

NORTH CHANNEL★STAR

Your News, Your Newspaper

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

VOLUME 2, NO. 2

JANUARY 8, 2014

www.northchannelstar.com

CHANNEL CHATTER

Dialogue with Readers is important

Inside this issue, you will find a form called Reader Opinion, and another column called Letters to the Editor. These two devices are for you to let us know how we are doing with the paper, and to share your thoughts on life in North Shore.

What issues are most important to you? What stories do we need to publish, that are not yet in the paper?

As we distribute the paper to our various rack locations, we hear from you as well. Most everyone is anxious to see this new paper, and read about their neighbors.

A few are not. Stores that declined to carry the paper include Sam's, Walmart, and I-Hop. Apparently they can take your money without offering to help the community with news and information. You decide.

We are looking for more locations to leave papers. You should be able to distribute over 25 copies each week to your customers. If that is possible, call us at 281-328-9605 and we will put you on our distribution list and your name in the paper. This should help bring in more customers, too.

Thanks to you when you take time to write to us. Sometimes you have pointed out mistakes, such as calling locations in North Shore as Channelview. That's a soft line between them, but we will learn.

And one reader pointed out that the Sheldon and Channelview fire departments are not a VFD or volunteer service, but paid. Thanks for the clarification.

We are not natives of North Shore, but like Texas, we got here as soon as we could. Hope to fit in as a native sometime in the future.

We are busy working on that Galena Park FFA photo presentation that we promised. In our next issue, look for Galena Park FFA photos! And call us if you would like to be a sponsor on those pages. 281-328-9605. The kids love to see their work in print, and it is a real keepsake issue for all of the FFA families.

Tell a friend about the new NORTH CHANNEL STAR. And visit us weekly, in print and on the internet at www.northchannelstar.com.

LyondellBasell will restart Methanol plant in Channelview

Methanol market strong worldwide

HOUSTON, Jan. 2, 2014 / PRNewswire/ — LyondellBasell (NYSE: LYB) today announced that its methanol plant at Channelview, Texas, was placed into service in the fourth-quarter 2013 to take advantage of low-cost natural gas from shale formations. The unit had been out of service since 2004 due to the rising cost of natural gas, the key feedstock for methanol production.

According to spokesperson David Harpole, the activation of this plant has meant 24 new jobs to the complex.

The methanol unit has the capacity to produce 780,000 tons of methanol each year, he said. The unit was shut down



LyondellBasell photo

Part of the LyondellBasell plant in Channelview, as seen in this company photo.

in the year 2004 due to high prices for natural gas, but this has now been reversed by the availability of shale gas in the Texas Gulf Coast region.

Harpole said the restart work actually began in December, and continues as they carefully start up equipment that has not been in use.

"The methanol plant restart is the first in a series of U.S. Gulf Coast projects by LyondellBasell to take advantage of the natural gas price advantage that we enjoy from shale gas," said Patrick Quarles, senior vice president, Intermediates and Derivatives. "The methanol plant project and our other significant debottleneck projects will bring new capacity into our system earlier and at substantially lower cost than constructing entirely new facilities."

Other LyondellBasell growth projects include expansions of ethylene capacity at La Porte, Channelview and Corpus Christi, Texas, that will add 1.8 billion pounds to the company's annual capacity, and the expansion of a polyethylene facility in Matagorda County, Texas.

Methanol is used in the production of chemicals such as acetic acid and formaldehyde, and in products including adhesives, foams, plywood sub-floors, solvents and windshield washer fluid. LyondellBasell is a leading manufacturer and global supplier of acetic acid. Methanol also is used in global gasoline production through dirmorect blending, as well as for the production of methyl tertiary butyl ether (MTBE), a clean-burning gasoline component produced by LyondellBasell.

LyondellBasell (NYSE: LYB) is one of the world's largest plastics, chemical and refining companies and a member of the S&P 500. LyondellBasell manufactures products at 58 sites in 18 countries. LyondellBasell products and technologies are used to make items that improve the quality of life for people around the world including packaging, electronics, automotive parts, home furnishings, construction materials and biofuels.

East Houston Hospital receives its first baby of the New Year 2014

Houston, Texas, January 1, 2014 —East Houston Regional Medical Center and Dr. Christy Obukofe helped Houstonians Jessica Parga and Gerardo Sandoval welcome their baby girl, Delaila Sandoval, into the world at 12:02 a.m. on January 1, 2014. Baby Delaila is 6 lbs. and 10 oz. and is 18 and 1/2 inches long. She was one of seven babies born on New Year's Day at East Houston Regional Medical Center.

"I didn't think I would be delivering Delaila on New Year's Day," said Jessica. "We are very excited that she is a New Year's Day baby and we will celebrate her birthday every year with fireworks."

"We are thrilled to have the first baby born at East Houston Regional Medical



Baby Delaila Sandoval maker her debut on New Year's day at East Houston Regional Medical Center with her mother, Jessica Parga and father, Gerardo Sandoval.

See FIRST BABY OF THE YEAR, page 2

McIngvale receives Points of Light Award from Bush

HOUSTON — When George H. W. Bush was in office as president, he initiated an award to private citizens who had demonstrated a high level of public service and philanthropy to his fellow man. He personally gave out over 1000 of these awards, on a daily basis, thus the name.

On Monday, Dec. 23, Houston's own Jim McIngvale was awarded this honor, by Bush's son Neil Bush, who now heads the board of the Points of Light Foundation. This was the 5115th time the Daily



JIM "MATTRESS MACK" McINGVALE receives his Daily Points of Light Award from Neil Bush, right, as Barbara and George Bush look on. Former President Bush nominated McIngvale for this prestigious service award.

See McINGVALE, page 2

North Channel STAR Photo/Hoffman

Girl Scout cookie program begins door-to-door sale

Girls learn skills to have positive impact on world

HOUSTON (January 6, 2014) - Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council (GSSJC), one of the largest Girl Scout councils in the U.S., will begin selling Girl Scout cookies door-to-door January 11 as part of the Girl Scout Cookie Program. The program is the largest girl-run business in the world and teaches girls essential skills to succeed personally and professionally, including goal setting, decision making, money management, people skills and business ethics.

Once a year, Girl Scouts venture into the entrepre-

neurial world to learn business skills and financial literacy and earn money to fund their service oriented goals. When customers purchase a box of Girl Scout Cookies, they are enabling girls to become advocates for issues they are passionate about, sending a city kid from a low income household to camp or a girl overseas to learn about an archipelago, or helping girls purchase supplies to send care packages to soldiers serving overseas. A Girl Scout cookie purchase supports girls as they do great things in their communities



The Girl Scout Cookie Program begins door-to-door sales January 11. A new season brings with it a new cookie - Cranberry Citrus Crisps, a whole grain crispy cookie with tangy cranberry bits and citrus flavor.

See GIRL SCOUTS, page 3

SCHOOL & COMMUNITY NEWS

COMMUNITY
CALENDAR

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 Baldree Center, 13828 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

- 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 after-school 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.

Veterans awarded scholarships

PASADENA, Texas - The first group of veteran students to receive a Wall of Honor plaque and scholarship were recognized on Veterans Day at the San Jacinto College Board of Trustees meeting.

