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VOLUME 4, NO. 06(#109) WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2016 www.northchannelstar.com



CHANNEL CHATTER

Senior Market Day

Market Day will be Saturday, February 17, 2016 from 10 am - 2 pm at Grayson Community Center, 13828 Corpus Christi, Houston, TX 77015.

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There will be also Door prizes, silent auction, concessions and much more!

Sponsored by Precinct2gether Senior Program 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Commissioner Jack Morman, Harris County Precinct 2.

San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund Site (SJRWP) meeting

The U.S. EPA will conduct a SJRWP Open House meeting on Wednesday, February 17, 2016 at 6:30 at the Martin L. Flukinger Community Center, 16003 Lorenzo Street, Channelview, Texas.

The informal meeting is to update the community on the EPA's remediation process, ongoing studies and recent events at the site located at the west bank of the San Jacinto River directly north of the I-10 Bridge.

Agency Officials will also update residents on upcoming activities, the site scheduled and what to expect next.

If you have specific needs or questions, please contact EPA Community Involvement at 1-800-533-3508.

STATE CHAMPIONS DIVISION I - 6A

North Shore Mustangs honored



PHOTO BY ALLAN JAMAL

Congressional and State Resolutions noting the successful season are presented to North Shore Head Football Coach Jon Kay and the 2015 State Champion North Shore football team by Congressman Gene Green Staff member Jorge Maldonado and State Representative Ana Hernandez last Thursday at the Galena Park Football Stadium.

By Allan Jamal
Special to the NC STAR

February 4, 2016 the celebration continued this past Thursday at Galena

Park ISD Football Stadium for the North Shore Mustangs football team after claiming the Class 6A, Division I championship with OT win over Austin West-

lake.

It was the December 19, 2015 state championship final at NRG Stadium the Galena Park North Shore Mustangs (East Side) (13-

3) beat the Austin Westlake Chaparrals (14-2) 21-14 in overtime to win the Class 6A Division I championship.

Thursday before a

packed home team bleacher of fans, family and elected officials the Mustang

See **MUSTANGS HONORED**, p. 4

San Jacinto River meeting explores ways to spend \$10 million settlement funds

HIGHLANDS - The San Jacinto River Coalition, and the Galveston Bay Foundation, held a joint meeting last Tuesday night, to hear details of the State's plans to use the settlement money from the lawsuit against the companies that created the Toxic Waste Pits in the river.

Representative from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Ted Hollingsworth and Jim Murphy, reviewed the history of the Waste Pits, and then discussed how the state's



Ted Hollingsworth, Texas PWD

See **San Jac RIVER**, page 6



Almost 100 residents of property along the San Jacinto River turned out to hear two representatives from the Texas Parks and Wildlife, and Jackie Young of the San Jacinto River Coalition.

Houston Rodeo presented at Chamber Luncheon

The North Channel Chamber was informed about the Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo at their monthly luncheon, last Friday, Feb. 5th.

The speaker from the Rodeo was Al Reese. Reese is a financial advisor with Integrity Growth Group, and a director of Integrity Bank. He has been associated with the Houston Rodeo, its new name, since 1986.

Reese spoke about the history of the Rodeo, economic impact that the Rodeo has on Houston, and the scholarship program for youth.

Last year the Rodeo awarded \$25 million in scholarships, to over 700 students in various categories of competition. Scholarships are now \$18,000 each student, spread over

a 4 year period. To qualify, you must be attending a Texas High School, and plan to go to a Texas college or university, or community college.

Applications for next year's scholarships are due Feb. 8th, and Reese urged every student to apply.

The Rodeo has 100 full time employees, and over 32,000 volunteers that work to make the Rodeo a yearly success.

The Houston Rodeo is made up of many different activities, Reese said. These include 13 trail rides, of which the first was in the 1950s. Also, there is a World Champion BBQ competition for 3 days, starting Feb. 26. The public is welcome.

