

NORTH CHANNEL★STAR

Your News, Your Newspaper

Serving all of the North Shore -- Channelview, Sheldon, Galena Park, Jacinto City

VOLUME 2, NO. 1

JANUARY 1, 2014

www.northchannelstar.com

CHANNEL CHATTER

First issue of NC STAR a success

Judging from the empty newsstands around the community, and comments made to our email and website, the first issue of the *North Channel Star* was well received. We distributed over 5000 copies to stores, libraries, racks and post offices, and often were greeted with expectation and "where have you been?" Some said "please leave more, they will be gone soon." Of course this was a collector's edition, No. 1, but hopefully they will ALL be a collector's edition to someone.

Please keep sending your news items, photos, event schedules and more. This is your newspaper, you deserve to be published here.

AND, it would also be a good place to advertise your business, or organization's fundraiser, because obviously a lot of people are looking here, and want to know about you. We really need your support in this regard.

In our next issue, look for Galena Park FFA photos!

Back-to-School Schedules

Galena Park, Channelview, and Sheldon will return to classes on Tuesday, Jan. 7. Monday, Jan. 6 will be an staff day for teachers. Jan. 20 is the MLK Holiday.

San Jacinto College North will have staff day starting Jan. 6, registration starts Jan. 7, first classes will be Jan. 13th.

Santa parades bring Holidays to North Shore communities

NORTH SHORE – Ho Ho Ho, Santa came to the North Shore communities, riding a Sheldon Fire Department truck, last Friday night, December 20th.

The event was originally scheduled for the week before, but rain and cold weather forced the delay for Santa.

The parade route was determined so that the most communities in the area could see Santa's arrival and the decorated emergency vehicles without having to drive and park a distance from their homes. Sheldon Fire Chief Sidney Webb and his wife, and North Channel Assistance Ministries directors Rodney and Gail Redford planned the route.

The parade started at Holly Park, at the Sheldon 9th grade school, headed south on Freepoint Street, turned east on the I-10 frontage road, turned north on Sheldon Road, turned west on Woodforest, and ended at the Kroger store at Normandy and Woodforest Blvd. Families lined the route for most of the way, and you could hear the sirens and see the lights for many blocks in the distance as they approached.

Participating emergency public safety units included Sheldon FD, Channelview VFD, South Lake Houston EMS, Pct. 3 Constables, and other groups.

The arrival point was the parking lot of the Kroger's store on Woodforest at Normandy, where a group of several hundred had gathered for the photos with Santa and the candy and gifts that were handed out by Santa and his Elfs and a red-nosed Rudolph reindeer character.

Other Christmas parades were held by Galena Park and Jacinto City fire departments earlier in the month.



SANTA and his Elf helper arrived on a Sheldon Fire Department ladder truck, decorated for the Holiday Season with lights and Christmas greetings.



Families gathered in the Kroger parking lot on Normandy, to have their picture taken with Santa.



EVENT ORGANIZER Rodney Redford, of the North Channel Assistance Ministries, awarded prizes for best costumes and best decorated vehicles to Sheldon & Channelview.

Basketball: NORTH SHORE HS WINS IHC TOURNEY

KINGWOOD – Ranked No. 3 Class 5A in the state, North Shore Mustangs were expected to win the Insuperity Holiday Classic held over the holidays at Kingwood High School. That's exactly what they did, defeating The Woodlands Highlanders team 66-40 in the championship round.

For coach David Green, it was special, too, since it was his 500th victory with the team. He gave credit to the players, "putting themselves in a position to win a state title" with their effort to improve through the season.

To reach the finals, North Shore defeated Del Valle, Cy-Fair, and Fort Bend Travis with strong offense and an attacking defense.

The Mustangs entered the final round game with a strong start, jumping out to a 17-0 lead before the Highlanders managed to score a 3-pointer on a shot by Shane Toner. This came only after a 13 minute run by North Shore. The Mustangs dominated most of the game with an attacking defense and a full-court press, that led The Woodlands coach, Dale Reed, to observe that "the pressure really affected us. We're not as deep," and his best players spent a lot of time on the court, wearing them out.

Other teams that finished in the tournament were second The Woodlands, third Travis, and Cy-Springs won the consolation position with a victory over Madison, 50-44.

North Shore's Kerwin Roach was voted MVP, leading the scoring with 13 points.

Citizens' Coalition protests Toxins in River



MAP OF THE SAN JACINTO TOXIC WASTE PITS as furnished by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, and the US EPA, show the confirmed North Impoundment Superfund Site, and the suspected South Impoundment site.

HOUSTON – Members of a group known as the San Jacinto River Coalition, as well as the TexansTogether organization, staged a demonstration last Wednesday, Dec. 18th to protest the inaction of parties involved in the clean-up of the toxic waste pits in the San Jacinto River near Channelview and Highlands.

These pits, which are the result of dumping of industrial waste from the papermaking process some 40 years ago, con-

tain dioxin, which is considered by some health experts to be the most deadly compound in existence. The dioxins have been leaking into the river water, and fish and blue crabs absorb them and make them deadly for human consumption, say the experts. The county has posted warning signs, but many fisherman ignore them.

Harris County Attorney Vince Ryan has sued the companies that now are responsible for the cleanup. These are

Waste Management, successor to McGinnes Industrial Maintenance Corp., and International Paper, which is the successor to Champion Paper Co. whose papermill generated the waste.

