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CHANNEL CHATTER

Rep. Hernandez files Legislation to address pregnant inmate needs in state facilities

AUSTIN, TX - Nov. 14, 2016 - Today, State Representative Ana Hernandez filed legislation to require the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) to report on the prenatal, mental health and gynecological services available to pregnant inmates confined in TDCJ facilities. This report would also detail inmates' nutritional standards, work, and housing conditions.

"As a state, we have a responsibility to ensure that expectant mothers, regardless of confinement status, have access to services critical to their children," Hernandez said. "Texas has taken positive steps toward accountability in county facilities. This legislation holds state facilities to the same transparency standards we now expect of our counties."

Sen. Sylvia Garcia files Bill to end unfair tax on women

AUSTIN, TEXAS - Nov. 14, 2016 - Today, Senator Sylvia Garcia filed SB 129, a bill to end the unfair sales tax levied on feminine hygiene products such as tampons and sanitary napkins. The bill would place feminine hygiene products alongside other medical necessities in sales tax code like aspirin, antifungal cream, and medical equipment.

"Women need this products regularly as part of our health and well-being. It's simply not right for the law to fail to recognize this fact. Why should the state of Texas treat tampons as a luxury item? It's simple. We should not."

San Jacinto College to cut four athletics programs in 2018

Decision based on facility needs and operational costs

PASADENA, Texas — San Jacinto College has a long tradition of achievement, both in the classroom and on the athletic fields and courts, with a laser focus on student success. Once dubbed "Harvard on the Highway," the reputation of San Jacinto College is well-known as demonstrated by being named one of the 10 finalists for the prestigious 2017 Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence.

In order to keep this focus, the Board of Trustees has made the difficult decision to discontinue competitive athletic programs in men's and women's basketball, women's volleyball and men's soccer, effective

May 2018.

The decision was made official November 7, 2016, at the regular meeting of the San Jacinto College Board of Trustees. The College will continue to offer National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) competitive athletics in baseball and softball.

"This was an extremely difficult decision," said Dan Mims, Chairman, San Jacinto College Board of Trustees. "For the last 10 years, the Board has been having difficult discussions around athletics and facilities. The Board is charged with being fiscally responsible and good stewards of taxpayer dollars. Because student success is the core

value at San Jacinto College, we need to remain true to our mission around student success and focus our resources on programs and initiatives that impact the broader student body."

These issues have been discussed for nearly a decade at San Jacinto College through facilities planning, which determines current and future needs. As the 2015 bond referendum was under consideration, critical facility and infrastructure needs were identified and prioritized. Most recently, it was determined that the gymnasiums on each campus require significant capital improvements, and specifically, the Central Campus facility

needed a major renovation or to be entirely rebuilt in order to accommodate the competitive athletic programs. While the athletic programs have had many successes, the priority needs to be on the broader student population's educational goals and what will have the most impact on that broader population.

In addition, the College also considered the operating costs for six highly competitive athletic programs and determined that these costs were not sustainable for the long term.

Over the more than 50-year history of San Jacinto College athletics, hundreds of student-athletes have participated, transferring

to four-year universities and colleges on athletic and academic scholarships, and moving into the ranks of professional athletes. To date, San Jacinto College has won 12 national championships and has 17 national runner-up finishes.

"San Jacinto College will honor its commitment to the approximately 150 current student-athletes who are affected by this decision," said Dr. Allatia Harris, vice chancellor for strategic initiatives, who oversees the athletics programs at San Jacinto College. "Student success remains our focus, and we

See **PROGRAMS CUT**, page 8

Practice helps fire fighters



Fire crews carry a grinning fellow fire fighter to safety that had been hidden within the smoke house to practice saving fellow crew members.

CROSBY — The fire fighters of Crosby Volunteer Fire Department and Sheldon Community Fire and Rescue teamed here last Thursday to get hands

on practice with the potential problems that fire fighters contend with at each incident.

They call it a smoke house, unlike the original

smoke houses used to cure and preserve meats, these smoke houses are used to test the skills and raise

See **Fire Rescue**, page 6

SAN JACINTO RIVER WASTE PITS

EPA EXTENDS COMMENT DEADLINE

EAST HARRIS COUNTY — The federal Environmental Protection Agency announced last Wednesday that they were extending the comment period for the public to express their opinions on whether the toxic waste pits should be removed, or a cap built over them and let them stay in place. EPA granted a 45 day extension, with final comments due by January 12, 2017.

The EPA had announced on September 28 that the Proposed Plan they preferred called for removal of most of the toxic wastes, in the North and South impound areas. They would, however, allow some material to remain if its toxicity was below acceptable stan-

dards.

Although this extension came as a surprise to the parties who have been involved in the long Superfund process, nevertheless it is within the guidelines of these types of federal procedures. Any party can request a hearing, or an extension, and the EPA determines whether it is a reasonable request.

In this case, authorities indicated that several parties had made requests for an extension. All of them are proponents for leaving the waste pits in place, it was learned.

Jackie Young, the leading advocate for completely removing the waste pits,

See **EXTENSION**, page 4

GALENA PARK ISD FOOTBALL

North Shore Mustangs head to area Playoff Game



The North Shore Mustangs defeated the Pasadena Memorial Mavericks last Friday with a score of 55-0. The Mustangs will now face Dickinson in the area football playoff game on Friday, November 18. The game kicks off at 7:00 p.m. at Sam Vitanza Stadium in Dickinson. Good luck Mustangs!

