in the previous films, serves only as an executive producer.) The film picks up as fictional band Connect 3 (Joe, Nick and Kevin Jonas) head back to their beloved camp to find a new opening act after the original opener cancels at the last minute. They plan to host a competition, and a few new campers, including Sage (Liamani Segura) and Fletch (Malachi Barton), have their sights set on taking it all. (Disney+) “Don’t Say Good

Luck” (PG-13) — Adam Sandler’s youngest daughter, Sunny Sandler (“Happy Gilmore 2”), is slowly starting to make a name for herself! In this musical teen drama, she stars as 15-year-old Sophie, opposite Melanie Lynskey (“Yellowjackets”) and Max Greenfield (“New Girl”). A theater kid with dreams of taking the stage as the lead in her high school musical, Sophie’s preparing for the biggest audition of her life, just as jaw-dropping news hits her family. Her mom’s (Lynskey) cancer has unfortunately returned, and even though Sophie’s overjoyed to eventually get the part, the weight of her mom’s illness overshadows her happiness. With no choice but to push through and continue to live her teenage life, Sophie must balance her grief against her aspirations and figure out how to find a silver lining in the situation. Premieres Aug.

14. (Netflix) “Busboys” (R) — This goofy buddy-comedy film was self-financed by comedians David Spade (“Outcome”) and Theo Von (“Sweet Dreams”), who also decided to team up to star together in the film. Markie (Spade) and Steef (Von) are best friends in the septic cleaning sphere who are craving more cash and an easier life. After Markie’s girlfriend gets seduced by a waiter while they’re on a date, he convinces Steef that becoming waiters is the key to an upgrade in their life. So, the buds spot an opening for busboys, thinking it’ll be a quick way to move up to being a waiter. Much to their dismay, they realize they weren’t the only ones who had this idea, but viewers shouldn’t underestimate how willing Markie and Steef are to cut corners to get what they want. Out on Aug. 14. (Hulu) “The Gates” (R) — Mason Gooding (“Scream 7”), Algee Smith (“Euphoria”), and Keith Powers (“Uglies”) are the trio leading this thriller film that’s out now to stream. “The Gates” follows three friends who are on their way to meet up with girls and decide to take a dodgy shortcut to outmaneuver the traffic. They are led into a wealthy gated community but get lost, deciding to pull over and ask one resident for help. However, before they can even utter a word, they witness the resident succumb to death at the hands of another. The killer, a pastor named Jacob (James Van Der Beek), is hot on their trail and employs the help of other residents in the community to hunt the boys down. This was Van Der Beek’s final film role before he passed on Feb. 11 of this year. (Amazon Prime Video) (c) 2026 King Features Synd., Inc.

TCEQ reviews proposed Highlands wastewater discharge permit ,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

land Shores. She said a separate nearby development, Eagle Shores, would have its own separate permit. The treatment facility will serve approximately 250 to 300 new homes being built in the Highland Shores area of Highlands. Another nearby addition, Eagle Shores, of roughly the same size is also expected in the future. Butcko said the wastewater facility is part of the normal infrastructure required for new subdivision development and is subject to state oversight throughout the process. “Everything is governed through the state,” she said. “Nobody can just go out there and build a plant. It doesn’t work that way.” She said the facility is designed as a complete-mix variation of the activated sludge process with single-stage nitrification. In that system, solids settle out and are transferred to a digester, then returned to the headworks. The plant also includes a chlorine contact chamber, a chlorination system and blowers. The collection system will be new, and minimum infiltration is anticipated, Butcko said. She said the facility must be maintained and operated by personnel licensed by the state of Texas. Testing and inspections also will be required once the plant is operating.

“They’ll have to do testing on the water before it’s discharged,” Butcko said. “They have to do weekly testing and they have to do monthly testing. And then the permit has to be updated every five years.” She said state site visits would be conducted to make sure the plant remains in compliance. The facility also is expected to have an intruder-resistant fence around it. Butcko said the plant is not designed to accept sludge from other facilities. Any sludge generated by the facility would be hauled off, and the plant would serve only the subdivision for which it is permitted. The permit application says the treatment plant would handle domestic wastewater. TCEQ has determined the application is administratively complete and will conduct a technical review before deciding whether to prepare a draft permit and issue a preliminary decision. Butcko said the process is no different from what other subdivisions go through when wastewater infrastructure is needed. “This is all being governed over,” she said. “Nobody is breaking ground or doing anything without a permit.” Residents may submit public comments or request a public meeting. TCEQ says it will hold a public meeting if the executive

director determines there is significant public interest or if one is requested by a local legislator. A public meeting is not the same as a contested case hearing. Butcko also noted that residents with concerns can submit them to TCEQ. “You can always address your concerns to TCEQ, and they have to respond to you,” she said. If concerns are submitted, she said, they would have to be addressed before the process could move forward. After the comment period closes, the executive director will consider timely comments and respond to relevant and material concerns. People who submit comments may later request reconsideration or ask for a contested case hearing, a legal proceeding similar to a civil trial in state district court.