The six veteran students were selected amongst their peers to receive the student plaques, which will be hung on the Wall of Honor at each San Jacinto College campus. In addition, the students each received a certificate and \$500 scholarship from the San Jacinto College Foundation.

"This is a tremendous honor for us to recognize and reward the men and women who represent all of those who have served our country," said San Jacinto College Foundation Executive Director, Ruth Keenan. "Each of these men and women are deserving of this recognition. We look forward to continuing to award our veteran students with the money they need to help them transition to college and civilian life en route to finding a career in their chosen field."

The six students that received a plaque and scholarship are:

- Lance Corporal Ricky Lynn Sistrunk, United States Marine Corp. Mr. Sistrunk is pursuing a general studies degree at San Jacinto College so that he can transfer to the University of Texas or Prairie View A&M University to complete a registered nursing degree.
- Hospital Man Manuel Or-



Six San Jacinto College veteran students received scholarships through the San Jacinto College Foundation. Pictured at a recent board meeting are (left to right): Gary Alston, scholarship recipient; Silvia Escobedo, scholarship recipient; Jeffrey Everitt, scholarship recipient; Willie Bush, scholarship recipient; Daisy Saenz, San Jacinto College Central Campus veteran success coordinator; Manuel Orlando Fernandez, scholarship recipient; Ricky Lynn Sistrunk, scholarship recipient; Ruth Keenan, executive director, San Jacinto College Foundation; Dr. Brenda Hellyer, Chancellor, San Jacinto College; Dr. Bill Raffetto, interim provost, San Jacinto College; and Eugene Bernard, San Jacinto College South Campus veteran success coordinator. Photo credit: Amanda L. Booren, San Jacinto College marketing, public relations, and government affairs department.

lando Fernandez, United States Navy Reserves. Mr. Fernandez is pursuing a licensed vocational nursing degree at San Jacinto College.

-Specialist Willie Bush, United States Army. Mr. Bush is pursuing a degree in auto technology, General Motors specialty, and carries a 3.12 grade point average.

-Private First Class Gary Alston, United States Army. Mr. Alston has a perfect 4.0 grade point average as part of the San Jacinto College air conditioning technology program.

-Sergeant Silvia Escobedo, United States Army accounting program. Ms. Escobedo is working towards an associate

degree in accounting, and plans to transfer to a four-year university.

-Private First Class Jeffrey Everitt, United States Marines. Mr. Everitt earned an Associate of Arts in History from San Jacinto College and is currently pursuing a degree in dietetics food service management.

Companies looking for drafters visit San Jacinto College to interview candidates

PASADENA, Texas - Companies hiring drafters are turning to San Jacinto College for their applicants, and not just by calling, but also by visiting students in their classroom for on-site interviews. Representatives from Oil States Industries recently held a recruiting event at the College to meet with associate degree drafting candidates from the engineering design graphics (EDG) program. Kelly Collins, with the human resources department at Oil States Industries, said that the company is looking to hire two entry-level drafters per semester.

"We know San Jacinto Col-

lege provides students with the curriculum and the training on software that we use," said Collins. "Once we hire them, they will be assigned a mentor that will guide and teach them everything within their job description. Moreover, we will provide any additional training, exams, and certifications he or she needs to start as a full-time drafter." Collins added that drafters who start at Oil States Industries will begin making approximately \$40,000. The company plans to start employees as drafters and transition them into senior drafter positions, and later into designer and senior designer po-

sitions.

"These jobs pay very well and come with excellent benefits, but we do prefer an associate degree," said Collins. "This is why we choose to look to our local community colleges to fill these positions and promote from within."

Anna Cummings, engineering design graphics department chair at San Jacinto College, said that engineering companies in Houston have a large employment gap to fill. Drafters enjoy a healthy job outlook, according to the Department of Labor, with Texas leading in employment in this field.

"The companies that are looking for graduates are mainly in oil and gas areas," said Cummings. "These companies build oil platforms, materials, and tools. With oil and gas production as high as it is, there are many positions

available for drafters. Engineering groups hire drafters as assistants to designers and engineers."

Drafters use 2D and 3D computer-aided drafting (CAD) software to convert the designs of engineers and architects into technical drawings and plans. There are several types of drafters, including electronics, electrical, civil, architectural, instrumentation, piping, with mechanical and petro/industrial in high demand in the Houston region.

Mechanical drafters prepare layouts that show details for a wide variety of machinery and mechanical devices. Petro/Industrial drafters prepare plans used in the layout, construction and operation of oil and gas fields, refineries, chemical plants, and process piping systems, according to the Department of Labor.

FIRST BABY OF THE YEAR,

Continued from page 1

Center for 2014. Each year we help families welcome their children into the world," said Alice Adams, Chief Executive Officer at East Houston Regional Medical Center. "It is wonderful to be the only community hospital dedicated to our resident's needs. It is so exciting to be a part of these families' lifetime memories."

Alice Adams, CEO, and Brenda Martinez, Chief Nursing Officer, presented the family with a beautiful basket of goodies for baby and mom, a plant and balloons, as well as a door decoration announcing her arrival. Gifts also included diapers and formula.

McINGVALE,

Continued from Page 1

Points of Light Award had been given, but it was the first time that former President Bush had actually nominated the recipient. The award was made at Bush's office in Houston, with McIngvale's daughters and son present, as well as Barbara and George Bush, and an interesting touch, the two family dogs, Mini-Me and Bibi.

McIngvale was deeply touched by the recognition, and although he and the president, as well as former president Clinton, have been friends for years, he was overwhelmed by the honor.

McIngvale's philanthropy has become legendary, and he spoke about how he was motivated to return to the community many of the profits that he had realized from his Gallery Furniture stores.

His charitable work includes donations to heart research, mental health, youth, education, military USO, scholarships at the Rodeo, and needy families throughout the Houston area, especially at Christmas time.

The term "Points of Light" came from President Bush's 1989 inaugural speech, where he spoke of selfless acts that would "spread like stars throughout the nation, doing good."

In his acceptance remarks, he modestly credited his father, the late George McIngvale, Sr., with inspiring him to reach out to the community. However, in his typical salesman's fashion, he reminded everyone that if they needed furniture, he would "deliver it tonight."

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EOI

San Jac College Happenings

Jan. 7-12

•Registration open and payment due on day of registration for Spring 2014, all campuses.

Jan. 13

•Classes begin for Spring 2014 term, all campuses.

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COMMUNITY NEWS & CRIME WATCH

GIRL SCOUTS,

Continued from page 1

and encourages them to change the world.

A new season brings with it two new cookies - Cranberry Citrus Crisps and bite-size, gluten-free Chocolate Chip Shortbread Cookies. The Cranberry Citrus Crisp is a whole grain crispy cookie with tangy cranberry bits and citrus flavor. Packaged in a 5 oz. resealable bag, the highly requested gluten-free cookie includes chocolate chips nestled in a gluten-free shortbread cookie and is free of artificial flavors, colors, high fructose corn syrup, palm oil and hydrogenated oils. GSSJC is one of 20 councils that will serve as a test market for the cookies that retail for \$5 per package.