VETERANS DAY

Channelview ISD Veterans Day Celebration



(Photo by Mark Kramer, Channelview ISD)

The Channelview Independent School District honored those who served in a community-wide Veterans Day at the Bill Neal Center on Nov. 9. Local veterans from all branches of military service were in attendance. Cadets with the Channelview High School JROTC, the Alice Johnson Junior High LOTC and the Anthony Aguirre Junior High LOTC led the event. The event also featured patriotic musical performances from the CHS Band and Choir. The ceremony concluded with a special musical tribute by bagpipe player William Titus.

See more **VETERANS photos**, page 8

COMMUNITY NEWS

HIGHLANDS ROTARY CLUB NEWS

Rotary speakers - Project Blue, Navy Seal

Highlands Rotary club continues to have interesting and varied speakers at the Tuesday luncheons, according to club president Diana Weaver.

This month's talks included information on Project Blue, by Mary Pinney, and the U.S. Navy, by Capt. Van Wennen, a Navy Seal and member of their special ops group.

Project Blue is an organization that helps licensed police officers who have any health problems, not related to their on-duty work. She said the most common problem they encounter is cancer.



Mary Pinney
Project Blue

Project Blue serves police throughout the state of Texas, Mary Pinney said. This

breaks down into 25% local officers, and 75% statewide.

They are a 501c3 charity, and have their office in Mont Belvieu. They have been in existence for 7 years, but are not well known, she said.

In the past 4 years, they have donated \$215,000 to families of police officers to help them with their medical bills.

The group raises money through school events known as "Pennies for Justice," a Jail Break Run every year which is a 1/2 marathon and a 5K run. Last year they had 1500 participants and 21 agen-

cies represented.

Pinney has written a book that details the group and its fund-raising efforts.

Rotary also heard this month from Capt. Van Wennen, speaking during "Navy Week" about that service branch. He spoke about the goal of preventing war, and "Peace through Strength."

He said there are 350,000 in the Navy, and 100,000 in the Naval reserve. The Navy has 10 aircraft carriers, and a budget of \$150 Billion yearly. An important job is



Captain Van Wennen
U.S. Navy seal

protecting the Port, he said.

He also related some of his personal experiences as a Navy seal.

The African Children's Choir to perform in Crosby November 22

The African Children's Choir melts the hearts of audiences with their charming smiles, beautiful voices and lively African songs and dances.


The program features well-loved children's songs, traditional Spirituals and Gospel favorites. Concerts are free and open to all. A free-will offering is taken at the performance to support African Children's Choir programs, such as education, care and relief and development programs.

Music for Life (The parent organization for The African Children's Choir)


works in seven African countries such as, Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Nigeria, Ghana and South Africa. MFL has educated over 52,000 children and impacted the lives of over 100,000 people through its relief and development programs during its history. MFL purpose is to help create new leadership for tomorrow's Africa, by focusing on education.

The African Children's Choir has had the privilege to perform before presidents, heads of state and most recently the Queen of England, Queen Elizabeth II, for her diamond jubilee. The Choir has also had the honor of singing alongside artists such as Paul McCartney, Annie Lennox, Keith Urban, Mariah Carey, Michael W. Smith, and other inspirational performers!

Promotional support of this community concert is greatly appreciated. The African Children's Choir is a nonprofit humanitarian and relief organization dedicated to helping Africa's most vulnerable children today so they can help Africa tomorrow. No tickets, donations welcome. Event to take place on Tuesday, November 22, 2016, 7:30 p.m. at the Little Country Church located at 14035 FM 2100, Crosby, TX 77532. For more information, visit www.africanchildrenschoir.com.



SAN JACINTO RIVER WASTE PITS SUPERFUND SITE
PROPOSED PLAN COMMENT PERIOD EXTENDED
Highlands, Texas
Harris County
November 9, 2016



THE U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY ANNOUNCES AN EXTENSION TO THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD FOR THE SAN JACINTO RIVER WASTE PITS SITE. THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD WILL BE EXTENDED AN ADDITIONAL 45 DAYS FROM THE CURRENT END DATE OF NOVEMBER 28, 2016, TO JANUARY 12, 2017.

You may submit comments via:

Online:
www.epa.gov/tx/forms/sjrwpc-comments

Email:
R6_San_Jacinto_Waste_Pits_Comments@epa.gov

Or, you may submit written comments to the:

Remedial Project Manager
U.S. EPA Region 6 (6SF-RA)
1445 Ross Avenue, Suite 1200
Dallas, Texas 75202-2733

Additional information is also available on the following EPA website:
www.epa.gov/superfund/san-jacinto-river-waste-pits

Para información en español, comuníquese con la Agencia de Protección Ambiental de los Estados Unidos (la EPA) a 1.800.533.3508 (llamada gratis).



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SCHOOL NEWS

CHANNELVIEW ISD

Harvey Brown Elementary to receive SPARK Park

Harvey Brown Elementary students and the community will have a large, new place to play as the campus was selected as the site for a public park and playground through the SPARK Park program.

