

COMMUNITY

Toxic Waste Pits report,

Continued from Page 1

shorter time schedule for action. She said water wells should be ordered shut down. Her own survey showed residents who "look like we are in a War Zone - missing limbs, skin diseases, and more. Very Sick people." She attributed these problems to the dioxins in the waste pits.

A representative of the Harris County Pollution Control Department, Bob Allen, said the county is taking proposals, due Feb. 22, on testing of wells in the area, and this would include dioxin screening for the first time. He said this testing is being paid for by settlement money from the lawsuit against the Responsible Parties, not taxpayer money.

Scott Jones of the Galveston Bay Foundation

said that the results of these tests would be posted publicly on his organizations's website.

Another Highlands resident that raised the issue of health problems was Archie Bickley, who said that as a life-long resident of Highlands, he had developed a number of cancers, perhaps from the site. He said he has lung cancer, brain cancer, and skin cancer. He voiced the opinion "we need that site cleaned up."

Gary Miller said that the EPA had a "lot of concerns" about the quality of work done last year on the cap, by the Responsible Parties. He indicated he would personally supervise future work on the containment at the site.

A number of other questions were asked by the audience. Scott Jones wanted to know how the site could be protected from barge strikes.

Another party wanted to know how a widening of the I-10 bridge might affect the

Waste Pit site.

Miller said that the PRP would be required to make 5 new test well at the north edge of the cap. Also the south impoundment area is being studied, with sample wells and borings. He noted that "the South is highly contaminated."

However, he said that sampling taken around the tear after the repairs, indicated that no toxins had been released, and no dioxin was in the river water. The issued was disputed by Jackie Young, who said that her organization tested wells and found dioxin.

EPA ended the evening promising more frequent meetings and a shorter remediation schedule.

NEW CENTER,

Continued from page 1

technical program facilities are not large enough to keep pace with growing enrollment."

Technical programs that

will be housed in the College's new CIT include welding technology, pipefitting fabrication, diesel technology, logistics, electrical technology, and heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration (HVACR). Other non-credit Continuing and Professional Development technical courses will also be housed at the new technology center, such as sheet metal, machining, and millwright training.

"We are proud to work with San Jacinto College and value the investment they are making in our students and community," said U.S. Rep. Gene Green (Texas-29), who attended the ceremony. "The 29th District is home to some of the most expansive chemical plants, refineries, and companies in the world, requiring a skilled workforce. Programs like these offered at CIT will help these businesses grow and meet their labor demands, stimulate our economy, and most importantly, prepare our students, right here at home, to qualify for these high-paying jobs."

Sheldon ISD crowns District Spelling Bee Winner



Sheldon ISD had its annual District Spelling Bee on Wednesday, February 17, 2016 in the Ney Administration Board Room. Jacob Ferguson, a 4th grader from Royalwood Elementary spelled Q-U-A-S-A-R correctly and was named the District Spelling Bee Champion.

Heaven Reyes, a 5th grader at Monahan Elementary was named the District Alternate.

Jacob will now go on to represent Sheldon ISD at the Houston Public Media Spelling Bee on Saturday, April 2, 2016 at 2 p.m. The Regional Bee airs live on TV Channel 8.

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SCHOOL NEWS



Channelview ISD’s February Students of the Month

Channelview ISD recently honored their February Students of the Month by hosting a recognition luncheon in the top level of the press box at Ray Maddy Memorial Stadium. Students were treated to lunch, along with a tour of the press box and field. The Students of the Month include, back row, from left, Nanci Martin (Channelview High School), Maria Diaz (Alice Johnson Junior High), Byron Henderson (Kolarik Ninth Grade Campus), Lauryn Little (Joe Frank Campbell Learning Center) and Stone Grimes (Aguirre Junior High). Pictured in front row, from left, are Nathan Folmsbee (Cobb Elementary), Pablo Parrett (Brown Elementary), Kalley Saunders (DeZavala Elementary), Samantha Flores (Crenshaw Elementary), Jordyn York (Hamblen Elementary), Kamryn Stark (McMullan Elementary) and Lindsey Caudillo (Schochler Elementary).