The mainstays of the program include: Thin Mints, Peanut Butter Patties, Peanut Butter Sandwiches, Shortbread, Thanks-A-Lots, Caramel deLites and Lemonades. All cookies are zero grams trans-fat per serving and the price for a box of cookies is only \$4.

Beginning February 21, Girl Scout Cookies will be sold at cookie booths outside of grocery stores and other retail venues. The cookie program ends March 30.

Girl Scouts across the nation invite their communities to celebrate National Girl Scout Cookie Weekend, February 7-9, to highlight the real purpose of the \$790 million Girl Scout Cookie Program: to teach girls five essential skills, including goal setting, decision making, money management, business ethics and people skills.

When all of the cookies have been consumed, remember, the box is not empty. Each box sold helps to create thousands of happy memories and incredible achievements that the cookie program has made possible. Every box of Girl Scout Cookies resonates with promise and possibility. Your support of Girl Scouting through purchasing Girl Scout Cookies helps make that promise and those possibilities into realities for girls.

Girl Scouts of the USA is the world's preeminent organization for girls, with a membership of more than 3.7 million girls and adults. Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.

Chartered by GSUSA to provide Girl Scouting locally, Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council is one of the largest Girl Scout councils in the country serving more than 62,000 girl members and nearly 19,000 adults in 26 southeast Texas counties.

San Jacinto College inducts PTK members



The San Jacinto College North Campus recently inducted new members of the Phi Theta Kappa international honor society, including, from left (front row): Deyanira Oyervides, Jamis Jenkins, Katerra McKnight, Nikki Maduka, Precious White, and Cynthia Rawlings; (back row): Edward Baldridge, Michael Edwards, Myron Crawford, Brian Ortiz, William Onyango, Ryan Nelson, Ebony Hudson, Elisa Hill, Yesennia Hernandez, Monika Cox, and Brian Coleman. Photo credit: Rob Vanya, San Jacinto College marketing, public relations, and government affairs department.

Lubrizol donates to provide 32 students with scholarships in technical education



Chris Hext, public affairs manager for Lubrizol; Van Wigginton, San Jacinto College provost; Jeff Parks, San Jacinto College dean of industrial and applied technology; Tammy McAdams, advancement coordinator for the San Jacinto College Foundation and SJ college students recipients. Photo by Jeannie Peng-Armao

PASADENA, Texas - Lubrizol recently awarded scholarships to 32 San Jacinto College students training in a variety of technical education fields.

For nearly 30 years, the company has supported student success by donating a total of \$261,600 to assist 663 San Jacinto College students, including 128 in process technology. This year, the Lubrizol Foundation donated \$16,000.

"We love San Jacinto College," said Chris Hext, public affairs manager for Lubrizol. "Lubrizol believes in supporting the education of our local community, and we strongly identify with San Jacinto College."

For Tessa Owen, a medical laboratory technology student, a \$500 scholarship goes a long way. Like many of her San Jacinto College peers, Owen is on her way to paying off her education by landing a job at a local hospital before even graduating.

"Getting a scholarship definitely shows me that I'm in the right direction," said Owen. "My parents have been paying for my college tuition, so this first scholarship really helps my family as well."

Sophomore students are chosen for scholarships based on their grade point average and program of study. Each recipient receives \$500 toward his or her college tuition.

"The partnership that we have with Lubrizol is unique," said Jeff Parks, dean of industrial and applied technology. "They have financially assisted students in receiving an education at San Jacinto College, one that prepares them for employment in the petrochemical field as well as other areas of business and industry. For that, we are truly grateful for their continuous support to student success."

The following are the 2013-2014 Lubrizol Foundation Scholarship recipients:

Business and Professional Services: Carlos Castillo, James Rainer, Laura Aguirre, Candace Earley, Kelly Harris, Erin Hyma, Nam Ngo, Kirstiana Valladares

Health Sciences: Kathryn McKenna, Krista Wells, Abigail Samford, Casandra Sandoval, Aimee Hernandez, Tessa Owen, Cynthia Smith Rex

Liberal Arts and Sciences: Aaron Villanueva

Industrial and Applied Technology: Andres Elizalde, Nathan Frey, Joseph Oliva, Cody Strange, Brett Bodkins, Tyler Bender, Francisco Rivera, Sheila Rodriguez, Toni Castille, John Charles, Natasha Downing, Thomas Elam, Ricardo Gonzalez, Ezra Lyon, Andrew McCallerty and Robert Spence.

Man shoots and kills ex-wife

A man was arrested on December 30, 2013 after he had said he shot and killed his ex-wife.

The man called 911 around 1 a.m. Monday, December 30, morning and confessed the shooting and killing on the woman, investigators said.

The shooting happened at Peppergate Lane at Rainglen Lane in northeast Harris County. After the call, paramedics rushed to the house where they tried to save the

woman, but she died from her injuries. Authorities said she was shot in the stomach.

According to reports, two domestic disturbances calls were reported from the house in 2012.

The man and the woman were living separately and it's unclear why they were together.

The man was in custody to be questioned and charges are pending.



Harris County Sheriff's Officers go to the house at Peppergate Lane to investigate after ex-husband calls 911 telling about the shooting.

Man charged in death of woman

A man was charged with the death of a woman killed crossing a street.

Last Thursday, January 2, Erik Garza, 28, was charged with falling to stop and render aid, Harris County Sheriff's Officers said.

Authorities said the woman was struck by a blue Dodge pickup around 8:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 1, in the

15200 block of Woodforest near Onaleigh in Channelview. Garza hit the woman as she was crossing the street and then sped away. A license plate was found at the scene and Garza surrendered the next morning at a Sheriff's office patrol substation. The identity of the woman has not been released.

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JAN 1, 2014 PICK-UP LOCATIONS FOR THE NORTH CHANNEL STAR

NORTH SHORE

North Channel Chamber Office, I-10 in Woodforest Bank Bldg
Pineforest Jewelry, Uvalde Rd
San Jacinto College North, Student Center & Library
Fonteno Court House, Wallisville Rd
East Houston Hospital, I-10
Foodtown, Uvalde Rd
Sellers Brothers Market, Uvalde Rd
YMCA, Wallisville Rd
Fiesta Market, I-10
HPD Substation, I-10
Federal Road Barber Shop, Uvalde @ Halifax
Panera Restaurant, Beltway 8 @ Wallisville
CiCi's Pizza, Uvalde @ Woodforest
Olive Garden, Wallisville @ Beltway 8
Shipley's Donuts, Uvalde @ I-10 E
Post Office, Mesa Road
Kroger's, Woodforest @ Beltway 8
Fuddruckers, Normandy Rd
Walgreens, Maxey Rd @ Woodforest
Senator Sylvia Garcia office, in Woodforest Bank Bldg
North Channel Library, Wallisville Rd
North Shore High School, at Wallisville Rd

CHANNELVIEW

K&T Western Wear, Sheldon Rd
Post Office, Sheldon Rd
Channelview High School, Sheldon Rd
Woodforest Bank, Sheldon Rd
Channelview Admin Bldg, Sheldon Rd
Food Fair, Sheldon Rd @ I-10
Flukinger Comm Ctr, Lorenzo St
Holiday Inn, I-10 E

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 @ Freepoint
Gatti's Pizza, Uvalde
North Channel Assistance Ministries, Bonham @ Freepoint

JACINTO CITY

City Hall, Main Street
El Ahorro Market, Main Street
Community Center/Senior Center, Oates Rd
Capital Bank, I-10 E
Jacinto City Branch Library, Akron St
State Rep Ana Hernandez office,Mercury Drive
Dairy Queen, Mercury Drive
Sellers Brothers Market, Market St
JC Police Dept., Market St
Market Street Feed Store, Market St

GALENA PARK

Baggett Community Center, Keene St
Post Office, Clinton Drive
Galena Park High School, Keene St
Galena Park City Hall, Clinton Drive
Galena Park Library, Keene St
McDonalds, Clinton Dr @ Main St

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READER OPINION!