Brown is one of 30 Houston area schools that will receive new parks through a \$5 million contribution to SPARK from the Houston Endowment and the Kinder Foundation. The City of Houston has also pledged \$450,000 in Community Development Block Grant funding for the projects.

The announcement was made during a special ceremony at Houston City Hall on Sept. 21, where Brown students and administrators met SPARK Park officials, Mayor Sylvester Turner and members of Houston City Council.

"Our community deserves to have places where kids are able to run free and enjoy the great outdoors," Principal LaKeisha LeBlanc said. "I envision this park bringing together families and strengthening the school/community relationship."

LeBlanc inquired about the program during the 2015-2016 school year after noticing SPARK parks at several Houston-area campuses. "I thought that this was something that was desperately needed for our students," she said. "At that point, I contacted the SPARK office to find out how we could become a part of this amazing program."

After LeBlanc and district administrators met with representatives from



Brown Elementary students and staff, along with Channelview ISD Superintendent Greg Ollis are congratulated by Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner on the selection of the campus being selected as the site for a community park through the SPARK Park program.

SPARK in June, a Trust for Public Land study identified the land around the campus as a "park desert." A park desert is defined to be an area where no parks are located in a half-mile radius or resident cannot access green space within a 10-minute walk. Based on that study, Brown Elementary was approved to become one of the first group of SPARK Parks to begin construction later this year.

"This project means so much to our community," said Greg Ollis, Channelview ISD superintendent. "We certainly want to thank the Kinder Foundation, the Houston Endowment, the City of Houston and the SPARK Park organization for this generous gift that will be enjoyed for years to come."

One of the first tasks for the staff and students is to decide on a theme and ideas for the look of the park. The school has partnered with IBI Group Architects to assist with the design of the park.

"Channelview as a school district and as a community is very fortunate and blessed to have been selected for this project," said Kyle Campbell, president of the Channelview ISD Board of Trustees. "I feel this will not only add in our constant efforts to engage and connect with the community we serve, but will also allow us some new opportunities to connect as this project starts moving forward."

Officials said the goal is to begin construction on the project no later than this summer and dedicate the park in Fall 2017.

"This park is going to truly transform the area adjacent to Harvey Brown Elementary," Campbell said. "We as a school board are looking forward to seeing the project kick off and then in its completion seeing our children and families enjoy this great space."

Channelview ISD's November Students of the Month



Channelview ISD recently honored their November Students of the Month by hosting a recognition luncheon in the top level of the press box at Ray Maddy Memorial Stadium. The November Students of the Month include, from left, Adalyn Espinoza (Brown Elementary), Joanna Garcia (DeZavala Elementary), Claude Richardson (McMullan Elementary), Allana Childress (Aguirre Junior High), Abraham Najera (Crenshaw Elementary), Kameron Kelley (Channelview High School), Joshua Torres (Hamblen Elementary), Trinity Jesse (Kolarik Ninth Grade Center), Jayla Johnson (Schochler Elementary), Alberto Romero Jr. (Joe Frank Campbell Learning Center), Valerie Villegas (Alice Johnson Junior High) and Xavier Sosa (Cobb Elementary).

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SCHOOL/COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY EVENTS

FREE Coffee Networking Event

Thursday, November 17th, 9:30am @ Dr. Patricia Janki's Office, 13601 Woodforest Blvd., 77015. Bring plenty of business cards. Invite your co-workers, business partners, potential member/clients! Everyone is WELCOMED!

New - evening San Jacinto Pilot Club

Meetings will begin on November 1st at 7 pm at the Woodforest Presbyterian Church (next to WalMart) and continue every 1st Tuesday of each month. The charter ceremony for this new club, made up mostly of former Anchors, will be Saturday, Jan 21, at 6 pm. More information to follow. For answer to your questions or to JOIN us, call Ericka at 832-264-1565.

East Houston Democrats meeting

You are invited to attend the monthly meeting of the East Houston Democrats where they will celebrate the victory of the founding member, Mr. Joe Stephens who won the position of Justice of the Peace, Precinct 3, Position 1. The meeting will be held on Thursday, November 17 at 6:30 p.m. East Houston Democrats meet on the third Thursday of each month at the Fuddrucker's located on Normandy. If you would like additional information, please contact Club Treasurer Charlotte Jackson at 832.896.1633.

The Buckshot Jamboree

Enjoy Classic Country music every Saturday night from 7 pm - 10 pm with The Buckshot Jamboree at 7414 Hartman near Old Beaumont Highway. More info, call 281-458-0729 or 832-444-5000.

Galena Park Senior Dance

Senior Dance is every Monday at the Alvin D. Building, 1302 Keene St., Galena Park. 7 pm - 9 pm. No cover charge. Live band Country music. Call for more information: 713-455-7335.

North Shore Senior Dance

North Shore Seniors holds a dance every Thursday from 1 - 4 pm at the Grayson/Baldree Building, Corpus Christi street. Live bands and refreshments. Cost is \$ 5/per person. For more information call 713-455-3660.

San Jacinto Pilot Club meeting

The Club meets the 2nd Thursday of each month at LyondellBasell on Sheldon Road at noon.