The demonstration was staged in front of the Waste Management offices in downtown Houston. The two companies say they are cooperating with authorities, but Ryan and the public say not fast enough. He seeks a permanent solution that would remove the toxins, but the TCEQ has not finalized an acceptable solution.

A temporary "cap" is over the pits on the north side of I-10, but its integrity has been questioned, especially during a possible flood that the Corps of Engineers says is possible. No action has been taken on possible waste pits and toxins on the south side of I-10, pending further tests and definition of the boundaries. This area is close to River Terrace Park in Channelview.

A trial has been set for September 2014, and County Assistant Attorney Rock Owens said that this potentially is the largest environmental penalty trial ever conducted in the United States. If the County wins, they will ask for \$25,000 per day for 38 or more years, a total of \$340 million dollars.

Five teens injured in Channelview shooting



EMERGENCY VEHICLES are on the scene of a shooting in the 900 block of Ashland Road, near Elgin Street in Channelview. They found one person wounded and lying on the ground. Four others were later found at East Houston Medical Center with various wounds, and investigators believe all the injuries are related.

CHANNELVIEW – Investigators for the Sheriff's department are trying to learn the reasons behind a multiple shooting that took place on Sunday, Dec. 15th at about 2:30 pm in the afternoon.

Deputies who responded to the call found a man lying in a front yard of the street, with a gunshot wound, according to Sheriff's spokesperson Lt. Thomas Gilliland.

This victim was transported by LifeFlight helicopter to

Memorial Hermann hospital in the medical center. He was reported to be in stable condition.

Shortly after the deputies cleared this scene, they learned that four other young men had been transported to the nearby East Houston Medical Center by private pickup truck, with similar injuries. All were in stable condition, however.

All five of the men are believed to be in their teens, ac-

cording to Gilliland. However, the reason for the shootings and the relationship of the five persons is not known at this time, and the investigation is continuing.

If you have any additional information, you are asked to contact the Sheriff's office, at 713-221-6000 or Crime Stoppers at 713-222-TIPS. You can remain anonymous when you call.

SCHOOL & COMMUNITY NEWS

Channelview ISD November Students of the Month



Channelview ISD recently honored its November Students of the Month by hosting a recognition luncheon in the top level of the press box at the Ray Maddy Memorial Stadium. The Students of the Month include, top row, from left, Top row, from left, Dylan Meade (De Zavala Elementary), Jordyn Campbell (Aguirre Junior High), Chassatti Tavale-Esteban (Joe Frank Campbell Learning Center), Laurn Little (Kolarik Ninth Grade Center), Delvin Lemons (Channelview High School) and Virginia Escamilla (Alice Johnson Junior High). Pictured in front are, from left, Makhi Lombard (Hamblen Elementary), Stephanie Silva (Harvey Brown Elementary), Jonathan Placencia (Crenshaw Elementary), Jonah De La Hoz (Schochler Elementary), Brandon Ramissoo (Cobb Elementary) and Vanessa Sierra (McMullan Elementary).

College Board honors 16 CHS students as Advanced Placement Scholars

The number of Advanced Placement Scholars at Channelview High School continued in a positive direction as the College Board recognized 16 students for their academic achievements. The Advanced Placement Program provides motivated and academically prepared students with the opportunity to take college-level courses while still in high school and to earn college credit, advanced placement or both for successful performance on the AP Exams. The College Board recognizes several levels of achievement based on students' performance on AP Exams. AP Scholars from Channelview High School included Jaime Alvarez, Heather Deel, Jasmins Diaz-Lopez, Rogelio Gutierrez, Anna Hale, Johnathan Jackson, Grace Lagos-Posey, Ashley Lawrence, Jesus Loreda, Caren Sanchez, John Yazbek, Sergio Sanchez

and Ruby Sanchez. Of this year's award recipients at CHS, Jaycelyn Jefferson, Anthony Lopez and Dulce Melgoza were juniors at the time of the exams, giving them an opportunity to complete college-level work and possibly earn a higher-level AP Scholar Award as seniors this year. The College Board is a not-for-profit membership organization whose mission is to connect students to college success and opportunity. Founded in 1900, the association is composed of more than 5,400 schools, colleges, universities and other educational organizations. Each year, the College Board serves seven million students and their parents, 23,000 high schools, and 3,500 colleges through major programs and services in college admissions, guidance, assessment, financial aid, enrollment and teaching and learning.

Science National Honor Society members inducted



The Channelview High School Science National Honor Society inducted 12 new members recently. New members include Brittany Diggs, Ariana Canales, Rubi Escamilla, Mary Anna Ontiveros, Alejandro Garza, Jay-ar Haro, Christina Grueso, Abraham Elizarraras, Bernardo Martinez, Adriana Aguirre, Elizabeth Hardy and Judy Bich-Tuyen Truong. The Science NHS sponsors are Karen Hebert and Jose Escutia.