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OPINION PAGE

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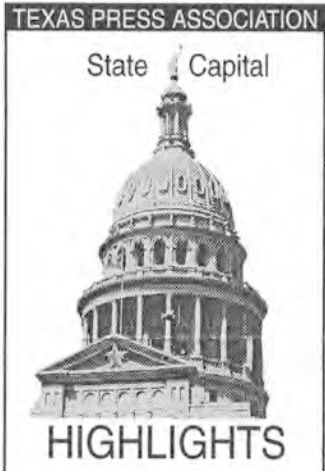
STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

By Ed Sterling

Attorneys general fire off letter to Sebelius

AUSTIN — U.S. Health & Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius received a letter dated Jan. 2 from 10 state attorneys general, expressing concern over recent action related to the enforcement of the federal Affordable Care Act.

Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott signed the letter along with 10 other state attorneys general who united in claiming



the federal Health & Human Services agency has proposed changes “that both compound illegal executive action and fail to protect the privacy of consumers using the health insurance exchanges.”

In the fall, President Obama said it would be acceptable for insurance companies to let current health policies remain in effect for a year, even if those policies do not meet all of the Affordable Care Act’s coverage requirements. But rather than have Health & Human Services accommodate an “administrative fix” to the act as proposed by President Obama, the attorneys general suggested, changes instead should come through congressional action.

As to the privacy issue, the attorneys general wrote of “the widespread public outcry over the security of consumers’ private information throughout the enrollment process” and said Health & Human Services “needs to implement common-sense safeguards, such as criminal background checks, for all persons with access to sensitive personal information.”

Meanwhile, the Texas Department of Insurance scheduled a Jan. 6 hearing on proposed state health care regulations of healthcare navigators, people who assist other individuals through the national health care exchange sign-up process.

State Sen. Kirk Watson, D-Austin, a few days before the hearing, said, “My problem is with things like fees for navigators, who themselves are prohibited from charging for their services and the arbitrary and unjustified addition of 40 hours to the existing federal training requirements. The Department needs to demonstrate that these provisions are not designed simply to put navigators out of business.”

Meeting deals with quakes

Texas Railroad Commission, the state agency that regulates the oil and gas industry, on Jan. 3 hosted a town hall meeting in Azle, a city straddling Tarrant

and Parker counties, northwest of Fort Worth.

Railroad Commissioner David Porter listened to residents’ concerns over recent seismic activity in the area, which many believe to be related to gas and oil industry operations that have increased dramatically over the last few years.

According to the Railroad Commission, Porter has been in communication with the state geologist in regards to a potential study by the Bureau of Economic Geology and the commission staff “has inspected every disposal well in the impacted area for any violations, none of which have been detected.”

But residents expressed suspicions that drilling activities and disposal wells, where waste fluids have been deposited, somehow might be related to the slippage of geological substrates.

Porter said, “The Railroad Commission will continue to diligently enforce its current rules and regulations regarding disposal and injection wells.”

Also, in a Jan. 3 statement, the Texas Oil and Gas Association said, “Safe and responsible operations in the oil and gas industry is priority one. Discussion of seismic activity and any possible correlation to oil and gas operations is a worthwhile exercise and the issue warrants robust investigation to expand upon the research we have on hand today.”

Governor appoints Steen

Gov. Rick Perry on Jan. 3 announced the appointment of John T. Steen Jr. of San Antonio to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for a term to being Jan. 8 and expire Aug. 31, 2019. The board sets policies and coordinates efforts to improve higher education in Texas.

Steen served as Texas Secretary of State from November 2012 to December 2013. He also served as a commissioner and past chair of the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission, as a board member of the Texas Public Safety Commission, and as a member of the Texas Commission on Economy and Efficiency in State Government.

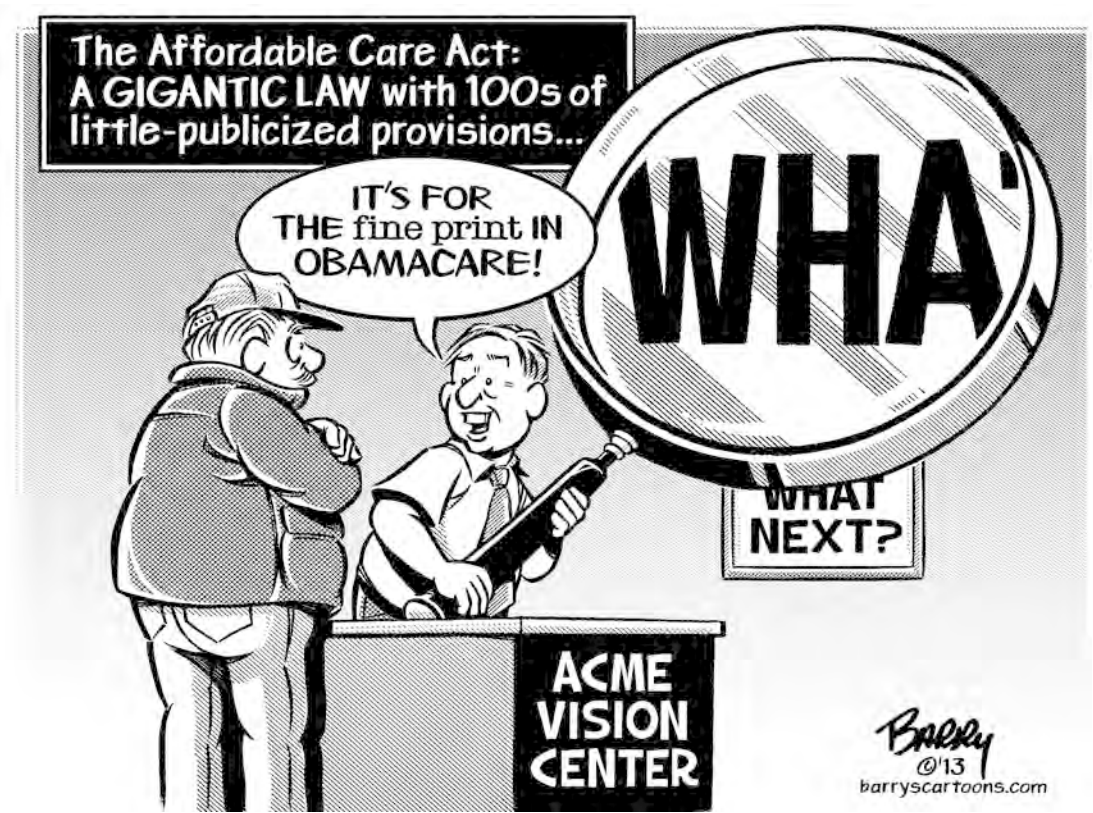
2 philanthropists die

Jack Sawtelle Blanton, 86, of Houston, a leader in the energy industry, philanthropy and higher education, died in Houston on Dec. 28. The Jack S. Blanton Museum of Art on the campus of The University of Texas at Austin was named in his honor in 1997.