Jacinto City Branch Library

-Thursday, Nov. 17, Coloring for all ages, available all day.
-Friday, Nov. 18, Clases de Inglés Usando Mango, 1:00 pm.
-Saturday, Nov. 19, Family Movie Theater, 12:30 pm.
-Monday, Nov. 21, ESL Discussion Class-CANCELLED.
-Tue., Nov. 22, Toddler Time, 10:30 am; Children's Storytime-Turkey Theme, 11:30 am.
-Wed., Nov. 23, ESL Class, 12:30 pm.
-Thur., Nov. 24-26, library CLOSED.

COMPUTER CLASSES:

They will be suspending computer classes at this location until further notice. There are free computer classes at Galena Park Library, 713-450-0982 and North Channel Library, 281-457-1631. Jacinto City Branch Library is located at 921 Akron, Jacinto City, TX 77029.

SHELDON ISD

Early College High School students participate in Google hangout with UT Professor



Sheldon ISD Early College High School students take a "virtual selfie" with UT Professor Dr. John Kappelman (photo by DERIK MOORE).

Sheldon ISD Early College High School students had an opportunity to participate in a Google Hangout with University of Texas Professor Dr. John Kappelman on Nov. 10 to learn more about paleoecology, functional morphology, sedimentology and stratigraphy.

Kappelman also heads a team of scientists who have continued to study high-resolution CT scans

of the 3.2 million year old fossil, "Lucy." Lucy was discovered in Ethiopia in 1974 and is known to be among the oldest, most complete skeletons of any adult, erect-walking human ancestor.

Students were able to see and hear Kappelman via a computer and projector, and they asked him various questions ranging from his work as an anthropologist to how he

thought Lucy might have died.

Also, thanks to advanced state-of-the-art 3D printing, students were able to hold and examine exact replicas of scanned images from Lucy's bones.

The Google Hangout event was coordinated by AP World History Instructor Sheryl Saeed and Secondary Digital Learning Specialist Annette Clark.

CHANNELVIEW ISD

Generous contribution provides CPR training equipment to district

Thanks to a contribution from LyondellBasell to Channelview ISD, the district was able to purchase \$1,000 in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) equipment that will be used for training staff and students in Hands Only CPR and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) use. Celebrating the arrival of the kits are, from left, Laura King, District Lead Nurse; Chad Nuetzmann, Cobb Elementary Principal; Joelle Ballariel, Community CPR Manager from the American Heart Association; Greg Ollis, Channelview ISD Superintendent and Mike Niemeyer, Assistant Superintendent of Administration. The equipment the district received included mannequins, videos and other supplies that will be utilized to assist the district in becoming a Project Adam Heart-Safe School on each campus.



SHELDON ISD

C.E. King HS choir grows

The C. E. King High School choir has grown to 230 members (up from 160 last school year). Over the summer, senior Abigail Zuniga won a gold medal and junior Amber McCray earned a silver medal at the UIL Texas State Solo and Ensemble Contest in Austin. Students participating in Saturday's concert at De Kaney High School include junior Alfonso Trevino; freshman Keondre Walker, junior Veronica Romero, senior Abigail Zuniga, junior Amber McCray, and junior Dejana Jaquet. Trevino, Walker, and Zuniga will also be competing in Pre-Area in December.



(photo by DERIK MOORE)
Pictured (from left) are Veronica Romero, Alfonso Trevino, Abigail Zuniga, Amber McCray, Keondre Walker, and Dejana Jaquet.

www.NorthChannelStar.com

Extension,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

expressed a concern that the extension allows more time for the opponents to organize or solicit comments in favor of their position, to leave the wastes in the river.

Authorities said that the requests came from the following companies or organizations:

Keepitcapped, asked for an extension of up to 120 days, on October 4th;

Thomas Kinkerbocker, attorney, asked for an extension of 60 days on Oct. 13;

The Texas Association of Business asked for a 60 day extension on October 17th;

The Winstead Law firm, representing the Potential Responsible Party McGinnis Disposal, asked for an extension of 90 days on October 28th.

Comments may be sent to the Dallas office of the EPA, by the following methods:

Online: www.epa.gov/tx/forms/sjrw-p-comments;

Email: R6_San_Jacinto_Waste_Pits_Comments@epa.gov;

Postal mail: written comments may also be postmarked by the January 12, 2017 date and addressed to:

Remedial Project Manager, U.S. EPA Region 6, 1445 Ross Avenue (6SF-RA), Dallas, Texas 75202.

Jackie Young indicated that she would call a news conference on this subject, on Friday of this week, and release a statement to the media.

At a public meeting on October 20, Gary Miller of EPA reviewed the history of the Waste Pits site, since its start in the 1960s, and its rediscovery forty years later. He detailed how the proposed plan called for a 19 month removal of 152,000 cubic yards of material on the north impoundment, and the backfill with 2 feet of clean soil. On the south impoundment, 50,000 cubic yards will be removed, and a building removed and replaced.

Regarding the 6 plans outlined in the Corps of Engineers study, he said "None of them are reliable for All Storm Events" except the final 6A which EPA adopted. He detailed the problems that have continually plagued the current cap, and the needed constant repairs and monitoring.

Miller revealed that even this month, a new "scour" or erosion 8 feet deep had been discovered in the river bed along the East side of the cap.

He said that the proposed solution will be safe, with sheet piling retaining the wastes, monitoring during the work, and contingency plans in case of storms or floods.