New allied health facilities put to the test during simulated exercises

HOUSTON - San Jacinto College allied health students got true-to-life experience in providing health care under pressure during recent multidisciplinary simulation exercises at the North Campus. It was the first time the College staged a training event that involved faculty and students from all allied health programs in the new state-of-the-art science and allied health building. By all accounts, the new facility passed the "test drive" with flying colors. "I love the new building because it provides an interactive way of learning that really helps us students to grasp nursing concepts and skills," commented nursing student Christa Wall. "Working in the simulation labs with the advanced equipment is like being in a real hospital. It's very life-like training." Faculty members were also impressed. "It's an amazing building design, and it was wonderful to see how students from different allied health programs interacted with the mock patients and with each other," remarked nursing professor Robbie Murphy. "Collaboration and communication is improved among different departments because of advanced equipment, and because all of the programs are in close proximity." Construction on the three-story North Campus science and allied health building was finished in March. The facility allows all science and allied health students to collaborate for in-depth research and un-



San Jacinto College students participating in the recent allied health simulation exercises included, from left, Gerardo Parga, mock patient Kasey Richmond, Millard Williams, Brandon Rodriguez, Ana Aguirre, and Omar Morales. Photo credit: Rob Vanya, San Jacinto College marketing, public relations, and government affairs department.

derstanding across fields of study. Labs are equipped with the most advanced technology available. Simulated doctors' offices, labs, and reception areas provide the look and feel of a hospital environment. A simulated pharmacy has a walk-up window, computer assisted patient entry systems, medication dispensing systems, medication refrigeration system, sterile compounding, and other true-to-life training facilities. The Emergency Medical Technology area has a simulated ambulance, a shock trauma center equipped with 3G high-fidelity manikins, an intercom system, and a control room. The nursing

area features 3G manikins, sinks, headwall units, a birthing bed with a Sim baby manikin, a simulation center equipped with a medication/IV room, a ventilator, IV pumps, and a medication dispensing system. Allied health departments participating in the multidisciplinary exercises included vocational nursing, EMT, health information management, pharmacy technician, mental health services, and medical assisting. During the exercises, faculty and students staged various medical scenarios ranging from mock minor injuries to more serious emergencies.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

MON. JAN 6 Neighborhood Safety Meeting

Gene Green sponsors a Town Hall Meeting at the HPD East Freeway Storefront, I-10 East Freeway. 8:30 am. Public invited.

WED. JAN 22 Town Hall Meeting

Gene Green sponsors a Town Hall Meeting at the Harris County North Channel Branch Library, 15741 Wallisville Road, Houston 77049. 6:30 pm. Public invited.

WED. JAN 22 Senior Citizens Issues Forum

Gene Green sponsors a Forum for Senior Citizens, at the Baldece Center, 13898 Corpus Christi Street, Houston 77015. 10:00 am, all senior citizens are welcome. There will be Agency representatives from the Social Security Administration, Agency on Aging, Better Business Bureau. Topics include Health Care, Referral Services, programs for seniors, and fraud prevention.

JANUARY North Channel Library events

- Friday, January 3 & Saturday January 4, library book sale.
- Monday, January 6, Board Game day at 4:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, January 7, Toddler time at 10:30 am and preschool story time at 1:30 pm.
- Wednesday, January 8, Strings attached/Knitting Group/Charity Challenge at 4 pm.
- Thursday, January 9, baby time at 10:30 am.
- Friday, January 10, Strings attached/Knitting Group/Charity Challenge at 1:30 pm.
- Monday, January 13, Movie madness at 4:30 pm.
- Tuesday, January 14, Toddler time at 10:30 am and preschool story time at 1:30 pm.
- Wednesday, January 15, Wii game day at 4 pm.
- Thursday, January 16, baby time at 10:30 am and lego play at 4:30 pm.
- Saturday, January 18, Scrapbooking with Mia at 10 am.
- Monday, January 20-LIBRARY CLOSED
- Tuesday, January 21, Toddler time at 10:30 am and preschool story time at 1:30 pm.
- Wednesday, January 22, book club at 10 am and afterschool craft at 4:30 pm.

The library is closed on Sundays. And it's located at 15741 Wallisville Rd., Houston, TX. 77049. You may call 281-457-1631 for more information on these programs.

LEGAL NOTICE		LEGAL NOTICE		LEGAL NOTICE		LEGAL NOTICE		LEGAL NOTICE	
CHANNELVIEW INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT									
BALANCE SHEET - GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS									
AUGUST 31, 2013									
Data Control Codes	10	24	50		98				
	General Fund	National School Breakfast/Lunch Program	Debt Service Fund	Other Governmental Funds	Total Governmental Funds				
ASSETS:									
1110 Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 960,348	\$ 837,757	\$ 65,764	\$ 577,157	\$ 2,441,026				
1120 Current Investments	23,447,991	3,557,906	10,800,911	--	37,806,808				
1220 Property Taxes Receivable	1,718,959	--	457,112	--	2,176,071				
1230 Allowance for Uncollectible Taxes	(832,447)	--	(169,030)	--	(1,001,477)				
1240 Due from Other Governments	--	109,023	--	320,780	429,803				
1260 Due from Other Funds	1,190,126	--	1,720	--	1,191,846				
1300 Inventories	30,546	173,947	--	--	204,493				
1000 Total Assets	<u>26,515,523</u>	<u>4,678,633</u>	<u>11,156,477</u>	<u>897,937</u>	<u>43,248,570</u>				
LIABILITIES:									
Current Liabilities:									
2110 Accounts Payable	\$ 582,825	\$ 862,691	\$ --	\$ 67,603	\$ 1,513,119				
2150 Payroll Deductions & Withholdings	711,294	2,071	--	2,285	715,650				
2160 Accrued Wages Payable	960,108	82,017	--	34,617	1,076,742				
2170 Due to Other Funds	947,741	--	--	244,105	1,191,846				
2300 Unearned Revenue	1,797,766	--	225,593	--	2,023,359				
2000 Total Liabilities	<u>4,999,734</u>	<u>946,779</u>	<u>225,593</u>	<u>346,610</u>	<u>6,520,716</u>				
DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES:									
Unavailable Revenue - Property Taxes	886,512	--	288,082	--	1,174,594				
2600 Total Deferred Inflows of Resources	<u>886,512</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>288,082</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>1,174,594</u>				
FUND BALANCES:									
Nonspendable Fund Balances:									
3410 Inventories	30,546	173,947	--	--	204,493				
Restricted Fund Balances:									
3450 Federal/State Funds Grant Restrictions	--	3,557,907	--	122,923	3,680,830				
3470 Capital Acquisition and Contractual Obligations	--	--	10,642,802	407,441	11,050,243				
3600 Unassigned	20,598,731	--	--	--	20,598,731				
3000 Total Fund Balances	<u>20,629,277</u>	<u>3,731,854</u>	<u>10,642,802</u>	<u>549,327</u>	<u>35,553,260</u>				
Total Liabilities, Deferred Inflows of Resources and Fund Balances									
4000	<u>\$ 26,515,523</u>	<u>\$ 4,678,633</u>	<u>\$ 11,156,477</u>	<u>\$ 897,937</u>	<u>\$ 43,248,570</u>				
This statement is published in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 140.006 Local Government Code, Texas Revised Civil Statutes, Act 2007, 80th Legislature. For additional information, contact the office of the Superintendent of Channelview Independent School District.									

