

NORTH CHANNEL★STAR

Your News, Your Newspaper

Serving all of the North Shore -- Channelview, Sheldon, Galena Park, Jacinto City
VOLUME 5, NO. 06 (#160) THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2017 www.northchannelstar.com

CHANNEL CHATTER

Pct. 2 Senior Market Day

Wednesday, February 15, 2017 from 10 am to 2pm, Grayson Center, 13828 Corpus Christi. Shopping, Healthcare, Screenings, Crafts, Jewelry, handmade quilts, door prizes, silent auction. Free to the public.

Fidelity High School History

The Fidelity High School Historical Committee is seeking memorabilia about the school, from the public and alumni.

An exhibit about the school is being planned for the future, when enough material is assembled.

Contact Linda Watkins at 281-458-2650 or sibleyla@sbcglobal.net if you have any items or information to contribute to this effort.

Frost Bank Ribbon Cutting

The public and chamber members are invited to the open house and ribbon cutting at the new Frost Bank branch at 13630 East Freeway. The event will take place from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm on Wednesday, Feb. 15th.

JC/GP Rotary Programs

The Rotary Club of Jacinto City/Galena Park continues to seek new members, and invited you to join them at lunch for one of their programs.

The club meets every Wednesday, from 12 noon to 1 pm, at the Baggett Center building in Galena Park.

Programs for February are themed "Really? I didn't know that." On February 1st, James Beasley presented a program on Black History month. On February 8th Dan Walte presented a program on tax advantages in the IRS code.

Programs to come are: February 15 - former Galena Park city councilwoman Maricela Serna will discuss the Galena Park Resource Center.

February 22 - instead of a luncheon meeting, the club will hold a golf tournament on February 23.

Chamber luncheon hears from District Clerk

Office services, historical stories

The North Channel Chamber of Commerce continued a busy schedule last Friday, with their monthly luncheon. This followed a very successful, well attended 40th Anniversary Gala the week before.

Adam Lund, the new president of the Chamber, emceed the luncheon meeting, which started with Mark Kramer of Channelview ISD presenting Outstanding Students and Educators.

New members were also introduced, including Huckabee Architects, and Andrew Held of Frost Bank.

This was followed by the keynote speaker, Harris County District Clerk Chris Daniel, who managed to give a talk that was both entertaining, informative, and full of historical anecdotes.

Daniel's District Clerk



DISTRICT CLERK CHRIS DANIEL

office is in charge of court records, he said. As such, he is in charge of jury duty for county courts, and also offers passport services and maintains historical Harris County Court Records dating back to 1836.

In regard to jury duty, Daniel said that you may be called to serve on a jury if you are registered to vote, or if you have a drivers license. The drivers license list was added, after the state discovered that

some were not registering to vote to avoid jury duty. Daniel also maintains a website where the public can search and read all court records. This is at www.hcdistrictclerk.com. There is also a tab on the site for obtaining free background checks on other individuals.

Passports are available from his office, either at 201 Caroline downtown, or at 5 locations county wide, mostly libraries.

Daniel's office has 450 employees and oversees a \$32 million budget. He was first elected in 2010 and re-elected in 2014. His office staffs 76 courts with clerks, maintains records for those courts, and runs jury service.

On a personal note, Daniel earned a mechanical engineering degree from UT Austin, and the South Texas College of Law, passing the bar in 2012. His wife Jennifer is a CPA, and a native or Barbers Hill. Oh, note that Daniel speaks Dutch.



SPEAKERS at the North Channel Chamber February luncheon included Chris Daniel, Shalonda Dawkins, Christie Gates, Adam Lund, and Mark Kramer.

During his first term in office, Daniel focused on turning more courts into efficient, cost-saving e-courts, modernizing the subpoena process and offering more services, such as passports.

In 2013 Daniel collaborated with Sheriff Adrian Garcia and the District Attorney's office to create eSubpoena, an efficient electronic system that greatly reduces the time it takes to notify or summon

witnesses.

As custodian of the Harris County Historical Document Room, Daniel has access to a number of important and interesting documents related to the history of Harris County, and the state of Texas. As part of his talk, he related several stories about historically important characters that were revealed in court documents, including David Burnet and Howard Hughes.

Governor Abbott releases 2018-19 budget

AUSTIN -- Coinciding with his State of the State address, Governor Greg Abbott today released his budget for the 2018-19 biennium. The Governor's budget ensures Texas will live within its means while fully funding key priorities without raising taxes or debt, and without looting the Rainy Day Fund. The budget released by the Governor builds on the successes of the 84th Legislature and looks to the future by strategically investing in priorities that protect the safety and security of Texans, furthers educational advancement of our future workforce, and empowers the private sector to create jobs, while also defending individual liberties and guarding against government overreach.