He also revealed a disappointing schedule for the balance of the work. A Record of Decision (final) will be made early in 2017, then 1 year of negotiation with the PRPs, 2 years of design and engineering, and finally the removal work would commence in 2020 and continue for 19 months.


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LIFESTYLE

Turner Chevrolet tapped as delivery for Mary Kay car winner



Turner Chevrolet was selected as the dealership from which the Mary Kay Distributor awarded their car winner from, above Kristy Clifton presents this Chevrolet to the winner of the Mary Kay Sales drive.

Crosby FFA Leadership Development Event Contest



Crosby FFA had three teams advance to the Area Leadership Development contest, one of which is the Crosby FFA Agricultural Issues Team. The team's presentation is a 15 minute long debate-type speech, where five members converse over the cause and effect of an agricultural issue. The team is conquering the malnutrition of the world, by suggesting a series of possible solutions along with different opinions of how it came to be such a devastating situation. Each team member portrays a character fitting to the position on which they stand to give the presentation a real world feel. In the end, the students offer possible causes and plausible solutions to issues facing the agriculture industry today.

LITTLE BIDDY BITS By Danny Biddy

Prayer Ground

Our new children's center at the church has an indoor playground called "The Sycamore Tree House." When my wife picked up our 3-year-old granddaughter from Mother's Day Out, she told my wife, "We got to 'pray' on the pray-ground' today."

To which Dana replied, "Well that's nice that our church has a 'pray-ground'!"

What of great reminder of what Jesus said in Matthew 21:13, "My house shall be called a house of prayer."

BIBLE TRIVIA

By Wilson Casey

1. Which book of the Bible (KJV) mentions the word "thanksgiving" the most times, at eight? Genesis, Nehemiah, Psalms, Isaiah
2. From Leviticus 22, a sacrifice of thanksgiving is most meaningful when it is ...? Sincere, Often, At your own will, Extravagant
3. What items of food and drink did Jesus give thanks for at the Last Supper? Figs/water, Bread/wine, Fishes/nectar, Honey/milk
4. In 1 Thessalonians 5:18, "In every thing give thanks: for this is the ... of God"? Power, Will, Gratitude, Travail
5. Where was Jonah when he prayed with the voice of thanksgiving? Fish's belly, Aboard ship, In the wilderness, Mountaintop
6. Whose thanksgiving is expressed in Philippians 4 verses 10-20? Paul, John the Baptist, James, David.

ANSWERS: 1) Psalms; 2) At your own will; 3) Bread/wine; 4) Will; 5) Fish's belly; 6) Paul

GCM Athletes read to Hopper Students

GCM football players visits and read to B.P. Hopper Primary. Pictured are athletes Brendon (Alaska) Johnson (at left) and Mason Davis, with Hopper students Bryan Legg (back right), JJ Zabaleta (middle), Tristyn Coburn (front right) and Ethan Gutierrez (front).



Photo by Carrie Pryor-Newman

Huffman student community service project gives "Blessings" to many

Huffman Middle School Teacher, Laurie Mensik, created this project to go along with the community service unit of the 6th grade Falcon 101 curriculum. Mrs. Mensik, along with other Falcon 101 teachers, Yessica Guerra and Courtney Young, asked their students to donate one "blessing bag" if they were able. A "blessing bag" is a gallon-size bag or other small bag that is filled with toiletry items, bottled water, socks, snacks, and various other items that someone in need might use. Many times, encouraging notes are included to inspire the person receiving the blessing bag. The students were given a checklist to help create their special bag. The 6th grade students at HMS took this idea to heart and brought in bags packed full of useful items, food and bottled water. Many students brought in multiple bags adding up to well over one-hundred bags.

Once the bags were collected, the majority of them were given to the local food pantry, the Huffman Food Pantry. The Pantry provides non-perishable food items, toiletry items, etc. to several hundred community members in need each month. The volunteers at the Pantry were elated to receive such a generous donation, especially coming from such young humanitarians. These "blessing bags" are being given out as helpful extras to the people served by the Pantry.

A portion of the blessing bags were also given to "Handbags of Hope," a ministry outreach program formed by Lana Walker, member of Lake Houston United Methodist Church. Handbags of Hope delivers 10 handbags each week to the FamilyTime Crisis Center to help women in crisis get a fresh start on life. Handbags are also given to students and women in need. These bags are filled with small necessities such as toiletry items, makeup, personal hygiene,



Falcon 101 teacher, Mrs. Mensik, with HMS sixth grade students.



The collection of "Blessing Bags" with volunteer staff members at the Huffman Food Pantry.

reach program formed by Lana Walker, member of Lake Houston United Methodist Church. Handbags of Hope delivers 10 handbags each week to the FamilyTime Crisis Center to help women in crisis get a fresh start on life. Handbags are also given to students and women in need. These bags are filled with small necessities such as toiletry items, makeup, personal hygiene,

socks, lotions, etc. along with niceties such as scarves, Bibles, notebooks, pens, sewing kits and more to provide aid and comfort to these women in crisis. The blessing bags shared by the HMS students were perfect for this ministry and Mrs. Walker was very happy and grateful for the large donation. She, too, was touched by the enthusiasm and generosity of the HMS Falcon 101 sixth grade students and teachers.