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OBITUARIES

Dennis Lynn Needham Boles

Dennis Lynn Needham Boles went to be with the Lord on December 7, 2013, in Mont Belvieu, Texas.

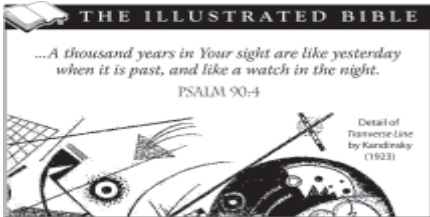
She was born on July 21, 1943 in Lockesburg, Arkansas. She was preceded in death by her parents Denver Needham and Chanie Doss Needham, her step-mother Nell Needham, her siblings David and Diana Needham, and her grandsons John and Paul Pelham.

She attended schools in West Memphis, Arkansas, and Marshall, Texas, and later graduated from San Jacinto College in Houston, Texas. Dennis loved to travel and lived in the Dominican Republic, Scotland and Holland. She also traveled extensively in the US, and visited Aruba, Mexico, Ireland, Spain, Greece, Italy, Monte Carlo, and Turkey.

Dennis was a successful entrepreneur and through the years owned several businesses, including Hairstyles Unlimited, Boles Electric, The Jelly Bean Junction Daycare, and Buzzards Roost RV Park. Dennis was also instrumental in founding Infinity Electrical Contractors. The construction phase of her latest project, Hackberry Creek Business Center, was still underway when she passed.



Survivors include her husband of 50 years, Roger Warren Boles, daughters Kim and husband Ray Melchor, Melynda and husband Arty Weber, Paula and husband Alex Baylot Jr., Rachelle and husband Larry Pelham, and a step brother, Richard Hearne. She leaves behind her grandchildren Jennifer Remaly, Kandice and Roger Melchor, Justine Aggers, Rochelle Weber, Kenneth and Kirsten Tackett, Nathan and Brittany Baylot, and Robert and Laura Pelham. She also left behind great grandchildren Emily Staten, Gemma Aggers, and Skylar Files.



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faith. Have courage and be
strong.
1 Corinthians 16:13

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Frankie Ellen Craven Beard

Frankie Ellen Craven Beard passed away peacefully at the age of 90 on the 25th of December, 2013.

Frankie is preceded in death by her husband, Marion Thomas Beard. She is survived by her daughter Joyce Pavlowich and husband Jim, son Thomas Beard, son Jimmy Beard and wife Stacy, and daughter Jeanell Hockett. She had 6 grandchildren, 6 great-grandchildren, and 3

great-great-grandchildren, along with numerous nieces and nephews.

A memorial service will be held Saturday, January 4, at 1:00 pm at 2nd Baptist Channelview. 1315 Dell Dale Ave, Channelview TX 77530.

In lieu of flowers, please make a donation to New Testament Outreach Ministry Villas on Woodforest, or to the charity of your choice.

Mary C. Ramos



At 9:44 p.m. on December 27th, 2013, Mary C. Ramos was called home to Heaven. She is survived by her husband of 44 years, Richard I. Ramos and her four children; Sam Castillo, Michelle Rayon, James Ramos & Crystal Ramos-Janda. Her faith and love will be carried on by her thirteen grandchildren. Mary was a dedicated wife, a patient and loving mother, and an astounding grandmother. Mary was the type of person who could find the good in anyone, she never judged people by their faults, but by their faith and willingness to persevere through all they must face. She welcomed people into her life and took them under her wing as a mother figure without second thought, a natural nurturer, always wanting to help you reach your full potential. For that reason she has so many more children in spirit. The family extends a special place in their heart for; Sharlene Ramos - Wife of James Ramos, Jeremy Janda - Husband of Crystal Ramos-Janda, Kristin Nelson - Longtime family

friend. Mary will be remembered daily for her great sense of humor, deep ability to love, her tendency to yell at the people in movies and her love of flowers that always let to their death. As you can see she has passed her love of life and humor on to her children along with her deep faith in the Lord. Feel no sorrow for this family for they are at peace with the knowledge that Mary has found her way to her Heavenly home.

Services have been entrusted to Sterling-White Funeral Home & Cemetery, 11011 Crosby-Lynchburg Road, Highlands, Texas 77562. To send the family condolences please visit www.sterlingwhite.com.