“The university has lost a great friend,” said Bill Powers, president of The University of Texas at Austin.

Also on Dec. 28, businessman, investor, political activist and philanthropist Harold Clark Simmons, 82, of Dallas, died.

Gov. Perry remembered Simmons as a “true Texas giant” whose “legacy of hard work and giving, particularly to his beloved University of Texas, will live on for generations.”



The Pope inspires to do more to fight hunger

By State Senator Sylvia R. Garcia, Senate Dist. 6

Recently, I have been inspired by Pope Francis’ strong stance against economic inequality and his urging to further support the poor among us. Having read about Pope Francis’ “One Human Family, Food For All” campaign, I am moved to pray and act to end hunger, especially during this holiday season.

The Pope’s message resonates closely with the values I learned growing up poor in South Texas and having been a recipient of the old commodity food program. Despite our family’s economic hardships, my parents instilled the value of generosity in me and my nine siblings. I give thanks to my parents for teaching us that everyone has something to give, regardless of their circumstances and that everyone should be treated with dignity and respect.

During this holiday season, as we gather with our families and friends to exchange gifts, express gratitude, and celebrate another year, let us reflect on the Pope’s message of compassion and generosity for those who are unnecessarily hungry in this season of giving. Consider adding generosity for those in need to your list of 2014 New Year’s resolutions.

In Harris County, there are 706,000 residents (18%) who are food insecure. This means that there was a time in the previous year when they had

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OPINION

By State Senator Sylvia Garcia

difficulty meeting their food needs. Some of these Harris County residents are eligible for federal and state food programs like SNAP (food stamps), WIC (Women, Infants & Children’s program) , and free school lunches, but estimates show that only about 55% of those who are eligible actually access these programs. Additionally, many with food insecurity simply do not meet the low income qualifications of these programs.

So what can we do to help our neighbors in Harris County? Here are some ideas:

Encourage your faith-based and non-faith based organizations to engage in the fight against hunger by offering meals at their location, especially during the summer and after school when many children cannot access free school meals.

Help our food banks. Food banks are a critical component to filling the gap in food insecurity among our neighbors. Your time, your voice, and your money are invaluable resources in helping food banks further their mission. Also, volunteer at your local food bank and pantry. Make it part

of your New Year’s resolution to volunteer in 2014.

Use your voice to educate and encourage your neighbors, friends and family members to contribute to a food bank, but also encourage federal legislators to preserve and strengthen the SNAP program and other federal nutrition programs, which are currently under consideration in the Farm Bill to be passed after the New Year. I will certainly use my voice to encourage my fellow State legislators to expand state food programs.

Food banks can also use your dollars to buy food at wholesale prices. This should not discourage you from donating non-perishable food items, but dollars can be leveraged to feed more families. I applaud Mayor Annise Parker and the Houston Inaugural Organizing Committee for organizing an event at the Houston Food Bank on January 2nd, where 100% of donations will go to the food bank.

Like the Pope says, let’s “place ourselves at the service of the poor.” Think of creative ways to truly make a difference next year.

Angel Fire

★

TEXAS

With Russell A. Graves



made staying and preparing meals easy. We were only a couple of blocks from the ski lifts and the nearly constant shuttle service made getting your gear from the condo to the slopes easy.

The Angel Fire Resort is an all-inclusive property that undoubtedly gears towards hospitality for its guests. In the lobby of the resort are a couple of restaurants, gift shop, coffee shop, an indoor swimming pool, and gear rental - everything you need for a long weekend of skiing.

After a couple of warm up runs on the bunny slopes, we caught the bigger lifts and went

up the mountain. Admittedly, I am not an expert skier. I can keep my balance, turn to where I want to go, and stop on demand. As such, my taste in ski slopes mirrors my affinity for dirt roads. I like the paths where you can go slow and see the scenery. At the top of the Chili Express lift, the green marked, Heading Home trail is a relatively flat trail that takes you across the top of the mountain back down to the bottom of the mountain. Along the way more experienced skiers can take the more challenging blue and black trails but they look too steep for me. I’m content to ski right past them.

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NEWS VIEWS

BY PASTOR TIM EDWARDS

Crime Watch Meeting

On 1st Thursday of 2014, approximately 500 deeply concerned citizens gathered at First Baptist Church Highlands in response to the crime and safety concerns for the Highlands area. These citizens, Sheriff Adrian Garcia, Constable Ken Jones, and several other Harris County officers are to be commended for their attendance. Highlands resident and event organizer Mike James is living proof that one person can make a difference for good. It is imperative that this January 2nd meeting is the beginning of a movement, and not just a one-time gathering. Over 300 persons put their name on the dotted line to register for the Highlands Crime Watch Program. These are the people who are committed to taking action and making a difference.

One recurrent theme that was expressed during the Thursday night meeting is the need for prayer for our community. God’s Power and Peace is stronger than any evil. Christ-followers and churches are challenged to pray for the men and women who daily stand to protect us in their Law Enforcement roles. Intercede for the safety of the men, women, and families in our homes and businesses. Prayer is greater than one more New Year resolution- prayer is a lifestyle of faith and trust expressed in continual submission to God and His Will. Although it is appropriate to voice specific requests to God, the true spirit of prayer is not just to talk to God because we have troubles. Prayer is intimacy in a love relationship with God. Christ-followers who **love truth** will pray directly and specifically for physical safety but will also talk to God regarding His Will. Christ-followers are under authority- the authority of God’s Word. The demand is that we be hearers *and* doers of the Word. *But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves* **James 1:22** As doers of the Word, get involved in making a spiritual difference and in combating crime.

Commitment and organization are essential for a Crime Watch to protect our homes and businesses. Commitment and organization is demanded by God Himself for Christ-followers to have a supernatural impact in the lives of people. If we keep doing the same things, we will keep getting the same results. That is a truism physically and spiritually. There is a direct correlation between hearing and obeying God’s Word and whether an area is victimized by evil. Highlands and this area will change as individual hearts change. God’s Word and His grace transforms hearts. Make a difference by a lifestyle that honors God. As you hear and do God’s Word, Highlands will not be the same. **Love Truth!** If Christ-followers dare to ask God to bless and protect our community, we must first commit to obey God’s Word.