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All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. Acts 2:4

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Be alert. Continue strong in the faith. Have courage and be strong.
1 Corinthians 16:13

Rise in the presence of the aged, show respect for the elderly and revere your God.
Leviticus 19:32

BUSINESS

Diamond Jim: "Is the precious metal Silver a good investment?"



Silver as an investment

Silver, like other precious metals, may be used as an investment. For more than four thousand years, silver has been regarded as a form of money and store of value. However, since the end of the silver standard, silver has lost its role as a legal tender in all developed countries, although some countries mint bullion and collector coins like the American Silver Eagle with nominal face values. In 2009, the main demand for silver was for industrial applications (40%), jewelry, bullion coins and exchange-traded products. In 2011, the global silver reserves amounted to 530,000 tonnes (tons). Millions of Canadian Silver Maple Leaf coins and American Silver Eagle coins are purchased as investments each year. The Silver Maple Leaf is legal tender at \$5 per ounce and there are many other silver coins with higher legal tender values, including \$20 Canadian silver coins. Silver is legal tender in the U.S. state of Utah, and can be used to pay all debts.

Price
Like most commodities, the price of silver is driven by speculation and supply and demand. Compared to gold, the silver price is notoriously volatile. This is because of lower market liquidity, and demand fluctuations between industrial and store of value uses. At times this can cause wide ranging valuations in the market, creating volatility. Silver often tracks the gold price due to store of value demands, although the ratio can vary. The crustal ratio of silver to gold is 17.5:1. The gold/silver price ratio is often analyzed by traders, investors and buyers. In Roman times, the price ratio was set at 12 or 12.5 to 1. In 1792, the gold/silver price ratio was fixed by law in the United States at 15:1, which meant that one troy ounce of gold was worth 15 troy ounces of silver; a ratio of 15.5:1 was enacted in France in 1803. The average gold/silver price ratio during the 20th century, however, was 47:1. Physical bullion, in coins or bars, purchased from a dealer, may have a premium of 20 percent or more. For much of 2015 as well as early 2016, physical silver bullion bars have been available for purchase at a premium of less than 7% over the Comex spot price, while government minted coins still command a much higher premium. The paper or computer prices are not the prices for buying actual silver, in your hands.

ASK DIAMOND JIM

There will always be a major difference between computer traded pricing, and the real, in your hands buying and selling of silver.

Investment vehicles

Bars
A traditional way of investing in silver is by buying actual bullion bars. In some countries, like Switzerland and Liechtenstein, bullion bars can be bought or sold over the counter at major banks. The flat, rectangular shape of silver bars makes them ideal for storage in a home safe, a safe deposit box at a bank, or placed in allocated (also known as non-fungible) or unallocated (fungible or pooled) storage with a bank or dealer. Silver is traded in the spot market with the code "XAG". When settled in United States Dollars, the code is "XAGUSD". Various sizes of silver bars:
•1000 oz troy bars – These bars, 999 fine, weigh about 68.6 pounds avoirdupois (31 kg) and vary about 10% as to weight, as bars range from 900 oz to about 1,100 oz (28 to 34 kg). These are COMEX and LBMA good delivery bars.
•100 oz troy bars – These bars weigh 6.86 pounds (3.11 kg).
•Odd weight retail bars – These bars cost less and generally have a wider spread, due to the extra work it takes to calculate their value and the extra risk due to the lack of a good brand name.
•1 kilogram bars (32.15 oz troy)
•10 oz troy bars (311 g) and 1 oz troy bars (31.1 g)

Coins and rounds
Silver coins include the one ounce 99.99% pure Canadian Silver Maple Leaf and the one ounce 99.93% pure American Silver Eagle. Coins may be minted as either fine silver or junk silver, the latter being older coins made of 90% silver. U.S. coins 1964 and older (half dollars, dimes, and quarters) are generally accepted to weigh 24.71 grams of silver per dollar of face value, which at their nominal silver content of 90%, translates to 22.239 g of silver per dollar. All U.S. dimes, quarters, halves and 1 dollar pieces contained 90% silver since their introduction up until 1964 when they were discontinued. The combined mintage of these coins by weight exceeds by far the mintages of all other silver investment coins. All 1965-1970 and one half of the 1975-1976 Bicentennial San Francisco proof and mint set Kennedy half dollars are "clad" in a silver alloy

and contain just under one half of the silver in the pre-1965 issues. Junk-silver coins are also available as sterling silver coins, which were officially minted until 1919 in the United Kingdom and Canada and 1945 in Australia. These coins are 92.5% silver and are in the form of (in decreasing weight) Crowns, Half-crowns, Florins, Shillings, Sixpences, and three pence. The tiny three pence weighs 1.41 grams, and the Crowns are 28.27 grams (1.54 grams heavier than a US \$1). Canada produced silver coins with 80% silver content from 1920 to 1967. Other hard money enthusiasts use .999 fine silver rounds as a store of value. A cross between bars and coins, silver rounds are produced by a huge array of mints, generally contain a troy ounce of silver in the shape of a coin, but have no status as legal tender. Rounds can be ordered with a custom design stamped on the faces or in assorted batches.