Cedar Bayou Jr. Spelling Bee winners

Jackie Tamayo (second from left) from JSW Steel, presents gift cards donated by the company to the winners of Cedar Bayou Junior School's Spelling Bee. Winners were (l to r) Madilyn Lawrence, 1st place; Nathalie Martinez, 3rd place and Kyle Lindstrom, 2nd place. Lawrence will proceed to the District Spelling Bee. Organized by Purnima Rahlon, language arts teacher, the event is a preliminary for the Scripps National Spelling Bee.

★
**LITTLE
BIDDY BITS**
By Danny Biddy

**BIBLE
TRIVIA**
by Wilson Casey

The Anchor

I was telling one of my best friends, Lonnie, that I had lost my boat anchor while out fishing. I had not secured the anchor rope to the boat correctly and it came off. When I noticed what had happened, it was too late. The rope and the anchor were gone. Lonnie told me he bought an anchor when he was sixteen years old. He said, "I'm over sixty years old now and I still have that same anchor. I have changed boats several times, but I kept my anchor."

Perhaps you gave your heart to Christ some time ago. Are you still anchored to Him? Many things may have changed in your life, but remember what God's word says, "We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure..." Jesus." (Hebrews 6:19-20)

1. Is the book of Zebedee in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. From Proverbs 3, "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy ...?" Thoughts, Estates, Paths, Fears
3. Acts 2:42 is a key scripture on Ecclesiology as a study of the ...? Rapture, Church, Messiah, Holy Spirit
4. To which apostle did Christ entrust the "keys of the kingdom"? Andrew, James, Simon Peter, Matthias
5. Where is the "Apostles' Creed" found in the Bible (KJV)? Nowhere, Matthew 2, John 3, Romans 7
6. What is the youngest book in the Old Testament? Ezra, Daniel, Haggai, Malachi

ANSWERS: 1) Neither; 2) Paths; 3) Church; 4) Simon Peter; 5) Nowhere; 6) Malachi

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Phillipians 4:13

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Leviticus 19:32

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in the Holy One of Israel
Isaiah 29: 10

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Dewhurst orders health services studies

AUSTIN — Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst on Dec. 20 delivered charges for the Senate Committee on Health & Human Services to tackle before the 2015 Texas Legislature convenes.

Dewhurst, who presides over the Senate, ordered the panel of nine senators to study what is being done by the state to enhance the health of Texas women. He also called on the committee to assess the effectiveness of programs designed to improve mental health for all Texans.

The committee will monitor all state-provided women's health programs, access to preventative services, efforts to reduce unplanned pregnancies and the maximizing of efficiencies, Dewhurst said.

Also, the lieutenant governor said, the committee will monitor programs designed to improve mental health and substance abuse services, assess their outcomes and address any gaps in the system.

Perry takes various actions

Gov. Rick Perry on Dec. 20 renewed for another month the current drought disaster proclamation for 114 of Texas' 254 counties. Perry originally issued the proclamation on July 5, 2011.

Meanwhile, also on Dec. 20, the federal government approved Perry's Dec. 13 request for disaster assistance to three central Texas counties — Travis, Hays and Caldwell — for damages attributed to severe flooding that occurred when hard rains hit the region at the end of October through mid-November.

In addition to the approval, the U.S. Small Business Administration granted Perry's request for additional assistance that will allow homeowners, renters and businesses in 11 central Texas counties to apply for long-term, low-interest disaster loans, the governor's office reported.

In other news, on Dec. 19, the governor posted notice of clemency he granted to 12 individuals "after each case was favorably recommended for clemency by the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles."

And, on Dec. 24, Gov. and Mrs. Perry publicized their wishes for "a happy and blessed Christmas to everyone in Texas, and to Texans all around the world."

More laws take effect

While most new laws are written to take effect either as soon as the governor signs them or on Sept. 1, some 47 pieces of legislation passed by the Texas Legislature were written to take effect as new laws on Jan. 1, 2014.

Here are five of them:

- House Bill 294 by Rep. Eddie Rodriguez, D-Austin, and sponsored by Sen. Kirk Watson, D-Austin: An exemption from ad valorem taxation of certain property owned by a charitable organization and used in providing housing and related services to certain homeless individuals.

- House Bill 1349 by Rep. Lyle Larson, R-San Antonio, and sponsored by Sen. Donna Campbell, R-New Braunfels: Stipulating that the Department of Public Safety's AAA is not

STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS
By Ed Sterling



required to request, and an applicant's AAA would not be required to provide, AAA the applicant's AAA social security number as part of an application for a concealed handgun license.

- House Bill 1772 by Rep. Chris Turner, D-Arlington, and sponsored by Sen. Wendy Davis, D-Fort Worth: Requiring a utility customer to provide written notice of disconnection to each tenant or owner at a "nonsubmetered, master metered multifamily property" prior to disconnection of electric or gas service.

- House Bill 1847 by Rep. Stefani Carter, R-Dallas, and sponsored by Sen. Joan Huffman, R-Houston: Requiring prosecuting attorneys to complete one hour of ethics training relating to a duty to disclose certain information in a criminal

case within 180 days of assuming duties. AAA Additional related training thereafter would be based upon rules promulgated by the court of criminal appeals.