The Rodeo will start March 1st, and continue through March 20. Each



AL REESE, Houston Rodeo speaker at the North Channel Chamber luncheon.

night there is a livestock show, rodeo events, and world class entertainment. Popular entertainers this year include Miranda Lambert, Pitbull, and Keith Urban on the last night.

Other activities during the Rodeo include a 5K/10K Fun Run, a parade downtown the Saturday before the opening, a carnival, a wine tasting competition, and the Art auction. Over the years, 200,000 students have entered the art auction.

The Livestock show includes commercial and youth shows, and the grand champion animals are sold at auction. Last year the GC Steer was sold for about \$300,000 of which the exhibitor receives a portion for his scholarship and expenses. Reese noted how this has changed over the years, the first GC Steer sold for \$500.

Another popular event is the Calf Scramble, where young students attempt to capture calves running around in the arena. There are 16 calves, and 16 out of 32 competitors receive \$2000 for their efforts.

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NATIONAL SIGNING DAY

Mustangs sign letters of intent



In front of family, friends, coaches and teammates, nine athletes from North Shore Senior High School signed letters of intent on National Signing Day, February 3, 2016: Front row (l/r): Zafir Murphy - Texas Southern University; Eric Monroe - Louisiana State University; Maciah Long - University of Kansas; Andrew Hyacinth - McNeese State University; and Leandre Dever - Texas A&M - Kingsville. Back row (l/r): Jacory Nichols - Harding University; Anthony Phillips - Texas Southern University; Vince Sebo - GPISD Athletic Director; Dominic DeRiggi - Texas Southern University; and Cameron Brown - Texas A&M - Kingsville.

Yellow Jacket signs letter of intent



At Galena Park High School, Richard Conyer participated in National Signing Day on February 3, 2016. He committed to play football for Henderson State University in Arkansas. He is in the center, picture with Head Coach David Handal (left) and Principal Tony Gardea (right).

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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

Monthly dance is the 2nd Thursday, Feb. 11, 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

The Club meets the 2nd Thursday of each month at the Mr. Gatti's on Uvalde at noon.

North Channel Library events

-Saturday, Feb. 13, 11-12:30 pm, Ask A Lawyer.
-Tue., Feb. 16, 10:30 am, Toddler Time; 1:30 pm, Pre-school Story Time.
-Thur., Feb. 18, 10:30 am, Baby Time; 12 pm, AARP Tax Help.
-Sat., Feb. 20, 2 pm, Faithful Paws.
Library is located at 15741 Wallisville Rd., Houston, TX. 77049. Call 281-457-1631 for more information on other programs.

GP/JC Rotary Club Golf Tournament

The Galena Park/Jacinto City Rotary Club is hosting its 14th Annual Golf Tournament with proceeds to benefit deserving Galena Park High School Students. February 29, Monday, at Texaco Golf Club, 19800 Texaco Rd., Houston 77013, 8am registration, 9am Shotgun start, 4 person scramble, par is your friend, longest drive and closest to the pin, included in registration fee of \$ 100 per player which also includes 1/2 cart.

Trophies for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place, 1st and 2nd flights. Hole Sponsorships available for \$100. and donations requested for "goody bags", raffle items, and "general" sponsorship for \$100- sponsors help make college dreams come true for Galena Park High School.

GALENA PARK ISD:

University awards \$128,000 in scholarships to Culinary Arts students



Pictured (l-r): Chef Vasso Espinosa, Christian Meza, Rita Perez, Marty Stout of Johnson & Wales, and Christian Cardenas.

Johnson & Wales University, a globally renowned leader in culinary education with campuses in Providence, Rhode Island; Miami, Florida; Denver, Colorado; and Charlotte, North Carolina recently awarded Galena Park High School culinary arts students with \$128,000 in scholarships. Rita Perez received \$40,000 to pursue a bachelor of science degree in Baking and Pastry, and Christian Cardenas will seek a Bachelor of Culinary Arts with the \$44,000

he was awarded; both students will attend the Denver, Colorado campus. Christian Meza will attend Johnson & Wales University in Miami, Florida. He plans to obtain a bachelor of science in Business Administration and International Business with his \$44,000 in scholarships. Chef Vasso is elated each student was not only accepted to this prestigious culinary program, but also awarded a substantial scholarship to help pursue their career goal.