Taxation
In many tax regimes, silver does not hold the special position that is often afforded to gold. For example, in the European Union the trading of recognized gold coins and bullion products is VAT exempt, but no such allowance is given to silver. This makes investment in silver coins or bullion less attractive for the private investor, due to the extra premium on purchases represented by the irrecoverable VAT (charged at 20% in the United Kingdom and 19% for bars and 7% for bullion products with face value, e.g. The US Silver Eagle and the Canadian Maple Leaf, in Germany). Norwegian companies can legally deliver free of VAT to the rest of Europe within certain annual limits or can arrange for local pickup. Other taxes such as capital gains tax may apply for individuals depending on country of residence (tax status) and whether the asset is sold at increased nominal value. For example, in the United States, silver is taxed only when sold for a profit, at a special collectibles capital gain rate (your normal income tax rate, subject to a maximum of 28% for silver held over 1 year).

Diamond Jim is a diamond dealer and precious metals broker of NTR Metals. See more at: www.pineforestjewelry.com. If you have questions pertaining to jewelry, watches, diamonds, precious stones, precious metals, and other questions related to the jewelry industry, email jmillis@pineforestjewelry.com.

How Should You Use Retirement Plan Distributions?

During your working years, you are (hopefully) putting money into your IRA and your 401(k) or similar employer-sponsored retirement plan. But once you've retired, how can you maximize the benefits you get from these plans?

First of all, you need to be aware of the rules governing withdrawals from your retirement plans. If you are older than 59½, you can withdraw money from your traditional IRA without paying penalties, though the withdrawals will typically be taxable. But once you reach 70½, you generally must start taking "required minimum distributions" (RMDs) from these accounts, with the annual amount determined by your age, the account balance and other factors. (The situation is different with a Roth IRA. If you are the original account holder, you are not required to withdraw funds from your Roth IRA at any age. You can choose to withdraw your contributions at any time, tax and penalty free. To withdraw your earnings tax and penalty free, you generally must have owned the account for at least five years and have reached age 59½.)

So, assuming you do have a traditional IRA and a 401(k) or similar plan, what should you do with the RMDs? You'll probably require at least some of these distributions for your living expenses, but if you don't need it all, what

ASK THE EXPERT

By Edward Jones

should you do with the "excess"?

Here's one suggestion: As part of your overall retirement investment portfolio strategy, you can reinvest the money into these three "buckets":

- Near-term income bucket – For this bucket, you're not concerned with high returns – you just want the money to be there when you need it for expenses and unexpected costs, such as a major car repair, a new furnace, and so on. It's always a good idea to have an emergency fund containing three to six months' worth of living expenses – and your short-term income bucket could be an ideal source to help build such a fund.

- Medium-term income bucket – During retirement, you can probably never have too many sources of income, so you may want to fill a bucket with intermediate- and long-term bonds, which make regular interest payments.

- Long-term income bucket – Even when you're retired, you will need some growth potential in your portfolio to help keep you ahead of inflation in the long run. So this bucket should be filled, not surprisingly, with growth-

oriented investments. These investments can fluctuate in value, but as long as you don't need to tap into them in a hurry, you may be able to avoid taking withdrawals when the price is down.

In addition to this "bucket" approach, you do have other options for your RMDs. For example, you could give your grown children some financial assistance, possibly for help in funding their IRAs. Or, you could contribute to a college-savings vehicle, such as a 529 plan, for your grandchildren. And you can always make charitable contributions, which allow you to support worthwhile organizations and, by doing so, earn some potential tax benefits.

Clearly, you can do a lot with your RMDs. And you worked hard for them – so make sure they work just as hard for you.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor.

Edward Jones
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Fire Rescue,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

awareness of life threatening situations and problems in fire fighting.

Searching for people within the structures is of course paramount to successful fire fighting and different scenarios were reenacted including lost child, and downed fire fighter. The crews were successful in operations but the Captain warned them often to speed up their time. The teamwork nature of fire fighting would be complemented by hands on training and experience from mistakes.

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LEGAL NOTICE

Request for Competitive Sealed Proposals will be received by the Galena Park Independent School District until DECEMBER 2, 2016 FOR: Cellular Phones, Internet Access and WAN Connectivity Services. Proposals may be downloaded from CRW Consulting website at: http://crwconsulting.com/rfp (CRW Consulting RFP ID #170049452). All questions and bids must be submitted via the CRW on-line RFP system.

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING TO DISCUSS GALENA PARK INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT'S State Financial Accountability Rating

Galena Park I. S. D. will hold a public hearing at 6:00 p.m. on December 12, 2016, in the Board Room of the Administration Bldg. 14705 Woodforest Blvd. Houston, TX

The purpose of this hearing is to discuss Galena Park I.S.D.'s rating on the state's financial accountability system.

This hearing will be held prior to the regular school board meeting scheduled for that date.

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR LOCAL OPTION ELECTION PETITION TO LEGALIZE SALE OF ALL ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES, INCLUDING MIXED BEVERAGES IN THE CITY OF GALENA PARK, TEXAS.

Juan Jose Anguiano intends to apply for a petition to gather signatures for a Local Option Liquor Election pursuant to Title 17 of the Texas Election code in the City of Galena Park, Harris County, Texas. The Petition for Local Option Election is to legalize the sale of all alcoholic beverages including mixed beverages in the City of Galena Park, Texas. The petition to legalize the sale of all alcoholic beverages, including mixed beverages, will be circulated among qualified voters of the City of Galena Park, for the signatures of those qualified voters in the City who desire that a Local Option Election be called. The Application for a Local Option Election Petition will be filed with Mayra Gonzales, City Secretary of the City of Galena Park, Texas.