"This upcoming biennium will be a time for addressing essential needs and eliminating the non-essential wants," said Governor Abbott. "That is why my budget proposal en-

sures that state government lives within its means while maintaining funding for important, but limited priorities. Fostering a climate of fiscal responsibility, low taxes, reasonable regulation, and limited government will enable Texas to remain the envy of the nation and encourage private sector investment, expansion, and innovation."

Highlights Of The Governor's Budget:

- Adds \$500 million for reforming Child Protective Services (CPS)
- Maintains \$800 million in funding for border security
- Fully funds \$5 billion in additional road construction without new taxes, fees, debt, or tolls
- Fully funds optional, high-quality PreK programs
- Fully funds job creation programs like the Texas Enterprise Fund (TEF)
- Fully funds the Governor's University Research Initiative (GURI)
- Fully funds disaster relief programs
- Cuts taxes on employers (franchise tax) by another \$250 million
- Maintains funding for development grants that support Texas military bases



Governor Abbott

2015 Miss Black Houston to compete in Miss Houston Pageant

By Allan Jamail

Maeamour (Mae) Jones the 2015 Miss Black Houston says she'll be competing in the 2017 Miss Houston Pageant, at the Hilton Houston Post Oak Hotel, April 13th - 15th, 2017. She has been competing in pageants for almost 3 years; she says her favorite part is bringing recognition to her platform which is, bringing awareness to the deaf community. Jones said she enjoys sports and photography and her goal in life is to become a Sports Broadcast Journalist.

Mae attended Clements High School and graduated in 2011. Later, she earned her Bachelor's in Mass Communications, and minored in Sign Language in 2015 from Sam Houston State University. Currently she is working on becoming an American Sign Language teacher or Interpreter to young children. She has enrolled back in school to receive her Masters from the University of Houston. Jones



Maeamour (Mae) Jones

is a member of the Fifth Ward Church of Christ where she's an active youth volunteer.

Pageants continue to motivate many young women to strive to be their best and work toward their positive goals. You can be a part of helping Mae achieve her goal, by donating and supporting her. Sponsorship funds can be given online at www.GoFundMe.com/n5hdfw, or mailed to P.O. Box 16362, Sugar Land, TX 77496-6362.

Galena Park-Jacinto City CIP

CIP meeting hears details on dredging of ship channel

Members and guests of the CIP (Community-Industry Partnership) heard details of dredging methods and regulations, at their last meeting on Thursday, Feb. 2 at the Baggett Center in Galena Park.

Mark Coyle explained that there are four types of dredging: Hydraulic, Mechanical, Mechanical/Hydraulic Offloading, and Hopper. The choice of which type is governed by cost, and conditions and location of the required work.

Also a consideration is where the dredged material will be disposed of. Coyle said that the Army Corps of Engineers counts 12 approved disposal areas around the ship channel, including three in the Galena Park area.

Coyle said that sometimes these spoils areas can sometimes be turned



MARK COYLE of Crosby Dredging and Construction explains with a slide show the regulations and details of dredging and water depth in the Houston Ship Channel.

into "beneficial use sites" suitable for marsh or wildlife areas.

Coyle said that the existing ship channel has a depth of 45 feet toward Galveston Bay, and is progressively shallower as it goes toward the turning basin, where it is only 32

feet. Coyle said that surveys or depth measurements are continual, due to movement of sediment. Constant dredging is required in both the main federal channel, and the private channels next to petrochemical facilities.

North Shore Rotary

Community support projects are the highlight of luncheon

At their weekly luncheon last week, the North Shore Rotarians were updated on several community projects that they support.

Rotarian Dan Mims and club president Kim Gonzalez displayed a banner from the Sheldon FFA Livestock Show, indicating that the club had purchased a Grand Champion swine in support of the scholarship program. The pig was exhibited by Kaydee Denton, and purchased for \$1600.

The club also purchased other animals at the Show, including the 3rd place swine exhibited by Samantha Doerr and purchased for \$1250, and the 5th place swine, exhibited by Alfonso Trevino and purchased for \$1200.

In addition, other Rotarians Dan Mims, and Don Nino bought animals for their own.



Rotary Club president Kim Gonzalez holds a banner with Dan Mims, indicating that they bought the Grand Champion swine at the recent Sheldon FFA Livestock Show.



North Shore Rotary also donated \$2500 to the Baytown Shriners Club for their work with injured children.

SPORTS

Channelview's Pope signs with Blinn College



Channelview High School football player Tuciano Pope signed a letter of intent to play for Blinn Junior College on a full scholarship this fall. Pope was a First Team defensive selection for his play at safety, but he was also an impact player as a wide receiver as he was named to the Second Team All-District Offense. He was a key player for the Falcons during their back-to-back playoff seasons.