Community transformation is all about taking action. Get involved with the Crime Watch. Be vigilant in protecting your home or business without being a vigilante. Commit to hear and obey God’s Word by personal study and church involvement. **Love truth** and live truth day by day in 2014!

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Ask The Experts

Calling all 7 through 12 grade students in Chambers County

The women of the “Lone Star State” have a rich history. Women of the State of Texas have made many historical contributions to this great state and deserve to be noted. The Chambers County Historical Commission (CCHC) is proud to announce the essay contest for the 2013-2014 school year.

Guidelines: All essay entries should be typed on 8 1/2 x 11" paper, using “Times New Roman” font, size 12. Top and bottom page margins are to be one inch, with side margins being 1.25 inches. Essays must be submitted in English. A minimum of four (4) references are needed; no more than two (2) may be Internet references. Research references should be listed on a separate page, but not counted as part of the essay length. The cover page is not counted as page count of the essay and must include the following: Name and grade of the student, Name of school, address, city, and contact number, name of the teacher, title of essay. Es-

says should be stapled once in the top left-hand corner in the following order: cover page, body of essay, reference page. Essays which do not follow these guidelines will not be read. All essays become the property of CCHC and will not be returned.

There are two divisions: Seventh-Ninth and Tenth-Twelfth Grades. Each student in these grades in Chambers County is eligible to enter. Seventh - Ninth Grade Essay and Tenth -Twelfth Grade Essay requirements are the same, but will be graded on level. The body of the essay can be no less than two and one-half pages and no more than five and one-half pages in length. There are no word count requirements. The topic: “Women in Texas History from Beginning to 1900.” Write a biographical essay about a woman who contributed to the history of the State of Texas. This can be any woman born from the beginning of time of Texas History through the year 1900. The woman may

not have been born in Texas but moved to Texas and must have made substantial historical contributions to the state. References must be able to be substantiated.

Essays will be judged using writing guide-lines. Voice, theme, syntax and semantics of sentence structure, transitions, paraphrasing, editing, etc. will be considered important in the judging of each essay. Each participant should use the writing process of pre-writing, drafting, revising, proofreading and publishing his/her essay.

It is important to note that each student may participate individually. Essays may be given to your teacher, the Chambers County Historical Commission Museum, or mailed to the CCHC, P.O. Box 206, Anahuac, TX 77514. The winners from each school in Chambers County will be awarded a trophy and a monetary gift. The deadline for the essays to be turned in is April 4, 2014. Winners will be notified by May 4, 2014.

Diamond Jim... what did the ancients believe about diamonds?



The ancient Romans and Greeks had a lot of powerful beliefs about diamonds, including ideas that diamonds were the tears of the gods or possibly even splinters that had broken off of falling stars. Roman literature, which first made mention of diamonds in the first century AD, also stated that Cupid's irresistible arrows were tipped with diamonds. Classical Greek philosopher Plato went even further to write about diamonds as living beings that embodied celestial spirits. The Hindus, who were known to use diamonds in the eyes of their statues, believed that diamonds were created when bolts of lightning struck rocks.

FINE JEWELRY

With Jim Mills

Diamonds were also believed to attract lightning bolts. In Persian culture, there exists a myth that God had no need for diamonds, gold, or any other precious metals or gems when he created the world. Satan, however, took notice that Eve loved the brightly colored flowers in the Garden of Eden and thus created gemstones in the same hues to tempt humans. In ancient times, Kings were known to lead wars on the battlefield wearing heavy leather breastplates studded with diamonds. It was believed that diamonds possessed God-given magical qualities and superpowers far beyond the understanding of ordinary humans. At one time,

Jewish high priests used diamonds to determine the innocence or guilt of someone accused of a crime. Their belief was that a diamond held before a guilty person would dull and darken, while a diamond held before an innocent person would glow with increased brilliance. Their reasoning? The more truthful someone was, the more the diamond placed before them would sparkle.

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

Registration now open for HCSO's first citizen police academy of 2014

HOUSTON, TX – The Harris County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) invites you to the first Citizens Police Academy (CPA) of 2014. The classes begin February 13, 2014 and will be held at 15555 Stuebner Airline at the Champions Forest Baptist Church every Thursday from 7 to 10 p.m.

The Citizens Police Academy is a once-a-week, 13-week program. It is designed to give residents a working knowledge of the Harris County Sheriff's Office, including police procedures and protocol.

Through the CPA's interactive courses, participants learn many aspects of law enforcement, such as the Texas

Penal Code, Patrol Procedures, Gang Awareness, Terrorism and many other topics. Residents will gain a better understanding of how police services are conducted in their communities and see “how and why” deputies make some of their decisions in the course of their duties.

Graduates of the CPA play a vital role in their community by improving communication between citizens and law enforcement and by providing local input and support throughout the county. The HCSO hopes the graduates will become partners with the agency in identifying problems and solutions to the crime is-

sues affecting our community.

The CPA is free and enrollment is open to qualified individuals, but space is limited. Applicants must be at least 21 years of age and reside in Harris County. A thorough background check will be conducted on each applicant.

Residents interested in participating in the CPA may download an application by visiting the HCSO's website at www.harriscountysoc.org. They may also pick up an application at any HCSO storefront or by contacting the HCSO's Community Services Division at 713-759-9454. All applications must be turned in no later than February 11, 2014.

Texas encourages vigilance in flu treatment

LIBERTY, January 6, 2014 - Though recent increases in flu activity are not unusual, Texas issued flu testing and treatment guidance today to doctors and is continuing to encourage everyone to get vaccinated now to protect themselves.

The level of flu-like illness is classified as “high” in Texas, and medical providers are seeing an increase in flu in multiple parts of the state. Unusually severe cases of flu-like illness are routinely investigated during the flu season by local health departments in coordination with the Texas Department of State Health Services. H1N1 is the most common circulating flu strain so far this season. This year's flu vaccine includes protection against the most common flu strains, including H1N1.

DSHS advises clinicians to consider antiviral treatment, even if an initial rapid-flu test comes back negative. A negative result does not exclude a diagno-

sis of flu in a patient with suspected illness. Antiviral treatment is recommended for anyone with confirmed or suspected flu who is hospitalized, has severe or progressive illness or is at a higher risk for complications.

“Flu is on the rise and causing severe illness in certain people. It is not unexpected this time of year, but it's a good reminder for people to get vaccinated and stay home if they're sick,” said Dr. David Lakey, DSHS commissioner. “Flu can be deadly. People who have not been vaccinated should do so now. It's the best defense we have.”

Flu is a serious disease that kills an average of 23,600 Americans a year, according to estimates from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. People over 65, pregnant women, young children and people with chronic health conditions are most at risk for complications, so it's especially important for them to be vaccinated.

Flu cases and flu-related deaths in adults are not required to be reported to DSHS. Healthcare providers are required to report pediatric flu deaths to their local health department within one business day. There are no confirmed pediatric flu deaths in Texas this season.

DSHS recommends everyone six months old and older get vaccinated. People should talk to their health care provider about the best type of flu vaccine for them. A nasal spray version is available for healthy people ages 2 to 49 who are not pregnant, and a high-dose vaccine is approved for people 65 and older.