Chamber honors CISD students, educator



The North Channel Area Chamber of Commerce honored three Channelview ISD students and one junior high educator at the Chamber's monthly luncheon on February 5. The honorees were, from left, Jaih Broussard of Aguirre Junior High, Francisco Casteneda Jr. of Alice Johnson Junior High, Zachary Sowell of Channelview High School and Alice Johnson eighth grade Pre-Algebra teacher Neiman Owens.

Galena Park ISD Spelling Bee Winner



At the 2016 GPISD Spelling Bee, the top competitors from each elementary and middle school gathered to see who would become the GPISD spelling champion. After many grueling rounds, Edlene Gomez (pictured left), a seventh grader from Galena Park Middle School, spelled "calamity" correctly to claim the victory. She will represent GPISD in the Houston Public Media Spelling Bee on April 2, 2016 at 2PM, which will be aired live on PBS and streamed at www.houstonpublicmedia.org/spellingbee. The runner up, Diana Delosa (pictured right) from Tice Elementary, is the alternate for the citywide spelling bee.

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LIFESTYLE

Sheldon ISD gearing up for 6th Annual 5K Run

Sheldon ISD is getting ready for its biggest annual fundraiser, the Sheldon Shuffle 5K run/walk. The race will take place on Saturday, April 16, 2016 at Deussen park, which is located at 12303 Sonnier St., Houston, TX 77044.

This year's race is going through some changes. For starters, there's a new route. Race organizers saw that last year's route went through a muddy area, so they worked with park officials this year to create a new route that is all concrete. Another change is that there will be no Kids 1K race, just the 5K. However, all ages are welcomed to register. Parents are encouraged to sign up with their child and join them in the race if they feel they are too young.

The Sheldon Shuffle was established five years ago and benefits the Sheldon Education Foundation. All proceeds raised go toward the Foundation, which allows grants to be awarded to Sheldon teachers and scholarships to students. Last year's race raised more than \$23,000 for Sheldon.

Those who are interested in running the race or making a donation can do so online at www.TheSheldonShuffle.com.

Women's basketball to show support for cancer awareness

HOUSTON — The San Jacinto College women's basketball team will show its support for breast cancer awareness and research by wearing pink and accepting donations during the Play4Kay home game against Blinn College on Saturday, Feb. 13 at 2 p.m., in Nichols Gymnasium on the North Campus.

Visitors to the game are encouraged to show support for the effort by also wearing pink. The first 100 fans at the game will receive a free pink rally towel. The team will stage a free throw "shoot-a-thon," and accept donations at the game. All proceeds will go to the Kay Yow Foundation for cancer research.

In her 34-year tenure at North Carolina State University, the late Kay Yow became the first coach to win two Olympic gold medals. She also guided her teams to 20 National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) tournaments, and was inducted into 11 halls of fame. Yow founded the Kay Yow cancer fund before passing away in 2009 after a 22-year battle with breast cancer.

Donations to the Kay Yow cancer fund can be made online at play4kay.org.

For information about the San Jacinto College women's basketball program, please visit sanjacsports.com.