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Answers

King Crossword

King Crossword

ACROSS

1 Wagon

5 Part of MYOB

9 Young fellow

12 Lotion additive

13 Small plateau

14 Bobby of hockey

15 Very hush-hush

17 Shell-game item

18 "A Streetcar Named Desire" role

19 German artist

21 Form of 22-Across

22 One of the media

24 Millinery

27 Winter mo.

28 Elevator name

31 Past

32 Whopper

33 Spy org.

34 Cried

36 Pismire

37 Dish damage

38 Cabbies

40 Otherwise

41 Bizet work

43 Online image

47 Mauna —

48 Leading comedian

51 Gun the engine

52 Manitoba native

DOWN

1 Long-running Broadway musical

2 Greatly

3 Lariat

4 Magnetic flux measures

5 Village People hit

6 "— the ram-parts ..."

7 Work with

8 Assessed

9 A-one

10 Belligerent god

11 "Phooey!"

16 Shade provider

20 2016 Olympics city

22 Jockey's handful

23 Help a hood

24 Hee follower

25 Time of your life?

26 Lacking balance

27 Criticism

29 Midafternoon, in a way

30 Fool

35 Pitch

37 Construction site machinery

39 Hidden complication

40 Eggs

41 Callaloo ingredient

42 Hammerhead part

43 Sleeping

44 Forbidden (Var.)

45 Soon, to a bard

46 — and file

49 Raw rock

50 Apiece

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PHOTO ALBUM



Galena Park ISD hosts annual Veterans Day Luncheon



Marines and Dr. Williams

As part of a week dedicated to honoring those who have served or are serving our nation, Galena Park ISD hosted its annual Veterans Day Luncheon on November 11. More than 150 veterans and their family members attended and were honored by the North Shore Senior High School's choir performance which included the theme song from each mil-

itary branch and finished with the Star Spangled Banner. There were also letters written to the veterans on the tables by elementary students, and a special reading by Dennesshae Jones from Jacinto City Elementary School of her letter.

Dennesshae wrote, "You put yourself through intense physical training and hard work, but most of

all you took time from seeing your family so other people could keep theirs safe. For all those amazing things you put yourself through, all people in the United States of America owe you a ginormous thank you."

GPISD would like to thank all of the veterans and family members who attended the Veterans Day Luncheon.

San Jac Programs Cut,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

want these student-athletes to complete the higher education credential they came here to achieve."

"This was a difficult and painful decision that in no way reflects on the success of the teams, our student-athletes, or the coaches," said Dr. Brenda Hellyer, Chancellor, San Jacinto College. "We are continually monitoring and evaluating student success, and making decisions based on data and the needs of our entire student body. This decision really came down to looking at the \$2.6 million in annual operating costs and a minimum of \$25 million in facilities needs. We have to weigh the total benefit to the full student body and to our goal of student success."

Athletic programs are not the only areas with facility needs and operational costs. The San Jacinto College Board of Trustees and leadership have also made the following difficult decisions:

- Closing the San Jacinto College golf course. As announced earlier this year, the golf course will close effective Dec. 15, 2016.
- Combining the auto body collision repair program. As enrollment was declining between two training facilities, one on the North Campus and one on the South Campus, the decision was made to combine the two programs into one that is currently housed on North Campus.
- Custodial and bookstore outsourcing. As a cost-saving measure, the decision was made to outsource the custodial and bookstore services.
- Closing the child care center at the South Cam-

pus. The College evaluated options to bring the entire building up to today's building standards and determined that due to the age of the building and the condition of the infrastructure, it was cost prohibitive.

• Closing the dental assisting program. Due to a lack of enrollment, the College closed the dental assisting program located on Central Campus. The College will no longer offer this program and has provided a teach-out for any student in the program.

• Redefining the core curriculum requirements. In order to meet the state of Texas requirement of moving all associate degrees to 60 credit hours, the College redefined the core curriculum and excluded several courses that would not readily transfer to a Texas university toward a bachelor's degree.

• Combining cosmetology and culinary programs. Due to facility needs iden-

tified in the current cosmetology and culinary programs at San Jacinto College, the three separate campus cosmetology programs will be combined into two programs, one on the North Campus and one on the South Campus. In like manner, the culinary programs on the North and Central Campuses will be combined into one program housed on the North Campus once the facilities are constructed.


"Higher education in general is going through transformational change," added Hellyer. "At San Jacinto College we operate in a continuous improvement cycle where we look at data, operational costs, and facility needs. Difficult decisions are part of the transformational change. It is sad to be at this point; it is a matter of stewardship and what is best for the overall student population and the taxpayers of our district."

Channelview ISD Veterans,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



(Photo by Mark Kramer, Channelview ISD)



I want to express my heartfelt thanks to the voters of Harris County Precinct 3 for electing me to Harris County JP 3-1. I am honored and humbled that you have placed your trust in me. God bless you all and I look forward to serving you with Honor, Integrity and Impartiality

Thank You All!

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