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OPINION PAGE



JUST

BETWEEN US

By Kristan Hoffman & Angie Liang

The Big Three Oh

By Kristan Hoffman and Angie Liang

In 2015, Angie and Kristan turned 30. The milestone was both more and less momentous than they expected...

ANGIE

Last year, Kristan, Mengfei and I went on a wonderful girls trip to Europe to commemorate the big 3-0. Traveling from different cities, I landed in Berlin first, too early for anyone to be awake and functioning. Though I arrived well prepared with maps and directions to our rented apartment, the subway line I needed to transfer at was unexpectedly closed for construction. Jet-lagged, with no idea where I was, I started to panic. Thankfully I spied two men walking to a bus stop nearby and ran towards them.

Together we navigated the bus route to a different subway. My new companions sleepily chatted with me and shared recommendations of their beloved city. The older man rode with me the entire way, even escorting me to a local bakery where I could eat and wait for my friends.

As he dropped me off at the bakery door, I offered to buy him coffee and breakfast. He politely declined, clasped his hands together and said, “I’m happy to help. Just stay it forward.”

My friends and I had an amazing trip afterward, but when I returned home, I didn’t practice the kind man’s words. Instead I spent the first half of my 30th year doing the opposite. Experiencing a period of deep vulnerability, I sought and took any support I could get.

The man in Berlin turned out to be a precursor for the abundance of time, love, wisdom and generosity that my friends and family would bestow upon me through a difficult time. So I began repairing myself — and in a symbolic parallel, finished putting together the apartment that I had moved into over a year earlier. My new home. My better me.

Now, I have finally begun to reciprocate, when I can and as much as I can. In the second half of my 30th year, I am trying to pay it forward.

When I was still in school, I thought women in their 30s had their lives together. It seemed like they all had a strong sense of self, and knew what they wanted and how to get it. Now that I am one of them, I know the truth: we definitely don’t have everything figured out. But we have learned a lot about ourselves and about the world, and we’re just trying to hold true to the one while navigating the

other.

I’m still trying to figure out that balance, amidst career politics and heartache. I’m learning that some things just aren’t important. You can skip the gossip and the negativity, you can ignore misconceptions about yourself. You should take responsibility for your actions and be wary of those who don’t. Practice empathy, and sometimes help a complete stranger, just because.

While I miss some of the free spiritedness of my 20s, I’m embracing the maturity of my 30s. There are still so many adventures to take, now complemented with full nights sleep. It’s worth figuring out how to navigate work, the world, and your own heart. At 30, you are stronger than you know.

KRISTAN

On a recent flight back to Houston to visit my parents for the holidays, I sat next to a very chatty man. Normally I tend to keep to myself on airplanes, sleeping or reading or working, but this guy clearly needed to discuss his troubled relationship and stuttering career. I didn’t have the heart to shut him down.

So we talked, and at some point I realized that I was offering advice and encouragement to a man 10-15 years older than myself. It’s not that I had all the answers for him — nor have I accomplished all of the goals in my own life. But somehow, over the years, I’ve turned into one of those worldly and insightful adults that I used to look up to.

And it’s not just me. Over the holidays, I caught up with several high school friends (including Angie), and it was such a delight to see how everyone has matured. Our 20s were sometimes turbulent, both personally and professionally, but that’s what taught us how to fly smoothly.

For me, I think the biggest lesson has been letting go of what I imagined “success” should be. I’m not rich or famous, and I don’t look like a supermodel, but that doesn’t make me a failure. My life is delightfully boring, with a husband, a dog, and a house in the Midwest. My writing career is still in its early stages. But rather than money, beauty, or fame, I’ve decided that what matters most to me is fulfillment and impact. As long as I remain a positive, nurturing influence to others, then I am successful. Whether I affect 10 people or 10 million.