GALENA PARK ISD: Mustangs sign Letter of Intent



On February 1, eight North Shore Mustang football players signed a letter of intent to their respective colleges on National Signing Day. Families, friends, coaches and teachers gathered together to show support as these athletes took the next step in their athletic and academic careers. Bryant Badie- University of Louisiana- Monroe; K'Lavon Chaisson- Louisiana State University; Khayman Johnson- West Texas A&M University; Eltroty Potts- Tyler Junior College; Kieston Roach-Texas State University; Joshua Sifuentes- Grandview College; Matthew Stephenson-Texas Southern University; and Jaylen Thomas- Sam Houston State University. Congratulations on this accomplishment!

GALENA PARK ISD: North Shore Football Team raises money for North Channel Assistance Ministries



On January 12, the North Shore Senior High football team presented Sally Phillips, North Channel Assistance Ministries volunteer, with a generous cash donation on behalf of North Shore Senior High School. The team held a fundraiser and collected spare change from their classmates during each lunch period. The money donated will be used to purchase food for the food pantry. We are so proud of the team for giving back to the community. Keep up the good work! The North Channel Assistance Ministries is available to assist anyone living within the area codes of 77013, 77049, 77015, 11078, 77044, 770530 and parts of 77029 with proof of residency. The food pantry is open Tuesday through Thursday from 8:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. If you would like to donate to North Channel Assistance Ministries, please contact Sally Phillips at 713-453-2028 or sjphillips711@yahoo.com.

Chamber honors Channelview students, educator



The North Channel Area Chamber of Commerce honored three Channelview ISD students and one teacher as their February Students and Educator of the Month at the organization's regular luncheon recently. The honorees were, from left, Gabriela Morales from Alice Johnson Junior High, Angel Zepeda Nunez from Channelview High School, Educator of the Month Janelly Alfaro from Aguirre Junior High and Valerie Arango from Aguirre Junior High.

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SCHOOL NEWS

Channelview BPA students qualify for state competition

Channelview High School's Business Professionals of America chapter shined in the spotlight with 15 students qualifying for state after their performance at the BPA Regional Competition in Sugar Land recently.

The BPA State Competition will be held March 1-4 in Dallas. The top medalists will then advance to the national contest in May.

"Our students did an amazing job and have put so much work into preparing for this competition," said Erin Bowman, BPA adviser at Channelview High School. "I was proud of the way they represented our school and our community."

The following students earned awards at the Regional Competition and are advancing to state:

Graphic Design
Jose Alvarez - First Place
Computer Animation Team
Jose Alvarez and Adriel Arias - First Place



Channelview High School's Business Professionals of America students proudly show the medals they earned at the BPA Regional Competition in Sugar Land. Fifteen students qualified for the State Competition, while four students were named State Alternates.

Karina Solis and Mera-
ri Torres - Second Place
Computer Modeling
Adriel Arias - Second Place
Video Production Team
Rafael Elorza, Chris
Frias, and Ariel Juarez -
First Place
Jessica Garza, Jonathan
Mejia, and Eduardo Rebol-
oso - Second Place

Personal Finance
Emily Garza - First
Place
Payroll Accounting
Giovanni Gonzalez -
Third Place
Network Design Team
Dylon McRae and
Laryssa Torres - First
Place
Entrepreneurship

Gabriel Mena-Morales -
Second Place
State alternates include
Miguel Valle, who finished
in sixth place in the Fun-
damental Accounting cat-
egory at regionals and the
third place Presentation
Management Team of Jose
Arellano, Gabriel Mena-
Morales and Evelyn Mon-
telongo.

UT-Austin's OnRamps program giving CHS students on early jump on college credits

By Mark Kramer
Channelview ISD Public
Relations

The University of Texas at Austin's OnRamps Dual Enrollment program is giving Channelview High School students an early start toward earning credits in college-level courses.

Channelview High School launched the program at the beginning of this school year, offering classes in English Language Arts (ELA), Geoscience, Statistics, Pre-Calculus and Physics. The 88 students who are enrolled in the program are taught by CHS teachers who are trained and certified by OnRamps facilitators.

"We are excited to be able to provide these opportunities for our students," CHS Principal Cindi Ollis said. "OnRamps brings the college experience to the high school classroom and transforms how students learn, while preparing them for post-secondary academic success."

During the fall semester, students complete a series of required assignments which leads them into the transition of rigorous college-level coursework during the spring. Students that successfully complete the first semester of OnRamps will receive high school course credit. Students that master the second semester of their OnRamps courses will receive three core credits from the University of Texas that will transfer to any public college or university in the state. In addition, students in English classes are eligible for course credit from UT in the fall and spring semesters for a total of six core credits.

"OnRamps offers students authentic college courses that provide them with both the academic expectations and social expectations of college," said Jennifer Saenz, UT-Austin's assistant director of strategic partnerships.

For example, Jenelle Million's Geoscience class involves the study of how biology, physics, chemistry and geology are integrated into the earth's systems. Million incorporates lectures, group activities and technology to enhance advanced learning skills among her students.