GALENA PARK ISD H-E-B announces 2016 Excellence in Education school district finalists

H-E-B recently announced that eight school districts and five early childhood facilities have been selected as finalists for the retailer's 15th annual 2016 Excellence in Education Awards program. For the third year in a row, H-E-B is also recognizing five public school boards to highlight the importance of strong leadership at the board level. This year, H-E-B will award a total of \$85,000 to the finalists and school boards who will go on to compete for even greater

cash prizes at the statewide level. Each finalist in the large district and early childhood categories, as well as the five recognized school boards, receive \$5,000; the two finalists in the small district category receive \$2,500. ~ To determine overall statewide winners, a panel of judges visits each district, early childhood facility and school board, tours campuses and talks with administration, staff, parents and community members. ~ Winners will be announced at the H-E-B Ex-

cellence in Education Awards ceremony on May 13 at La Cantera Hill Country Resort in San Antonio. The winning large district will receive \$100,000. In addition, forty teacher and principal finalists will be announced in February and March during a series of surprise visits to schools and classrooms across Texas. Galena Park ISD is among the five large school district finalists along with Leander ISD, Socorro ISD, Katy ISD and Allen ISD.

MUSTANGS HONORED,

Continued from page 1

football team wearing shirts claiming ownership of not just the school or city but rather the state received volumes of praise.

Coach Kay says hard work and dedication is what reversed the 1-3 losing start of the season to be able to come back and claim the state title. This reminds me of the late baseball legend Yogi Berra's famous quote, "it ain't over til it's over."

Texas Army National Guard Specialist First Class Clarence E. Foster presented the National Ranking Banner and trophy from MaxPreps Tour of Football Champions. MaxPreps is American's leading source for high school sports information and rankings.

Ana Hernandez State Representative of House District 143 praised the unforgettable successful season while mentioning

some keys plays. They included linebacker Andrew Hyacinth's returning a fumble 95 yards for the team's first score, defensive tackle Britton Larkin blocking a field goal attempt in the final seconds of regulation which kept the teams tied 14 -14. In overtime, quarterback Maciah Long punched in a one-yard touchdown, and then the Mustangs defense stopped Westlake on the next possession to clinch the championship title.

A celebration banquet to cumulate the entire football season is set for Wednesday, March 2, 2016 at the Houston Marriott at Hobby Airport. Advance tickets can be purchased at the Galena Park ISD Administration Bldg. 14705 Woodforest Blvd. Houston, TX 77015 and for more information call, 832-386- 1226.



Receiving Award Trophies for their outstanding contributions to the 2015 Galena Park ISD North Shore football team's State Championship; left to right: Maciah Long Offensive Player of the year, Coach Jon Kay Coach of the year and Eric Monroe Defensive Player of the year.

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BIBLE TRIVIA
By Wilson Casey

1. Is the book of Ecclesiastes in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. From Numbers 4, what color was the cloth draped over the Ark of the

Covenant? White, Black, Gold, Blue
3. "The wicked man travaileth with pain all his days" is from what book's 15:20? Ezra, Nehemiah, Job, Psalms
4. Whose hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws? Daniel, Matthew, Luke, Nebuchadnezzar
5. In which city were 85 priests slain? Gezer, Nob, Shechem, Aphek
6. From Daniel 5, who was so scared that his knees knocked together? Moses, Belshazzar, Solomon, Lot

ANSWERS: 1) Old; 2) Blue; 3) Job; 4) Nebuchadnezzar; 5) Nob; 6) Belshazzar.

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1 Corinthians 16:13

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

BUSINESS

Think about sending financial Valentines to loved ones

Americans spent nearly \$19 billion in Valentine's Day gifts last year, according to the National Retail Federation. Much of this money went for gifts with short shelf lives, such as candy, flowers and restaurant meals (and about \$700 million was spent on gifts for pets). There's certainly nothing wrong with giving chocolates or roses. But this year, think about going beyond the classic gifts. Instead, use Valentine's Day as an opportunity to determine how you can make gifts with long-lasting impact to your circle of loved ones.

Here are some suggestions:

• For your spouse or significant other ... As long as your spouse or significant other has earned income, he or she may be able to contribute to a traditional or Roth IRA. So, consider giving a check to be used for that purpose. A traditional IRA can grow tax deferred, while contributions are usually tax-deductible. (Taxes are due upon withdrawal, and withdrawals prior to 59½ may be subject to a 10% IRS penalty.) While Roth IRA contributions are not deductible, any earnings growth can be distributed tax free, provided the account owner doesn't take withdrawals until age 59½ and has had the account at least five years. For 2015 and 2016, the IRA contribution limit is \$5,500, or \$6,500 for those 50 or older.