- Senate Bill 945 by Sen. Jane Nelson, R-Lewisville, and sponsored by Rep. Sarah Davis, R-Houston: Requiring a health care provider in a hospital to wear a photo identification badge clearly stating the provider's name, department, and title. AAA If applicable, the badge must also state the provider's status as a student, intern, trainee or resident.

TxDOT chief moves to LCRA

Texas Department of Transportation announced its executive director, Phil Wilson, is leaving the agency to join the Lower Colorado River Authority, a public utility company founded in 1934 that serves all or part of 61 counties.

Wilson, who was appointed by the governor to head TxDOT in October 2011, is to start as general manager and chief executive officer of the LCRA on Feb. 1.

Before joining TxDOT, Wilson was a senior vice president of public affairs and a corporate officer of Luminant, a large power company based in Dallas. Before that, Wilson served as Texas secretary of state from July 2007 to July 2008.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Stray Dogs kill miniature ponies, donkey

26 December 2013

To the Editor:

My name is Jeanne McClanahan and I live on Wallisville Road in Baytown. I have a pony farm. On Thanksgiving Day pit bulls attacked my ponies & donkey. They outright killed three and maimed four more to the point they had to be put down. They also maimed one of the donkeys to the point she had to be destroyed and injured a second donkey. The second donkey is a very old donkey. However she is also a large donkey and was able to fight them off &

survive.

Harris County Sheriff's Dept. came out & wrote up an incident report although the Deputy stated he really wasn't supposed to as it was an animal control issue. Well, animal control was off for the holidays & couldn't be reached. Once they were notified, they took three days to respond and then it was at night & really — how do you "patrol" an area in the dark?

The reason I am writing you is to get the word out to the public — the dogs are back. My Christmas present yesterday was another dead pony.

These are my broodmares the mothers of my show horses — miniature horses/shetland ponies who have multiple national & grand national championships — ponies worth thousands of dollars.

Now I have 8 dead horses/ponies and one dead donkey. What is the magic number of dead before someone cares enough to do something? At this rate I am sure I will get there if only I know what it was. Thank you for listening.

Jeanne McClanahan
Highlands, Texas

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★ ASK THE EXPERTS ★

Teacher receives grant for high-interest books for class



Students in Christopher Scott's class at San Jacinto Elementary visit with Baytown Mayor Steve DonCarlos during Red Ribbon Week. The students will benefit from reading high-interest books as a result of a grant Scott received from DonorsChoose.org. Pictured are (1st row, l to r) Alcadia Solis, Angelita Ruiz, Michelle Magana, Diana Pedraza, Ty'Rell Respress, Leanna Verastegui (2nd row, l to r) Scott, Jesus Herrera-Zavala, DonCarlos, Kacen Carpenter, Travis Nichols, Annie Rueda, Daniela Moncivais, Logan Colon (3rd row, l to r) Heather Ramos, Angel Medina, Abigail Oroscio, Deziree Hagan, Ivan Velazquez, Mark Salazar, Eddie Martinez, and Layah Hernandez.

Christopher Scott asked for specific Guided Reading books for his 5th grade ELA students, San Jacinto Elementary School Principal Becky Robins suggested that he apply for a grant through DonorsChoose.org. Using the information on this site, donors choose the projects they want to sponsor, donating as little as \$1.00.

"The kids have such a desire to read as many books as possible, but our problem is that we don't have the books to accommodate that desire," said Scott on the site he set up through DonorsChoose.org.

Scott hoped to supply his students with high-interest books so they would read more and become better readers. He also planned book clubs, allowing students to become experts on the books they select, shar-

As a result of DonorsChoose.org, Scott achieved his goal for his class. He and his students received a grant for \$773, allowing them to select 100 books from various genres that will not only challenge and enhance the students' readability, but will also help them gain a wealth of knowledge in various subject areas.

"I'm trying to give my students a world perspective by reading," said Scott. "This week, we're in India. I hope to spark the desire in them to see the world."

Scott did not care much for reading until he discovered the Harry Potter books. He now claims to be a Harry Potter fanatic, and he has even traveled to London. He is excited that his students will

have the opportunity to read high-interest books due to the kindness of others.

"These donations will help these children to understand that there are people out in the world that truly care for them and their education," said Scott. "I hope this donation can spark a desire for them to pass this kindness on into the world. The donations will contribute to the overall classroom environment because we are creating a love of reading, and my students can pass that on to their family and friends."

"I am very proud of Mr. Scott and his dedication to his students," said Robins. "As a first-year teacher, he has hit the ground running and is continuously challenging himself and striving to improve every day."

Diamond Jim... how old are diamonds?



FINE JEWELRY

With Jim Mills

Generally speaking, carbon-containing minerals in the earth provide the carbon source, and the growth occurs over periods from 1 billion to 3.3 billion years (25% to 75% of the age of the earth). Diamonds are carried to the surface of the earth by magma, or molten rock, which solidifies when it draws closer to the surface. However, the diamonds themselves are much older than the rock that they are found in. It isn't always possible to find out the age of a diamond by examining it di-

rectly. A better method is to look at tiny inclusions, which are crystals made from other minerals that are often found within diamonds. These give out a slight radioactive signal that scientists can measure to find out how old they are. This means flawless diamonds, that don't have any inclusions, are very difficult to date. Of even more interest than the age of diamonds is that scientific evidence indicates that white dwarf stars have a core of crystallized carbon and oxygen nuclei. The largest of these found in the universe so far, BPM 37093, is located 50

light-years (4.7_1014 km) away in the constellation Centaurus. A news release from the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics described the 2,500-mile (4,000 km)-wide stellar core as a diamond. It was referred to as Lucy, after the Beatles' song "Lucy in the Sky With Diamonds".