The application is expected to be available for review at the Stratford Branch Library, 509 Stratford St. in Highlands, and online through TCEQ’s pending wastewater permit applications page. Butcko said she had mailed the materials to the library for public review. Public comments and requests may be submitted electronically through TCEQ’s eComment system or by mail to the TCEQ Office of the Chief Clerk, MC-105, P.O. Box 13087, Austin, TX 78711-3087.

Current and Back Issues are available on our website: www.starcouriernews.com

ENTERTAINMENT

Amber Waves



Weekly SUDOKU

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

HOCUS-FOCUS BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Towel is longer. 2. The tie is larger. 3. Ring on stool is missing. 4. Hair is different. 5. Rope is missing. 6. Man is moved.

August 10, 2026 Posting Date

King Crossword

ACROSS

1 Sheepish "Hello!"

4 Out of control

8 Regretted

12 U.S. Navy vessel

13 — Crunch (breakfast cereal)

14 Singer Guthrie

15 Mel of baseball

16 Manitoba tribe

17 The same

18 Cold-hardy salad veggie

21 Whatever amount

22 Green shade

23 Kick out

26 Send electronically

27 Extinct bird

30 Sunrise direction

31 Future flower

32 Border on

33 Tipsy

34 A Bobbsey twin

35 Dish

36 Cat's coat

37 Three, in Rome

38 Young person, metaphorically

45 Mideast airline

46 Bern's river

8 Indian yogurt dish

9 Language of Pakistan

10 Power co. supply

11 Stadium top

19 Diplomacy

20 — -Mex cuisine

23 Long, skinny fish

24 — alai

25 Proposal fig.

26 Gaiety

27 CEO's degree, often

28 Chic no more

29 Chowd down

31 Shopper's quest

32 Novelist Waugh

34 Mother Teresa, for one

35 Mass celebrant

36 Mailed a tax return

37 Toss

38 Beheld

39 Stage show

40 Grate

41 Superhero's garment

42 Vegas game

43 Always

44 D.C. baseball team

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Trivia test by Fifi Rodriguez

1. U.S. STATES: Which two states do not observe Daylight Saving Time?

2. ANATOMY: How many valves does the human heart have?

3. MATH: What comes after a trillion?

4. GEOGRAPHY: What is the longest river in Europe?

5. TELEVISION: What is the name of the hospital in the sitcom "Scrubs"?

6. HISTORY: Which empire did Genghis Khan rule?

7. LITERATURE: Which children's book features a character called Augustus Gloop?

8. ART: Who painted the famous work titled "Guernica"?

9. MOVIES: In which film does Sidney Poitier's character say, "They call me Mr. Tibbs"?

10. ASTRONOMY: What is the smallest planet in our solar system?

Solution time: 21 mins.

Answers

King Crossword

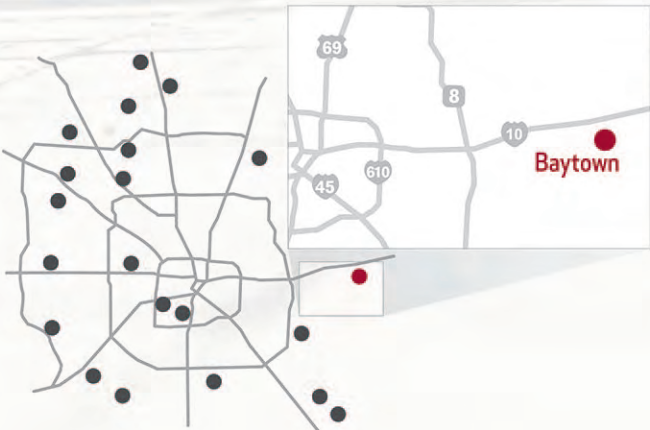
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LEADING ORTHOPEDIC CARE KEEPS YOU MOVING

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