"The content that I teach is the same content



University of Texas OnRamps facilitator Alison Mote and Channelview High School OnRamps students Jonathan Paz, Christian Loza and Angel Zepeda investigate radioactive decay through the use of technology programs in Jenelle Million's Geoscience class. Students in the OnRamps program are able to earn core credits from the University of Texas that will transfer to any public college or university in the state.

that is taught at UT-Austin," she said. "We use the same labs, similar lectures and tests. My students are required to investigate and work together to solve problems or explain what they are seeing. These methods of teaching helps students to broaden their higher-level thinking skills."

Incorporating technology into the classroom is an important part of the OnRamps curriculum. Million's students participate in interactive studies of the Earth's interior, geologic processes, climate systems and energy systems through the use of website programs and other electronic resources.

"This generation of students grew up with the internet and computers and use them regularly," Million said. "Using digital platforms of learning naturally helps to reach these students in a way that goes beyond the traditional classroom."

In Robert Barajas' Statistics class, students are learning statistical concepts by using computer programming methods. "The university's philosophy is that it would be a great asset to the students to learn computer code and statistics at the same time," he said. "It has been an eye-opening experience for my students as some of them had never even considered computer programming as a possible major or future career."

Unlike a regular high school class where the majority of learning is per-

forming in the classroom, the OnRamps students are responsible for reading and learning the major concepts of the class on their own time like in a college class. Classroom time is used for discussion and collaboration on projects. Students are then required to show mastery of what they've learned through exams and quizzes.

Along with the advanced coursework, CHS English teacher Joseph Canicatti believes the OnRamps program prepares students for the rigorous timelines of courses in college classes. In his Rhetoric class, the curriculum is designed to prepare students to better analyze and produce arguments involving a variety of topics and issues.

"OnRamps attempts to provide a link between the vastly different pacing of college and expectations of college," Canicatti said. "Most of our course is conducted in workshop-style format where the students have learned the topics at home. In class, we will share discussion about what the students have been studying or working on related projects."

In her experience working with UT's OnRamps program, Saenz said she has seen the program provide students with valuable access to college resources. She added that this type of support is designed to create a smooth transition for students as they face more challenging grading, deadlines and exams.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

East Houston Democrats meeting

East Houston Democrats invites you to attend the February Membership Meeting on Thursday, February 16 beginning at 6:30 p.m. Membership Meetings are held at Fudrucker's located at 855 Normandy Road. In an effort to introduce newly elected leaders to the community, they have scheduled at least one elected leader monthly to address the community. Membership dues are \$40 per household, \$30 for an individual or \$20 for a college student. More information may be obtained by contacting Charlotte Jackson, Treasurer at 832-896-633 or by email at Charlotte.Jackson@yahoo.com

East Houston Democrats Volunteer Deputy Voter Registrar Training

East Houston Democrats Club is hosting a Volunteer Deputy Voter Registrar Training on Saturday, February 18 at 230 p.m. This free training is open to any registered voter in Harris County. The training will take Harris County Library located at 15741 Wallisville Road, Houston 77049. The class is presented by the Office of Harris County Tax Assessor-Collector Ann Harris Bennett. Class is one hour and participants must arrive on time and attend the training in its entirety.

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. For more information, please visit www.SanJacintoPilot.com.

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OPINION PAGE

Uncle Sam Wants You To Save For Retirement

(NAPSI)—If you ever feel your finances are too stretched to save for retirement, you're not alone—and there could be good news for you. The Saver's Credit—a little-known tax credit made available by the IRS to eligible taxpayers—could make saving for retirement more affordable than you think. It may reduce your federal income taxes when you save for retirement through a qualified retirement plan or an Individual Retirement Account (IRA).

"The Saver's Credit is a fantastic tax credit because it pays you to save for retirement. It offers eligible workers an added incentive to save for retirement on top of the benefits of tax-deferred savings when they contribute to a 401(k), 403(b) or IRA," says Catherine Collinson, president of nonprofit Transamerica Center for Retirement Studies®.

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1. Check Your Eligibility
Depending on your filing status and income level, you may qualify for a nonrefundable credit of up to \$1,000 (or \$2,000 if filing jointly) on your federal income taxes for that year when you contribute to a 401(k), 403(b) or similar retirement plan, IRA or myRA.

Single filers with an Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) of up to \$30,750 in 2016 or \$31,000 in 2017 are eligible. For the head of a household, the AGI limit is \$46,125 in 2016 or \$46,500 in 2017. For those who are married and file a joint return, the AGI limit is \$61,500 in 2016 or \$62,000 in 2017.

You must be 18 years old or older by January 1 and cannot be a full-time student or be claimed as a dependent on another person's tax return. If you fit within these parameters, the Saver's Credit may be for you.