• For your children ... You don't have to be rich to give your children a gift worth \$1 million—you just have to help them through school. College graduates earn about \$1 million more

ASK THE EXPERT
By Edward Jones

over their lifetimes than those without a degree, according to research from the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. Still, college isn't cheap: The average annual cost—tuition, fees, room and board—for a private four-year college is more than \$42,000, according to the College Board, while the comparable fig-

ure for a public four-year school is about \$19,000. Of course, if financial aid is available, you could get some help. Nonetheless, you may want to start putting away money for college. One popular college savings vehicle is a 529 plan. Your 529 plan contributions may be deductible

from your state taxes, and any earnings growth can be withdrawn tax-free, provided it is used for qualified higher education expenses. (However, if you take withdrawals from your 529 plan, and you don't use the money for these higher education expenses, you may be subject to both income tax and a 10% penalty on the earnings.)

• For your parents ... If you have elderly parents, you may want to find out if they've got their retirement and estate plans in place. If they've already taken care of everything, you may not need to get involved—but if they've left some "loose ends," your help could be a valuable gift. So, ask them if they have drawn up the necessary legal documents. Do they each have a will? Have they created a durable power of attorney, which allows them to name someone to make financial and health care decisions on their behalf if they become incapacitated? If it appears they have much work to do in these areas, you may want to offer to arrange a consultation for them with a legal advisor and a financial professional.

None of these ideas are "traditional" Valentine's Day gifts—but all of them can prove of great value to your loved ones.

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

Edward Jones
6830 E Sam Houston Pkwy N, Suite 150
Houston, TX 77049
281-436-0396

ASK DIAMOND JIM

Diamond Jim... "What is the origin of Valentine's Day?"



ORIGINS OF VALENTINE'S DAY: A PAGAN FESTIVAL IN FEBRUARY

While some believe that Valentine's Day is celebrated in the middle of February to commemorate the anniversary of Valentine's death or burial—which probably occurred around A.D. 270—others claim that the Christian church may have decided to place St. Valentine's feast day in the middle of February in an effort to "Christianize" the pagan celebration of Lupercalia. Celebrated at the ides of February, or February 15, Lupercalia was a fertility festival dedicated to Faunus, the Roman god of agriculture, as well as to the Roman founders Romulus and Remus.

To begin the festival, members of the Luperci, an order of Roman priests, would gather at a sacred cave where the infants Romulus and Remus, the founders of Rome, were believed to have been cared for by a she-wolf or lupa. The priests would sacrifice a goat, for fertility, and a dog, for purification. They would then strip the goat's hide into strips, dip them into the sacrificial blood and take to the streets, gently slapping both women and crop fields with the goat hide. Far from being fearful, Roman women welcomed the touch of the hides because it was believed to make them more fertile in the coming year. Later in the day, according to legend, all the young women in the city would place their names in a big urn. The city's bachelors would each choose a name and become paired for the year with his chosen woman.

These matches often ended in marriage.

VALENTINE'S DAY: A DAY OF ROMANCE

Lupercalia survived the initial rise of Christianity and but was outlawed—as it was deemed "un-Christian"—at the end of the 5th century, when Pope Gelasius declared February 14 St. Valentine's Day. It was not until much later, however, that the day became definitively associated with love. During the Middle Ages, it was commonly believed in France and England that February 14 was the beginning of birds' mating season, which added to the idea that the middle of Valentine's Day should be a day for romance.