We are smarter and stronger than we know. And maybe part of turning 30 is just taking the time to reflect on that. To realize it. To embrace it. And as we move through the next decade of our lives, to build on it.



University president sets campus carry policies

AUSTIN — University of Texas at Austin President Gregory L. Fenves has adopted policies to implement Senate Bill 11, the campus handgun carry law that goes into effect on Aug. 1.

Fenves adopted 25 policy recommendations developed by the 19-member Campus Carry Working Group that he appointed in 2015. Under the policies, certain laboratories, areas where pre-K-12 programs are held, and, with some exceptions, university residences will be considered gun-exclusion zones and employees with private offices will be able to prohibit handguns inside them. However, classrooms will not be included in gun-exclusion zones.

“Under the law, I cannot adopt a policy that has the general effect of excluding licensed concealed handguns from campus. I agree with the working group that a classroom exclusion would have this effect,” Fenves wrote.

But, Fenves also wrote, “I do not believe handguns belong on a university campus, so this decision has been the greatest challenge of my presidency to date. I empathize with the many faculty, staff, students and parents of students who signed petitions, sent emails and letters, and organized to ban guns from campus and especially classrooms. As a professor, I understand the deep concerns raised by so many. However, as president, I have an obligation to uphold the law.”

The University of Texas System Board of Regents may amend the campus carry rules with a two-thirds vote within 90 days of adoption.



STATE CAPITAL

HIGHLIGHTS

By Ed Sterling



Texas Gateway is launched

Texas Education Commissioner Mike Morath has announced the launch of the Texas Gateway (www.texasgateway.org), a free online resource library for educators and parents provided by the Texas Education Agency.

Morath said on Feb. 17 that Texas Gateway “not only builds upon the success of TEA’s online learning community Project Share but also expands access to resources — such as videos, interactives, formative assessments, professional development courses, and other classroom support materials — designed to strengthen classroom instruction to help every student succeed.”

And, Morath added, “while teachers will no doubt find the resources on this site to be valuable tools, items found on the Texas Gateway are also available to parents, stu-

dents, and all Texans at no cost.”

This portal to instructional resources aligns with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, the state standards that describe what students should know and should be able to accomplish at each grade level. Each resource in Texas Gateway contains a lesson or series of lessons that introduce a new idea or skill and then gives the learner opportunities to practice and apply what he or she has learned, according to the TEA.

Officials express condolences

After the Feb. 13 death of U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justice Antonin Scalia was made public, Gov. Greg Abbott and Attorney General Ken Paxton released statements. Here are excerpts:

Abbott remembered Scalia as “a man of God, a patriot and an unwavering defender of the written Constitution and the Rule of Law.”

Paxton said Scalia was “a powerful voice for liberty and a passionate defender of the freedoms guaranteed to all Americans by the Constitution. His passing is a deep loss for our nation.”

Scalia, 79, was a guest at the Cibola Creek Ranch resort in Presidio County when he died. His body was found in his room at the resort. No autopsy was performed and the death was ruled as resulting from natural causes.

Texans feel Pope’s visit

Pope Francis celebrated mass in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, on Feb. 17, and the visit was felt by people across the border in El Paso and far beyond.

According to a story by The Associated Press, Pope Francis “also offered a silent prayer for the thousands of immigrants who have died while trying to reach the U.S.” The State of Texas’ case against the Obama administration over the president’s executive order protecting the majority of undocumented people living in Texas and elsewhere across the country is on the current docket of the U.S. Supreme Court.

March 1 primary nears

Feb. 26 is the last day for early voting in the March 1 primary elections. The primaries will determine which candidates appear on the ballot as the nominees from the Republican and Democrat parties in the November general election. Voters will need to bring one of the accepted forms of photo identification if they cast a ballot in person.



LETTER

To the Editor

Dear Editor,

Wayne Smith represents exactly what we need in a State Representative for House District 128:

- An individual of personal integrity setting high standards for himself.