2. Save for Retirement

Save for retirement in your employer's retirement plan, if offered, or in an IRA. In general, for every dollar you contribute to a qualified retirement plan or IRA (up to the lesser of the limits permitted by an employer-sponsored plan or the IRS), you defer that amount from your current overall taxable income on your federal tax returns—

and you may also qualify for the Saver's Credit.

3. File Your Tax Return and Claim the Credit

When you prepare your federal tax returns, you can claim your Saver's Credit by subtracting this tax credit from your federal income taxes owed.

Workers who are eligible to claim the Saver's Credit are also eligible to take advantage of IRS' Free File program for taxpayers with an AGI of \$64,000 or less. Twelve commercial software companies make their tax preparation software available for free through the Free File program at www.irs.gov/FreeFile.

• If you are using tax preparation software, including those offered through IRS' Free File program at www.irs.gov, use Form 1040, Form 1040A or Form 1040NR. If your software has an interview process, be sure to answer questions about the Saver's Credit, also referred to as the Retirement Savings Contributions Credit and/or Credit for Qualified Retirement Savings Contributions.

• If you are preparing your tax returns manually, complete Form 8880, the Credit for Qualified Retirement Savings Contributions, to determine your exact credit rate and amount. Then transfer the amount to the designated line on Form 1040, Form 1040A or Form 1040NR.

• If you are using a professional tax preparer, be sure to ask about the Saver's Credit.

• Consider having any refund you receive directly deposited to an IRA to further boost your retirement savings.

Note that the Saver's Credit is not available with Form 1040EZ.

The 17th Annual Transamerica Retirement Survey found that just one in three American workers are aware that the credit exists. Don't overlook Uncle Sam's Saver's Credit; it may help you pay less in your current federal income taxes while saving for retirement.

For more details on the Saver's Credit and online retirement planning calculators, visit the Transamerica Center for Retirement Studies® at www.transamericacenter.org.



Governor raises four issues to emergency status

AUSTIN — Gov. Greg Abbott delivered his second biennial "State of the State" address to a joint session of the Texas Legislature on Jan. 31.

In exercising his prerogative as governor, Abbott presented a short list of emergency items for lawmakers to enact during the 85th regular session of the Texas Legislature:

- Improvements to Child Protective Services;
- A ban on sanctuary cities;
- Ethics reforms; and
- Approve a resolution calling for a convention of states.

Abbott said a convention of the states is needed to propose constitutional amendments in order to "fix America" because of a federal government "grown out of control." It would take a two-thirds majority, or 34 of the 50 state legislatures, to call a convention under Article V of the United States Constitution.

In addition to the emergency items, Abbott called for:

- A hiring freeze, to be observed at all state agencies through the month of August. The freeze, he said, would give the state \$200 million to use on other budget items;
- More attention to pre-kindergarten programs and the funding of them;
- Full funding of the Texas Enterprise Fund, a financial instrument used by the governor's office to help lure big businesses to the Lone Star State; and
- Property tax reform.

On Feb. 1, a day after delivering the State of the State address, Abbott met with U.S. Department of Homeland Security Secretary John Kelly for a quick tour of the Rio Grande Valley. "Together with the federal government, Texas will not flinch in our resolve to keep our citizens safe," Abbott said, and pointed out the connection between border security and his emergency item calling for a ban on sanctuary cities.

Hecht speaks to lawmakers
Texas Supreme Court Chief Justice Nathan

STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS By Ed Sterling



Hecht delivered his "State of the Judiciary" address to a joint session of the Texas Legislature on Feb. 1.

Hecht began his remarks by recounting the 2015 shooting of State District Judge Julie Kocurek in Travis County. Kocurek survived the shooting and returned to the bench.

"With judges like Judge Kocurek serving the people of Texas every day," Hecht said, "I am proud to report to you that the state of the Texas judiciary is strong."

Hecht asked lawmakers for help in improving judicial security and compensation, electronic access to court documents, guardianship monitoring and increased access to justice for the poor and the middle class. Hecht pledged to work with lawmakers in crafting reforms to the bail system, the treatment of the mentally ill and the imposition of fines, fees and costs for minor offenses.

Hecht also called for an end to straight ticket voting in judicial elections. Following Hecht's address, Texas House Speaker Joe Straus agreed, adding: "We shouldn't stop there. Texas should join 40 other states and end straight ticket voting in all elections. This change would encourage voters to learn more about individual candidates, their platforms and their qualifications. Too often, good men and women are swept out of down-ballot offices due to the political winds at the

moment. It has happened in San Antonio and across Texas. I look forward to working with my colleagues to address this issue."

Health spending analyzed

Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar on Jan. 31 announced his office's posting of an online report examining health care-related spending by 68 state agencies and higher education institutions from fiscal 2011 through 2015.

The report features a close look at the five state agencies reporting the largest share of that spending: the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, the Department of Aging and Disability Services, the Department of State Health Services, the Employees Retirement System and the Teacher Retirement System. Those agencies accounted for 82.5 percent of all state health care spending in fiscal 2015. The report also features a section on health care spending by counties.