If you have questions pertaining to jewelry, watches, diamonds, precious stones, precious metals, and other questions related to the jewelry industry, email jmills@pineforestjewelry.com.

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SPORTS NEWS & CRIME WATCH

Women’s basketball team looks forward to a stronger finish

HOUSTON – As the 2013-2014 season approaches the mid-point, the San Jacinto College women’s basketball team is putting a rough beginning behind them while looking forward to a stronger finish.

First-year head coach Brenita Williams-Jackson anticipated a difficult opening stretch for a rebuilding team that includes only one returner and 13 new players. “We are a young team,” she commented. “We rely on our freshman players and they are learning a lot about the speed and execution at this level. We played a tough pre-season schedule. Six of the 10 pre-season games were on the road, three of which were against nationally ranked teams.”

The tough schedule, combined with a rash of injuries, contributed to an overall first-half record of 1-9, and a conference record of 0-2. Williams was encouraged by what she saw in the recent game against Panola College, which was the final conference game of the first half of the season. Panola won 86-80, but there were definite signs of improvement. “We competed well against Panola, but they got the edge over us because their kids made some plays down the stretch,” she said. “Our team did a great job of executing, and if they can build on that moving forward we have a chance to improve before the most important stretch of the season begins. The main deal for us is just getting healthy.”

The backcourt trio of Ken-



San Jacinto College's women's basketball head coach Brenita Williams-Jackson hopes for a stronger finish for 2013-2014 season. Photo by Rob Vanya.

dra Howard (Dallas / Cedar Hill High School), Laura Chavez (Katy / Morton Ranch High School) and Nekeita Bailey (Houston / Alief Hastings High School) have been consistent contributors thus far. “I am proud of their leadership and focus as freshmen,” Williams remarked. “I’m waiting on some players to recover from injuries so we can get more production from inside players and have a more balanced team. The opening half was the beginning stages of rebuilding, and we knew coming in it would be hard. We take the good with the bad all in stride and learn from it.”

Williams is pleased with how players are serving as positive ambassadors for the College off the court, through such volunteer efforts as visiting patients at the Texas Children’s Hospital, and serv-

ing at the Houston Food Bank during Thanksgiving. “We’ve been working diligently to build relationships on campus and in the local community,” Williams said. “We’ve been involved in Hispanic Heritage activities, Gator Slam, Ladies of Integrity (student club) activities, and at a community fall fest. Overall, the culture for women’s basketball program has improved and will continue to improve.”

The first home game of the final half of the season will be played on Saturday, Jan. 11, 2014 at 4 p.m. when the team hosts conference foe Tyler Junior College. All games are free, open to the public, and are played at the North Campus in Nichols Gymnasium, 5800 Uvalde Road. For a complete schedule, please visit www.sanjacsports.com.

Bicyclist killed by Hit/Run driver on Normandy

NORTH SHORE – Houston Police were searching for a hit and run driver, after an accident last Friday night, Dec. 20, that took the life of a bicyclist. The collision happened about 7:00 pm in the southbound lanes of Normandy Drive, near the I-10 frontage road.

Witnesses said they saw the bicyclist earlier in the evening riding erratically in the traffic lanes. After he was struck by an unknown white vehicle, he lay in the street until emergency personnel arrived. He was then taken to Ben Taub hospital, where he was pronounced dead. His name has not been released.

Police said that two nearby gas stations may have video showing the crash, and are studying the tapes. The driver, when identified, faces a felony charge of failing to stop and render aid.

Anyone with information is asked to call Houston Homicide at 713-247-4065 or Crime Stoppers at 713-222-TIPS.



HPD OFFICERS take photos and measurements of the mangled bicycle at the scene of a fatal Hit & Run accident, Friday Dec. 20th on Normandy Drive near I-10. Police are looking for a white vehicle that did not stop after the collision.

NC STAR PHOTO/Hoffman

HCSO wins gold award for ship channel security program

HOUSTON, TX- The Harris County Sheriff’s Office (HCSO) received the Gold Award at the Government Security News (GSN) 2013 Homeland Security Awards for “Most Notable Maritime/Seaport Program”.

The HCSO, which heads the Houston Ship Channel Security District, received the award for its 24/7 security monitoring program for threat assessment and response through the monitoring center known as Security Monitoring and Assessment Group or SMAG.

The winners of the GSN 2013 Homeland Security Awards program were selected from hundreds of nominations submitted by leading vendors of IT and physical security products and federal, state, county and municipal government agencies, highlighting their most noteworthy programs and projects.

The Houston Ship Channel Security District (HSCSD) is a public-private partnership developed by the State of Texas, regional industry, Harris

County, and first responder partners along the Houston Ship Channel.

It’s mission is to provide a greater degree of security and safety for facilities, employees and communities surrounding the Houston Ship Channel by supporting projects and initiatives to enhance the capabilities, communication, and joint operational readiness of existing first responder, law

enforcement, and regional organizations.

Through the collaborative efforts of the HCSO, the Harris County Information Technology Center, the Houston Ship Channel Security District, and supporting technology suppliers, the well-coordinated security system is unprecedented in the industry.