Valentine greetings were popular as far back as the Middle Ages, though written Valentine's didn't begin to appear until after 1400. The oldest known valentine still in existence today was a poem written in 1415 by Charles, Duke of Orleans, to his wife while he was imprisoned in the Tower of London following his capture at the Battle of Agincourt. (The greeting is now part of the manuscript collection of the British Library in London, England.) Several years later, it is believed that King Henry V hired a writer named John Lydgate to compose a valentine note to Catherine of Valois.

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.

Diamond Jim is a diamond dealer and precious metals broker of NTR Metals. See more at: www.pineforestjewelry.com.

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COMMUNITY

Sheriff's candidate
Carl Pittman appears with
Arizona Sheriff Arpaio



PICTURED ABOVE ARE Sheriff Richard Mack, Linda Mills, Sheriff candidate Carl Pittman, Jim Mills, and Sheriff Joe Arpaio of Maricopa County, Arizona. Jim Mills hosted a "Meet and Greet" session last Saturday at the China Ko restaurant on Beltway 8 East, and the participants were backing the candidacy of candidate Carl Pittman, running for Harris County Sheriff. Pittman is a strict Constitutional follower, and the presence of Constitutional Sheriff Arpaio emphasized this. Arpaio is known nationally as the toughest Sheriff in the country.

Man killed in a hit-and-run on Maxey Road

February 1, 2016 - Houston police are investigating a fatal hit-and-run crash at 800 Maxey Road about 4:45 p.m. on Saturday, January 30. The male victim, 52, a pedestrian, was pronounced dead at the scene. According to Houston Police reports, the driver

of a gold Toyota Corolla was traveling southbound on Maxey Road. The victim crossed Maxey, not at a crosswalk, and was struck by the Corolla. The driver then stopped at a washateria on Maxey and Fleming and fled the scene on foot. A passenger in the Corolla was detained by responding HPD officers and was released with no charges filed. The investigation is continuing. Anyone with information in this case is urged to contact the HPD Hit and Run Unit at 713-247-4065.

San Jacinto
River Meeting,

Continued from Page 1

share of the settlement, \$10 million, could be used. They explained that the state legislature, through bills sponsored by Representative Wayne Smith and Sylvester Turner, had insured the money would come back to the communities around the river. However, the state stipulated that these funds could not be used to remove the toxic materials, or to compensate individuals for health or other damages. TPWD said that they have a process for applying to use some of the \$10 million, for projects that "mitigate the effects of environmental contamination and the effects of that contamination on natural resources and the public use of natural resources." This is the language of the 84th legislature's Senate Bill 2. The purpose of the meeting was to advise the community that they could propose projects, that would

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• Lifetime Member of the Community

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• Former HOUSTON ROCKET

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COMMUNITY PAGE

★

Crosby-Huffman CC hosts annual Expo



Crosby Lions Club had a booth at the Crosby-Huffman Chamber of Commerce Craft & Consumer Expo last Saturday, February 6, 2016.

Dealership donates to Knights



Turner Chevrolet donated a 48 inch TV to the Knights of Columbus last week just in time for Super Bowl 50. At left David Mendez of the dealership gives the boxed set to Eddie Foster, of the Knights of Columbus. Below, Eastside Veterans Celebration participants watch the Super Bowl commercials on the set.

"It's about time we did something for the Knights of Columbus, it is a great organization and is a major asset to the Crosby community," said David Mendez. The Knights of Columbus Hall is for rent for public or private events call (713) 201-6247.

Wayne Smith kicks off his campaign at Crawfish Shak



Scott Stephens introduces Wayne Smith to local Republicans numbering over 30 at a reception at the Crawfish Shak in Crosby on Monday. Smith stated that the Cody Stephens Bill that he wrote and introduced in the House of Representatives last year had "Cleared the House and now we have to get it through the Senate next time. I know all the soft votes and I am going to get them for us." Additionally, Smith lined out his efforts to get funding for the Battleship Texas, and Texas Alliance for Life, Life PAC, and a 100% voting record with Texas Right to Life. Smith discussed importance of securing our border with Mexico and prohibiting sanctuary cities, both issues for which he has co-authored legislation.