One finding in the report is that in fiscal 2015, Texas spent \$42.9 billion on health care, representing 43.1 percent of all state appropriations.

Revenue total is reported

Texas Comptroller Hegar announced state sales tax revenue totaled \$2.45 billion in January, 0.7 percent less than in January 2016.

"Sales tax collections reflect tepid spending by both businesses and consumers. Receipts from the information sector were up, but declines were seen in receipts from the construction and mining sectors, as well as retail trade," Hegar said.

However, he added, total sales tax revenue for the three months ending in January 2017 was up by 0.3 percent compared with the same period a year ago.

Get Ahead Of Allergies

(NAPSI)—Don't wait for allergy season to arrive to do something to avoid the health problems that allergies can cause. There are several easy steps you can take to beat the sneezing before it starts.

Here are some prevention tips:

- Cut back on carpeting; instead, consider using tile and hardwood floors.
- Use a vacuum with a HEPA filter.
- Roll up your window shades and clean your drapes.
- Have your HVAC system professionally cleaned.

Dirty ducts can harbor pollen and other pollutants. Contaminants are pulled into the HVAC system and recirculated several times a day. The buildup in the ductwork creates continuous exposure that only cleaning can address.

A complete cleaning should include replacing the filter and cleaning the ductwork, from where the air enters the return duct, through the air handler (blower, coil, and head exchanger), to the exit, where the air is released to condition the home. This will remove built-up particulates and contaminants such as pollen, improving indoor air quality and maximizing system efficiency.

Members of the National Air Duct Cleaners Association (NADCA) have signed the NADCA Code of Ethics and invested time and resources into industry training and education. NADCA requires that all members have at least one certified Air Systems Cleaning Specialist (ASCS) on staff, and they must clean and restore your heating and cooling system in accordance with NADCA standards and guidelines.

Get facts and tips at BreathingClean.com. The Find A Professional directory can help you locate a certified individual in your area.

Advertisement for Mountbatten House Assisted Living. Text includes: "The independence you want with the assistance you need", "Respite Care Available", "FALL SPECIAL! Reduced Deposit for New Applicants", and contact information: "213 Maple Street Highlands, TX 77562 281-843-2013".

Advertisement for Star★Courier. Text includes: "HIGHLANDS CROSBY", "USPS 244-500 and the", "Barbers Hill★Dayton PRESS", and a list of staff: "Editor & Publisher: Gilbert Hoffman", "Associate Publisher: Mei-Ing Liu Hoffman", "Assoc. Editor/Advertising Manager: Lewis Spearman", "Assistant Editor: Julieta Paita", "Production Manager: Luis Hernandez", "IT Technical Manager: Pedro Hernandez".

Advertisement for Viagra & Cialis. Text includes: "Attention: VIAGRA & CIALIS Users", "There's a More Affordable & Effective Alternative to U.S. Pharmacy High Prices!", "50 Pill Special: Only \$99 Plus Free Shipping!", and "For discreet home delivery, CALL NOW! 800-923-6962 Operators Available 24/7!".

LIFESTYLE

Van and Georgia May Celebrate 60th Anniversary



Long-time Crosby residents, Van and Georgia May, celebrate their 60th Anniversary on February 9th. They got married in Crosby, traveled to Monterey, Mexico for their honeymoon, and have lived in Crosby all their married life.

Van and Georgia met when she was 16 and he was 20 at the Crosby Nite Spot – the local favorite for live music and dancing. The Crosby Nite Spot was owned by Van's mother, Fannie May. (It was located in the area that is now occupied by Iguana Joe's restaurant.) For many years Van was the lead singer/guitarist in the band, The May Brothers, performing weekly at the Crosby Nite Spot, and even performed on the popular Utah Carl TV show.

Van graduated from Crosby High School in 1949. He was quite the athlete: Football: Undeclared District Champions '48. Track: District Champion in four events: broad jump, one-mile race, 440 relay, and one-mile relay. At Regionals his team won the one mile relay and he won 3rd in the one-mile race. He qualified for State in four events but didn't get to compete because he had the mumps. The Crosby Buffalos went on to also win District in basketball that year. Van is the also the ultimate outdoorsman: deer hunting, fishing, archery (won 3rd place in the 1965 Archery State Championship in the heavy tackle division using a recurve bow, and in 1966 placed 7th in State). His other great love and work was as a horse trainer – winning many trophies, saddles, belt buckles, and equipment in horse shows on his prized Quarter Horse, Sweet Thang. He owned his own company, May Construction, building metal buildings, carpents, and barns around Crosby and beyond.