Dr. Lakey also urged people to follow standard illness-prevention steps:

Wash hands frequently with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer; Cover coughs and sneezes; Stay home if sick. For more information, go to www.TexasFlu.org.

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LIFESTYLE PAGE

Back in Crosby

The Christmas and New Year celebrations are over and we should now be back at the old routine of winter. I always regret the end of the holiday period and that we just finished is no exception. This was however a little different for me. This was the first time in more than twenty years I wasn't at home at Christmas time with most of my family, which is growing smaller as the year's progress.

For the first time in my life I spent the Christmas holiday with David here in Crosby. He and I had a good celebration for a few days before Christmas and sometime later. I arrived in Crosby this year about mid-December which is some three weeks earlier than usual. While this was my first time away from home on Christmas it was the first Christmas in about twenty years that David has had a family member to celebrate Christmas. Unfortunately being a chemist in a chemical plant he has had to work on Christmas day about 17 out of the last twenty years.

It doesn't seem possible but this is my 14th winter in Crosby and about 17 or 18 visits here during that period. Linda and I started visiting Dave in Crosby in 1999, right after he moved to this fine community. Another thing that

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TOUCH OF LIFE

By Don Springer



doesn't seem possible is that he has been a Texas resident for more than 30 years. Time does fly! I still think of him as a West Virginian but he has lived in Texas at least five years more than in the Mountain State.

We don't have any great plans for the winter except to stay warm and do some traveling in the great state of Texas over the next few weeks. We hope to take our first trip next week and haven't decided where to visit but I suspect this year we will start around the border.

It has been a few weeks since I have written a column for my Texas readers or for those back home but a couple of hospitalizations and other medical problems have kept my activities limited. I underwent the knife more times in October and November than I like to remember. I'm back on the mend now so should have a column often.

Old English sheepdog Mag-

gie and I are once again taking a walk twice a day in Newport or elsewhere in Crosby so we are enjoying seeing many sights we have seen before and seeing a lot of familiar faces. Maggie, now 13, has to undergo the knife shortly. She has an upper jaw problem that has to be operated on within the next few weeks. I talked with our vet here a couple of months ago by phone and made some arrangements which were finalized this past Monday. Maggie and I are getting old together.

I'm no cook so once again I am frequenting most of the area restaurants on a regular basis. When Brent is working I always eat out. If you see me around give me a shout for a few words or longer conversation. Always glad to see and talk to old friends as well as new ones.

Such are the people, places and things that have touched my life in my home!

Library program 1001 Books Before Kindergarten

By Lisa Naasz
Children's Librarian, Crosby Branch

"Experts tell us that children need to hear a thousand stories read aloud before they begin to learn to read for themselves." - Mem Fox in Reading Magic

1000 books sounds like a lot, but it is a very doable and worthwhile goal for every parent. If you read just one story a day —just 5 to 15 minutes of your time— you will achieve this goal in less than three years. If you read three books a day, you will have read 1000 books in one year! The Stratford and Crosby Children's Librarians have teamed up with other children's librarians in the Harris County Library System to create a self-paced program that is easy and fun to help you to keep track of all those books. **1001 Books Before Kindergarten** consists of ten reading logs featuring a different animal on the



Jennifer Spitz reading to her daughter, Judith Spitz

cover. On the back are tips and quotes for the parents. Every time you and your child read a book together, color in one of the 100 stars on the inside of the reading log. When you are finished with 100 books, unfold the reading log and color the large picture of the log's featured animal. Repeat with all ten logs, available at your local Harris County Library or online at www.hcpl.net. When all ten logs are completed, come to the library for a certificate featuring all ten animals celebrating your accomplishment!

By making reading with your child a daily habit, you will be doing one of the best things you can to get your child ready for school and for life. You will also create warm and lasting memories of special times spent together. For more information or to sign up for the program, visit your local library in Highlands or Crosby.

BIBLE TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey

1. Is the book of Delilah in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. In Acts 8, the Ethiopian eunuch that Philip met was under what queen? Hephzibah, Esther, Azubah, Candace
3. From Psalm 23, what did the psalmist say would follow him,

goodness and ... ? Love, Mercy, Despair, Vanity

4. Who, along with his men, hid in caves to avoid the wrath of Saul? Solomon, Ezekiel, David, Job

5. In John 8, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at ... "? Evil, Him, Priest, Her

6. From Genesis 20, who was king of Gerar? Abimelech, Ahab, Zedekiah, Josiah

ANSWERS: 1) Neither; 2) Candace; 3) Mercy; 4) David; 5) Her; 6) Abimelech

★

LITTLE BIDDY BITS

By Danny Biddy

Impression or Impact in 2014

This New Years Day morning a friend named Larry came by. Knowing how I enjoy crafting knives, he showed me an article about Everette Johnson, a man born with no

arms, who makes knives. Then Larry handed me one of Johnson's knives. I was speechless and inspired in the same moment by the gift I held in my hands and the friendship I felt in my heart.

This event did not make an impression on me; it left an impact. I have a gift for you, dear reader. A gift that will make an impact, especially if you know the story, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him will not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)

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TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY



NOTICE OF RECEIPT OF APPLICATION AND INTENT TO OBTAIN WATER QUALITY PERMIT RENEWAL

PERMIT NO. WQ0014500001

APPLICATION. Sralla MHP, LP, 1400 Woodloch Forest Drive, Suite 120, The Woodlands, Texas 77380, has applied to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to renew Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) Permit No. WQ0014500001 (EPA I.D. No. TX0126381) to authorize the discharge of treated wastewater at a volume not to exceed a daily average flow of 20,000 gallons per day. The domestic wastewater treatment facility is located at 13535 Sralla Road, Crosby, Harris County, Texas 77532. The discharge route is from the plant site to an unnamed drainage ditch along Sralla Road; thence to an unnamed drainage ditch along Kennings Road; thence to Cedar Bayou Above Tidal. TCEQ received this application on August 1, 2013. The permit application is available for viewing and copying at the Harris County Public Library, Crosby Branch, 135 Hare Road, Crosby, Texas. 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. <http://www.tceq.texas.gov/assets/public/hb610/index.html?lat=29.881351&lng=-95.037148&zooom=13&type=r>

ADDITIONAL NOTICE. TCEQ's Executive Director has determined the application is administratively complete and will conduct a technical review of the application. After technical review of the application is complete, the Executive Director may prepare a draft permit and will issue a preliminary decision on the application. **Notice of the Application and Preliminary Decision will be published and mailed to those who are on the county-wide mailing list and to those who are on the mailing list for this application. That notice will contain the deadline for submitting public comments.**

PUBLIC COMMENT / PUBLIC MEETING. You may submit public comments or request a public meeting on this application. The purpose of a public meeting is to provide the opportunity to submit comments or to ask questions about the application. TCEQ will hold a public meeting if the Executive Director determines that there is a significant degree of public interest in the application or if requested by a local legislator. A public meeting is not a contested case hearing.