Brandi Giles Commits to Texas A&M International University

North Shore senior Brandi Giles accepted a scholarship and signed a National Letter of Intent to play softball at Texas A&M International University after she graduates from high school in June. Brandi celebrated the occasion with teammates, coaches and family in a ceremony at the Mustang softball field on November 14th. Brandi has garnered all-district 21-5A honors during her first three seasons of high school play at three different positions, pitcher, first base and outfield. Brandi’s lifetime on-base percentage as a Mustang is .486 and she has batted in 77 runs. She looks forward to an exciting senior season with the Mustangs in the spring. After the ceremony at North Shore, Texas A&M International publicly announced the signing on the University’s website.



READER OPINION!

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Federal Road Barber Shop, Uvalde @ Halifax
Panera Restaurant, Beltway 8 @ Wallisville
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North Shore High School, at Wallisville Rd

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Channelview Admin Bldg, Sheldon Rd
Food Fair, Sheldon Rd @ I-10
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SHELDON

Sheldon ISD Admin Bldg.
C. E. King High School, Tidwell Rd
Kroger’s, Normandy at Woodforest

CLOVERLEAF

HC MUD #36, Hollywood St
Grayson Community Center, Corpus Christi St
Galena Park Admin Building, Beltway 8 at Woodforest
CommunityBank of Texas, I-10 E @ Freeport
Gatti’s Pizza, Uvalde
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City Hall, Main Street
El Ahorro Market, Main Street
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Capital Bank, I-10 E
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JC Police Dept., Market St
Market Street Feed Store, Market St

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CLUBS, ORGANIZATIONS

North Shore Rotary sponsors EarlyAct FirstKnight ceremony

Knights of the Round Table came to two North Channel elementary schools last Friday, Dec. 6, thanks to the North Shore Rotary. The program is a nationally recognized effort to teach young people worthwhile values, and become civil service-oriented people during their formative years. Elaborately costumed actors, sometimes with a horse, present value lessons, enroll the students, and award them for their achievements along the lines taught.

After these two presentations, there was also one at the Rhodes School located on Tidwell and Normandy near C. E. King High School.



Scene at North Shore Elementary school on Friday afternoon. Rotarians David Gray and Don Spies are pictured with Knight Sir James and the 5th grade award winners.



North Shore Rotarian Scott Stephens addresses Cloverleaf Elementary students before the Knighthood ceremony. He explained what the purpose of the EarlyAct FirstKnight program was.

Rotary & Pilot Club donate bicycles & helmets

Students rewarded for Perfect Attendance

Thursday, December 12, San Jacinto Pilot club joined with the North Shore Rotary Club to donate bicycles and helmets to over 70 children who had perfect attendance in the youth program sponsored by Harris County's Precinct2 Gether program.

The after-school program's mission is to develop Precinct2 Gether youth academically, physically and socially, guiding them to become productive citizens in their communities. The presentation included a musical presentation entitled "A Sombbrero for Santa" per-

formed by students from Cloverleaf and Sam Houston Elementary schools. Other community businesses offered their help in putting together the bikes, providing snacks for the children. The Pilot Club donated helmets, while the Rotary Club donated the bikes. San Jacinto Pilot Club is a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to brain safety and fitness. For more information, visit www.SanJacintoPilot.com and www.PilotInternational.org.



Musical presentation. Also bicycles and helmets donated by San Jacinto Pilot Club and North Shore Rotary.

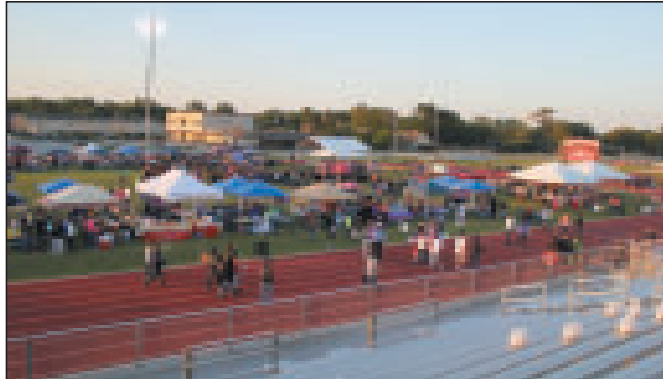
North Channel area Relay for Life kick-off set for Jan. 25

The North Channel Area Relay for Life will hold a kick-off celebration on Saturday, Jan. 25, at 10 a.m. at the North Shore High School Ninth Grade Campus gymnasium, 13501 Holly Park.

The celebration invites the public, interested volunteers and participants to gather to learn about the meaning of the event and how to launch their fundraising efforts for the year. The rally will feature speakers from the community, including cancer survivors who have benefitted from the funds raised by Relay For Life. Bands, cheerleaders and other groups will serve as featured entertainment for the kick-off.

North Channel Relay for Life steering committee members will also inform those in attendance about the actual Relay For Life event to be held at 6 p.m., Friday May 2 at North Shore High School Ninth Grade Campus track.

Teams of community members, friends, families, businesses, schools and people from all walks of life are participating in the event in support of the American Cancer



The North Channel Area Relay For Life draws widespread support from the community and is held every May at the North Shore High School Ninth Grade Campus track on Holly Park. Funds raised from the event benefit cancer research.

Society's efforts to save lives by helping people stay well, by helping them get well, by finding cures and by fighting back.

Relay For Life began in 1985 with one man who walked and ran around a track

for 24 hours and raised \$27,000 for the American Cancer Society. This year, Relay For Life will take place in nearly 5,100 communities in the United States and 20 other countries and will raise

funds to support the Society. For more information on North Channel Area's Relay for Life, please call 281-452-8080 or go to www.relayforlife.org/north-channeltx.

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