Georgia (Smesny) graduated in 1953 from Dayton High School. Her family lived in Eastgate, Texas. She was a Broncos Cheerleader and voted FFA Sweetheart. Many around Crosby know her as 'Ms. Georgia' because she has been a like a grandmother to many children during the twenty-five plus years she served in Mother's Day Out programs. She has loved seeing the ones she cared for grow up to accomplish great things! One year, one of Crosby's star football players (who she babysat when he was a preschooler) presented her with a homecoming corsage! Georgia and Van are huge fans of the Cougars as you can tell by their photograph. Georgia loves her family, enjoys traveling, shopping at Churches United, encouraging others, and she never meets a stranger!

Their pride and joy is their family. Children: Mark – a Crosby resident; Melinda and her husband David – Waco residents. Grandchildren: Preston and his wife Carolyn, Brandon, and Stephanie; and their first great grandson, Judah. Van and Georgia are lovingly called Papa and Gangy!

Happy Anniversary!

Let's all celebrate with Van and Georgia – please send them a card or gift card to congratulate them. Mail to P.O. Box 213, Crosby, TX 77532.

Area Student Selected as Texas All-State Musician

Travis Hyman, a member of the Crosby High School Varsity Choral, will perform with the Texas All-State Men's Choir in San Antonio, Saturday, February 11, 2017 as part of the 2017 Texas Music Educators Association Clinic/Convention. He was chosen for this prestigious honor through a competitive process of auditions held across the state at District, Region, Pre-Area and Area levels, starting in September 2016. Travis sings at Crosby High School under the direction of Brianna Fernandez, who is a member of the Texas Music Educators Association. This is Travis' first time to perform as a member of a TMEA All-State organization, and he is the first student from Crosby in 16 years to earn a place in one of the All-State Choirs. Travis is the son of Jennifer Carter and

Michael Hyman. Along with being involved in choir, he is also involved in Varsity Football, Powerlifting, Student Council, Cougar Compadres, UIL Academics, and is a member of the Science National Honor Society, Mu Theta Alpha, and National Honor Society.

All-State is the highest honor a Texas music student can receive. 1,780 students are selected out of over 68,000 students from around the state vying for the opportunity to perform in one of 15 ensembles (bands, orchestras, and choirs). The highest-ranking musicians judged at the TMEA Area competitions qualify to perform in a TMEA All-State music group. Only the top 2.6% of musicians who initially audition become All-State musicians. These students participate in three



Travis Hyman

days of rigorous rehearsals directed by nationally-recognized conductors during the TMEA Clinic/Convention. Their performances for thousands of attendees bring this extraordinary event to a close. For the All-State concert schedule and conductor information, go to the Performances section of www.tmea.org/convention.

Floree E. Adams



Floree E. Adams 87, of Seabrook, Texas went to be with the Lord on January 30, 2017.

Floree was born on November 14, 1929 in Oak Grove, Louisiana to Thomas and Elene (Hemphill) Howington. Floree enjoyed sewing, dolls, cooking gumbo and meatloaf every

★ OBITUARIES

Wednesday for her family and she enjoyed spending time with friends and family.

Floree was a very kind and caring woman who will be deeply missed by all who knew her. She is preceded in death by her parents, Thomas and Elene Howington; husband, Arthur Adams; daughter, Diana Clark; and son, Daryl Adams.

Floree is survived by her grandson, Lance Clark; great granddaughters, Rylie Clark, Alyssa Clark, Mia Clark and many other

relatives and friends. A visitation for family and friends will be held on Thursday, February 2, 2017 from 5pm-8pm at Sterling-White Funeral Home. Funeral services will be held on Friday, February 3, 2017 11am at Sterling-White with burial following at Forest Park Lawnside Cemetery.

Services have been entrusted to Sterling-White Funeral Home 11011 Crosby Lynchburg Rd. Highlands, Texas 77562.

To send the family condolences please visit www.sterlingwhite.com

★ OBITUARIES

Dorothy Mae Kubin Janacek



Dorothy Mae Kubin Janacek, 86, of Crosby passed away Tuesday, January 31st. She was born on May 31, 1930 to Stanley and Rose Machala Kubin.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband, Leroy Janacek; daughter, Bridget Smith; grandson, Reed Robertson. She is survived by her children and spouses: Monalisa and Ray Matthews; Leroy (Buddy) and Barbara Janacek; Gary and Sandy Janacek; Rebecca Robertson; Chris and Sally Janacek; Teena and Rick Galvan; son-in-law Gary Smith. Grandchildren, spouses and great-grandchildren include: Jennifer and Brad Reeves (Braylee and Logan); Matt and Debra Matthews (Lincoln and Grant); Brianne and Mike Reeber, Emily Janacek, Britney and Bobby Stevens (Rayann, Reidland, Robey and Robert III); Amanda & Derrick Schriever (Daniel); Tyler and Cullen Robertson; Stephen and Blakeley Janacek; Patrick and Ben Janacek; Shelby and Kendall Smith; Luke Galvan.