- Gives of his time and vast knowledge to make sure the needs of residents in District 128 are met.

- A civil engineer with the knowledge to work on issues such as The Ike Dike and draining water.

He is involved in professional and social groups in all of the communities in our area, so he is well acquainted with the issues that effects all of us in south east Harris County. He is a Vietnam veteran, who takes pride in public service - both for his country and now for our great state. He is a Christian who holds the conservative values of his constituents very close to his heart. He makes himself available when people call on him, and he finds solutions for the problems that we may be facing here in the district.

In Austin, he has paid his dues and built the trust of his colleagues from around the state. In making these valuable relationships it enables him to better represent us in the Texas Legislature. He has had the honor of being appointed a Chairman to several committees in the Texas House, and because of this, when major state decision are made, Wayne has a seat at the table and can make his voice heard so our communities are well taken care of.

Representative Smith has successfully fought for more troops to secure our border with Mexico, stricter pro-life legislation and an end to the funding for Planned Parenthood, more money for our public schools, lower taxes on our homes and our businesses, and protection for our religious leaders who refuse to succumb to the Supreme Court ruling which allows for same sex marriage.

Representative Wayne Smith has proven that he knows what’s best for our community because he listens to all of us. He’s proven that his interest is in serving the residents of House District 128, and not special interest groups from outside of our area. Early voting is February 16-26. Election Day is March 1.

Please help keep a hardworking, proven, leader to represent us and vote for Wayne Smith.

LES ELLARD

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OBITUARIES

Barry Lamont Wilbanks



Barry Lamont Wilbanks 68, from Houston, Texas went to be with the lord on February 10, 2016, greeted at he gates of

heaven by his parents John & Lois Wilbanks, wife Bobbie Wilbanks, brothers Gene Wilbanks, Randal Wilbanks and many others.

He is lovingly survived by four children Bobbie Fletcher, Eugene (Bubba) Wilbanks, Rhonda Wilbanks, and Barry Wilbanks Jr., 5 brothers, 15 grandchildren and great grandchildren.

His celebration of life will be held at First Assembly of God , 406 N. Magnolia, Highlands, TX, 77562 on March 5, 2016 at 11:00 a.m. Pastor Brandon Brewer will be officiating.

We all Love you Dad and are greatly missed. Rhonda.



LITTLE BIDDY BITS

By Danny Biddy

Keep A Lid On It

I was making a protein shake for breakfast early one morning. I placed the lid on it and was about to start shaking when I was called out of the room. I returned, grabbed the container and started to shake. Milk and powder went everywhere! The lid was just sitting on top rather than connected tightly to the container.

Have you ever been "al shook up" and "words went everywhere" because the "lid" was not on tightly? "Let everyone be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger." (James 1:19)

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<div style="text-align: center;"> St. Timothy's Episcopal Church All Invited to Worship with Us <table border="0"> <tr> <td>SUNDAY</td> <td>Holy Eucharist Rite II</td> <td>9:00 am</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SUNDAY</td> <td>Coffee Hour</td> <td>10:00 am</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Spanish Service/Holy Eucharist</td> <td>11:00 am</td> </tr> </table> 13125 INDIANAPOLIS ST., HOUSTON, 77015 sttimothyinhouston.com </div>		SUNDAY	Holy Eucharist Rite II	9:00 am	SUNDAY	Coffee Hour	10:00 am	Spanish Service/Holy Eucharist		11:00 am
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SUNDAY	Coffee Hour	10:00 am								
Spanish Service/Holy Eucharist		11:00 am								
<p>All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. Acts 2:4</p>										
<div style="text-align: center;"> ROOF LEAKING Call Mr. Roofer 1-844-WET ROOF 1-844-938-7663 All Roof Types Repairs 281-452-0000 </div>										
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<p>Be alert. Continue strong in the faith. Have courage and be strong. 1 Corinthians 16:13</p>										
<p>Rise in the presence of the aged, show respect for the elderly and revere your God. Leviticus 19:32</p>										

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Solution time: 21 mins. — King Crossword —

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SIKES DISPOSAL PITS SUPERFUND SITE PUBLIC NOTICE U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY REGION 6 FIFTH FIVE-YEAR REVIEW OF SITE REMEDY FEBRUARY 2016



The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 6 (EPA) has begun the fifth five-year review of the remedy for the Sikes Disposal Pits Superfund Site (Site) in Harris County, Texas. The review will evaluate if the remedy continues to protect human health and the environment.