Smith has always fought for lower taxes. In the previous session, he co-authored legislation to increase the homestead exemption - a tax cut of nearly \$1.2 billion. He also supported a 25% reduction to the business margins tax 0 a \$2.6 billion tax cut. Wayne has consistently fought for conservative values in the Legislature, such as helping pass legislation to protect pastors who refuse to perform same sex marriage.

Smith, a lifetime member of the National Rifle Association (NRA) and holds an A rating with their organization.



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STATE CAPITAL
HIGHLIGHTS

By Ed Sterling

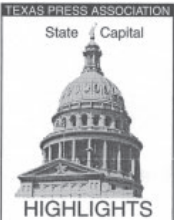
Governor, congressman seek details on border security cuts

AUSTIN — Gov. Greg Abbott and U.S. Rep. Henry Cuellar, D-McAllen, are asking U.S. Department of Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson for detailed information regarding border security cuts.

Of particular interest to Abbott and Cuellar is the federal agency's decision to cut resources for aerial-based border security support in a program known as Operation Phalanx. Specifically, the Department of Homeland Security's request for aerial detection, situational awareness and monitoring capability support for Operation Phalanx from the Department of Defense for calendar year 2016 was 50 percent lower than that of recent years.

The decrease came despite the governor's Sept. 30, 2015, request for additional aerial observation resources along the border, and despite the fact that Congress fully funded Department of Defense support for Operation Phalanx in the recently passed omnibus appropriations bill, according to the governor's office.

"Given the recent surge of migrants from Central America and Cuba along the southern border, we believe (the Department of Homeland Security) should be requesting more surveillance and security resources, not fewer," Abbott and Cuellar wrote in a Feb. 1 letter to Johnson. "Any decrease in aerial observation is not



only imprudent, but contradicts the very mission of border security enforcement."

Abbott and Cuellar noted that the Department of Homeland Security's decision to decrease surveillance resources "is unsettling" and requested the following information:

- Metrics used to determine that a 50 percent reduction in aerial resources would sufficiently support Operation Phalanx;

- Detailed plans on how the cuts would impact staffing, resource allocation and operation levels in Laredo, the Rio Grande Valley and Tucson; and

- What resources the department plans to use "to backfill any gaps" the reduction presents.

Abbott posts first year report

Gov. Abbott on Feb. 2 released a "Report to the People of Texas" listing highlights of his first year in office.

The report, as stated in a news release, "takes a look at the economy and busi-

nesses that expanded or relocated to Texas, in addition to providing an overview of legislation passed to cut taxes, improve Texas' public and higher education systems, build new roads, secure our border and chart a course that keeps the Lone Star State a beacon of individual liberty and economic opportunity."

State representative resigns

State Rep. Ruth Jones McClendon, D-San Antonio, who is suffering from lung cancer, resigned from office effective Jan. 26.

Gov. Abbott set May 7 as the date for a special election to fill the House District 120 seat held by McClendon for the last 20 years.

The winner of the special election will serve out the rest of McClendon's term, which expires Dec. 31, 2016.

Sales tax revenue decreases

Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar on Feb. 2 said state sales tax revenue in January totaled \$2.47 billion, down 4

percent compared to January 2015.

"As expected, reduced spending in oil and gas-related sectors resulted in a fall in total sales tax revenue," Hegar said. "Collections from industries mainly driven by consumer spending, including retail trade, restaurants and services, continued to grow, as did receipts from the construction sector."

However, Hegar noted, sales tax collections in January 2015 were a record high and represented a double-digit percentage increase over January 2014, meaning this month's collections are being compared to unusually high collections from a year ago.

Heroes Day is proclaimed

Gov. Abbott has proclaimed Feb. 2 to be Texas Military Heroes Day.

Last year, Feb. 2 was celebrated as Chris Kyle Day to honor the late Medal of Honor recipient who be-

came widely known as the U.S. military's most prolific sniper.