OPPORTUNITY FOR A CONTESTED CASE HEARING. After the deadline for submitting public comments, the Executive Director will consider all timely comments and prepare a response to all relevant and material, or significant public comments. **Unless the application is directly referred for a contested case hearing, the response to comments, and the Executive Director's decision on the application, will be mailed to everyone who submitted public comments and to those persons who are on the**

mailing list for this application. If comments are received, the mailing will also provide instructions for requesting reconsideration of the Executive Director's decision and for requesting a contested case hearing. A contested case hearing is a legal proceeding similar to a civil trial in state district court.

TO REQUEST A CONTESTED CASE HEARING, YOU MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING ITEMS IN YOUR REQUEST: your name, address, phone number; applicant's name and proposed permit number; the location and distance of your property/activities relative to the proposed facility; a specific description of how you would be adversely affected by the facility in a way not common to the general public; and, the statement "[I/we] request a contested case hearing." If the request for contested case hearing is filed on behalf of a group or association, the request must designate the group's representative for receiving future correspondence; identify an individual member of the group who would be adversely affected by the proposed facility or activity; provide the information discussed above regarding the affected member's location and distance from the facility or activity; explain how and why the member would be affected; and explain how the interests the group seeks to protect are relevant to the group's purpose.

Following the close of all applicable comment and request periods, the Executive Director will forward the application and any requests for reconsideration or for a contested case hearing to the TCEQ Commissioners for their consideration at a scheduled Commission meeting.

The Commission will only grant a contested case hearing on disputed issues of fact that are relevant and material to the Commission's decision on the application. Further, the Commission will only grant a hearing on issues that were raised in timely filed comments that were not subsequently withdrawn. **TCEQ may act on an application to renew a permit for discharge of wastewater without providing an opportunity for a contested case hearing if certain criteria are met.**

MAILING LIST. If you submit public comments, a request for a contested case hearing or a reconsideration of the Executive Director's decision, you will be added to the mailing list for this specific application to receive future public notices mailed by the Office of the Chief Clerk. In addition, you may request to be placed on: (1) the permanent mailing list for a specific applicant name and permit number; and/or (2) the mailing list for a specific county. If you wish to be placed on the permanent and/or the county mailing list, clearly specify which list(s) and send your request to TCEQ Office of the Chief Clerk at the address below.

AGENCY CONTACTS AND INFORMATION. All written public comments and requests must be submitted to the Office of the Chief Clerk, MC 105, TCEQ, P.O. Box 13087, Austin, TX 78711-3087 or electronically at www.tceq.texas.gov/about/comments.html. If you need more information about this permit application or the permitting process, please call TCEQ Public Education Program, Toll Free, at 1-800-687-4040. Si desea información en Español, puede llamar al 1-800-687-4040. General information about TCEQ can be found at our web site at www.tceq.texas.gov.

Further information may also be obtained from Sralla MHP, LP at the address stated above or by calling Mr. Morgan Cole at 281-249-9024.

Issuance Date: December 4, 2013

CLUBS, ORGANIZATIONS

La Porte fire truck goes to new home at San Jacinto College



San Jacinto College Firefighter Training Academy cadets perform skill demonstrations using the Ferrara fire truck from the City of La Porte. Pictured left to right: Daniel Smith, Firefighter Training Academy cadet; Joseph Brysch, San Jacinto College fire protection technology program director; Dr. Brenda Hellyer, San Jacinto College Chancellor; Mayor Louis Ridgy, City of La Porte; Donald Ladd, assistant chief of the La Porte Fire Department; and Genise Williams, Firefighter Training Academy cadet. Photo credit: Jeannie Peng-Armao, San Jacinto College marketing, public relations, and government affairs department.

PASADENA, Texas – Like an infamous cinematic line, the City of La Porte recently made an offer San Jacinto College just could not refuse.

The College is now home to a 1997 Ferrara fire truck that will serve as a major training tool for cadets of the Firefighter Training Academy. This latest addition to the fire protection program comes at the price of \$1 and adds to another fire truck contribution made by the city earlier this year.

For Firefighter Training Academy cadet Genise Williams, training on fire trucks adds a much-needed element to an already thorough program.

“As cadets, we go through very rigorous training to prepare us for what we will face one day,” said Williams.

“Learning the various operations and all of the little details that go along with a fire truck prepares us even more for when we arrive on a scene.”

The San Jacinto College Firefighter Training Academy delivers 592 hours of training over seven courses, compared to the 468 hours required by the state. Once certified, cadets have a choice of furthering their education to include an Associate of Applied Science in Firefighting.

“Supporting the San Jacinto College Firefighter Training Academy is very important, not only for the cadets who are training, but to the citizens of La Porte because a lot of these student come back to us to work as firefighters,” said La Porte Mayor Louis Ridgy.

In fact, the fire protection

degree program at San Jacinto College was started by a volunteer La Porte firefighter in the early 1980s. Since that time, the program has grown to include the Firefighter Training Academy, which is currently conducting classes 46 and 47. Cadets in these classes are scheduled to graduate in May.

“The key to our students’ success is the generous support from our community,” said Dr. Brenda Hellyer, San Jacinto College Chancellor. “Our cadets will one day serve as our community firefighters, and we thank the City of La Porte for recognizing and supporting our mission to provide the very best in training and education to our students who are preparing for their careers in public safety.”

A semester of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) at San Jacinto College

PASADENA, Texas – The Fall 2013 semester at San Jacinto College has been one filled with activities promoting the areas of science, technology, engineering, and math, also referred to as the STEM fields.

San Jacinto College considers STEM education a high priority due to national student interest declining in science and math. Yet, in the Houston metroplex, 52 percent of STEM jobs require an associate degree, according to The Brookings Institution.

Since its formation, the STEM Council at San Jacinto College has scheduled events throughout this year to engage both students and the community in STEM activities and to educate about the career opportunities in the related fields.

Some of the events have included Engineering Day, where students had the opportunity to meet university representatives from engineering programs across Texas; robotics competitions for the public and student volunteers; the NASA Micrograv-



San Jacinto College math and engineering professor Nate Wiggins (right) observes as Galena Park ISD students operated a robotics device during the recent STREAM meeting, where visiting eighth-graders collaborated with San Jacinto College students on projects incorporating concepts from the disciplines of Science, Technology, Reading, Engineering, Allied Health, and Math (STREAM). The GPISD students include, from left, Tylar Perkins, Giselle Reyes, and Aatika Rizwan.

Photo by Rob Vanya

ity Project; visits from STEM professionals, like Fred Haise, former Apollo 13 astronaut; and participation in community events, like Family Earth Science Festival at the Houston Museum of Natural Science.

Intentional Connections graduates recognized

HOUSTON - Two graduates of San Jacinto College's Intentional Connections program were recently recognized for achievements. From left, college preparatory instructor and Intentional Connections mentor Darlene McClain; student Jorge Escamilla, who earned a welding technology certificate of technology; welding instructor Tino Guajardo; student Jerrell Goudeau, who earned a welding technology certificate of technology; and Myrna Gonzalez, college preparatory instructor and Intentional Connections coordinator. The North Campus Intentional Connections program provides mentoring to lower level developmental students who struggle with core subjects, but want to complete college and improve their lives.



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