The excavation and incineration of contaminated materials and soil restoration were completed in June 1994. However, the ground water remains contaminated and the sampling program will continue until contaminated concentrations are below the health based criteria. The fourth review for the Site was completed in September 2011.

The 185-acre Sikes Disposal Pits Site is located about two miles southwest of the City of Crosby, immediately north of old U.S. Highway 90, and roughly 20 miles northeast of Houston. The Site was used as a waste depository from the early 1960s to 1967. During the period, a variety of chemical wastes from area petrochemical industries were deposited on-site in several sand pits.

Once completed, the results of the five-year review will be made available to the public at the following information repository:

Crosby Branch Library 135 Hare Street Crosby, Texas 77532 (281) 328-3333

Information about the Sikes Disposal Pits Superfund Site is also available on the internet at:

www.epa.gov/superfund/sikes-disposal-pits

For more information about the Site, contact Raji Josiam, EPA Remedial Project Manager, at (214) 665-8529, 1-800-533-3508 (toll free), or by e-mail at Josiam.Raji@epa.gov. All media inquiries should be directed to the EPA Press Office at (214) 665-2200.

STAR-COURIER is on the Internet & your Smart Phone www.starcouriernews.com

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Channellview ISD Property Foreclosure Auction; March 1, 2016 at 10:00 a.m.; Bayou City Event Center at 9401 Knight Rd, Houston, TX 77045; LTS 2 & 10, BLK 12, SAN JACINTO RIVER ESTATES 1; HCAD # 0681130120002; Property Address: 17704 MEADOWBROOK DR CHANNELVIEW TX 77530; Opening Bid: \$10,300.00; call 832.777.3373 for more information.

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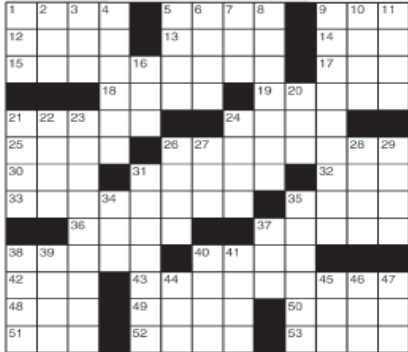
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King Crossword

ACROSS 1 Assistant 5 Praise to the skies 9 Banned bug spray 12 A-line originator 13 Choir member 14 Playwright Levin 15 Went on a tangent 17 Weep loudly 18 Approximately 19 Makes less intense 21 Military group



24 Sandwich shop 25 Colors 26 Sight-seers 30 Dadaist Jean 31 Debtors' woes 32 Take to court 33 Type of parking 35 DNA carrier 36 And others (Lat.) 37 Fragrant wood 38 Founded (on) 40 Ethereal 42 "Of course" 43 Talked over 48 Pirouette

49 Great Lake 50 Architect Saarinen 51 Conclusion 52 Gridiron arbiters, for short 53 Anger

8 Walks feebly 9 Permitted to leave 10 Let fall 11 Filing aids 16 Before "The Greatest" 21 Bloke 22 Emanation 23 Sad 24 Boring 26 Cash drawer 27 Bullring bravo 28 Albacore, e.g. 29 Palm reader, for one

31 Football lining 34 Chowd down 35 Old Faithful, e.g. 37 French vineyard 38 Data amount 39 Ages and ages 40 "Yeah, right!" 41 Frosts 44 Rage 45 Vast expanse 46 Measure of work 47 Fawn's mama

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