Abbott said his proclamation now calls Texans to remember "scores whose names are unrecognized and have quietly done their duty, serving Texas and the United States faithfully. Today, and from every Feb. 2 hereafter, we will honor all who have sacrificed and served on behalf of the Lone Star State. No matter the battle, no matter the job, they deserve our thanks."

1st Zika case is reported

The Texas Department of State Health Services on Feb. 2 reported the first case of Zika virus disease contracted in Texas.

According to the agency, the case involves a Dallas County resident who had sexual contact with someone who acquired the Zika infection while traveling abroad.

Seven other Texas cases of Zika virus disease are known and all are related to foreign travel to areas

★

LETTER

To the Editor

Dear Editor,

I want to take this opportunity to thank the Crosby ISD Board of Trustees and Administration for all of their hard work and dedication to spend the taxpayers hard earned money. I have recently noticed a steep increase in the Crosby ISD property tax rate (no surprise after the bond election in 2013!) A recent search of the website of the Harris County Appraisal District confirmed that Crosby ISD is tied with New Caney ISD as having the highest property tax rate in Harris County in 2015 of 1.67 per \$100 valuation. I bet the Crosby ISD Administration and School Board must be the envy of every other big-city ISD in the entire County for being able to pull off such an expensive and ambitious building/spending project. Congratulations Crosby ISD of being tied for the #1 ISD tax rate of any other district in Harris County. You guys did it!

Sincerely,
E. Lentz

where Zika is currently being transmitted, the DSHS reported.

There is currently no vaccine or treatment for the virus, and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control currently recommends that pregnant women delay travel to foreign countries where Zika is being transmitted.

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New Leadership with New Ideas

- Restructure the department to trim waste by cutting unnecessary supervisory positions (currently 34% of the department are supervisors) to put more deputies on patrol
- Institute Community Oriented Policing by putting 15 new deputies out into the neighborhoods to get to know and serve the community
- Create a Senior Citizen - Deputy Liaison Program to provide senior citizens direct access to a deputy assigned to their neighborhood
- Develop a Youth Mentoring Program to train and provide resources to mentors who will work with at-risk children in our community

MEET SGT. SHERMAN EAGLETON

- Born in Barrett Station Crosby, Texas
- Graduated from Crosby High School in 1984
- Graduated from Harris County Sheriff's Law Enforcement Academy in 1993
- Deputy at Pct. 3 Constable's office since 1993
- 23 years of Law Enforcement experience
- Currently serving as a Sergeant for Precinct 3 Community
- Married to Dr. Rosalyn Gayle Eagleton - who grew up in Scenic Woods a Northeast Houston community
- Parents of twin girls, Kimberly and Shayla, and son Jared

"I hope I can count on your support for Constable in this year's Democratic Primary."

- Sherman Eagleton

DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY

Early Vote: Feb. 16 - 26 • Election Day: March 1



Our new addition to the family, baby Aspen Noelle Stephens

My name is Joe Stephens and I am running for Justice of the Peace Pct. 3 Place 1 in this years March Democratic Primary. I am a former Houston Rocket and currently serve as School Board President in Galena Park ISD where I was elected in 2009. After 20+ years of service my longtime mentor, supporter and friend Judge Mike Parrott is "RETIRING" and not seeking re-election. I respectfully ask for your vote so I can not only continue his legacy, but continue the work I have already begun in our community. I want my service as the next Justice of the Peace Pct. 3 Place 1 to honor Judge Mike Parrott's legacy. As a Christian, Husband, Father, Small Business Owner, and public servant I understand the vital role a Justice of the Peace plays. Together we can get our youth to "PULL THEIR PANTS UP" and work hard to become successful, productive citizens.

Please vote for JOE STEPHENS JUSTICE OF THE PEACE PCT. 3 PLACE 1.

Thank you and God Bless you,

Joe Stephens



WE SUPPORT JOE STEPHENS FOR JUSTICE OF THE PEACE:

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