Also preceded in death by her siblings: Rita Gregory, Margaret Cutbirth, Bernadette Eilers and Danny Kubin. Also survived by: brother, John and Fay Kubin; sister, Mary Ann Fischer and sister-in-laws Mary Kubin and Gladys Foerster.

Special thanks to caregivers: Betty Jo Leibham and Bert Virsie.

Dorothy was a faithful servant to her Lord, praying daily and reciting the Holy Rosary. She was known to never leave home without her "prayer" bag. No matter how sick she was, she always made the sign of the cross when her children said the rosary with her. Dorothy was a die-hard deer hunter at Lux Ranch for over 60 years. She was a dedicated canasta player and loved her card club.

Visitation will be Friday, February 3, from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Sacred Heart Catholic Church, 915 Runneburg Road in Crosby with Rosary at 7:00 p.m. Funeral Services will be at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, February 4, at Sacred Heart Catholic Church. Burial will follow at Sacred Heart Catholic Cemetery. Services have been entrusted to Sterling-White Funeral Home 11011 Crosby Lynchburg Rd, Highlands, Texas 77562.

To send the family condolences please visit www.sterlingwhite.com.

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

Margaret Ann Campbell



Margaret Ann Campbell, 62, passed away February 1, 2017 in Houston, Texas after battling a lengthy illness.

Margaret was born June 17, 1954 in Houston, to parents Elbridge and Clydell Gary. She was a dedicated executive secretary

with Houston Independent School District for 30 years. Margaret was a generous and loving person who enjoyed giving back to her community. She was always cooking meals and delivering them to her local Jacinto City police officers' fireman, and constables office to show her genuine appreciation for those who served.

Margaret will be remembered for her kind heart. She is preceded in death by her parents; and her husband, Danny Wayne Campbell. Margaret is lovingly survived by her sister and brother-in-law, Mary and Phil Skelton; nephews, Daryl and Amanda Skelton, Kevin and Kara Skelton; great-niece and nephews, Logan Daniel Skelton, Ella Skelton, Jonathan Skelton; her

beloved dog and companion, Sampson; as well as many dear friends that became family to her.

Friends are welcome to join the family for visitation Tuesday, February 7, 2017 at 10:00 a.m., with the funeral service to follow at 12 noon in the chapel of Carter-Conley Funeral Home. Graveside services will begin at 2:00 p.m. at Houston National Cemetery under the direction of Carter-Conley Funeral Home. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations may be made in Margaret's memory to the National Kidney Foundation or a charity of your choice.

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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

ASK THE EXPERT

Diamond Jim: "What is the birthstone for February?"



ASK DIAMOND JIM

FEBRUARY'S BIRTHSTONE IS AMETHYST

For individuals with February birthdays, the amethyst makes a perfect birthstone. This month is often cold, dark and short for many people around the world, so the amethyst—which is often associated with qualities of peace, courage and stability—is the right gem for individuals who need a little extra warmth and strength this time of year. A beautiful purple quartz, the amethyst is an easily recognizable gem, but you may not know everything about it just yet! Take a look at the links below to learn more about the amethyst.

AMETHYST OVERVIEW

Amethyst is purple quartz and is a beautiful blend of violet and red that can be found in every corner of the earth. The name comes from the Ancient Greek, derived from the word "methustos," which means "intoxicated." Ancient wearers believed the gemstone could protect them from drunkenness. Amethyst, as previously mentioned, is composed of quartz, which is the second most abundant material found in the Earth's crust. Amethyst gets its color from irradiation, iron impurities and the presence of trace elements. Its hardness (a 7 on the Mohs scale) is the same as other quartz, which makes it a durable and lasting option for jewelry. While amethyst is most commonly recognized to be a purple color, the gemstone can actually range from a light pinkish violet to a deep purple that can read more blue or red, depending on the light. Sometimes, even the same stone can have layers or color variants, so the way the gemstone is cut is important to the way the color shows in a finished piece. Amethyst often occurs in geodes or in the cavities of granitic rocks. It can be found all over the world, including the United States, Canada, Brazil and Zambia. The amethyst is not only the February birthstone, it is also used to celebrate the 6th and 17th year of marriage.

AMETHYST HISTORY

Amethyst, the gemstone believed by ancient Greeks and Romans to ward off the intoxicating powers of Bacchus, also was said to keep the wearer clear-headed and quick-witted. Throughout history, the gemstone has been associated with many myths, legends, religions, and numerous cultures. English regalia were even decorated with amethysts during the Middle Ages to symbolize royalty. Amethyst jewelry has been found and dated as early as 2000 BC. It has been associated with many myths, legends, religions, and numerous cultures. Some historical accounts say that Saint Valentine had an amethyst ring carved with an image of Cupid. And for those familiar with Old Testament history, amethyst was one of the twelve gemstones that represented the twelve tribes of Israel. For many years, amethyst was held to be one of the most precious gemstones, often favored by royalty or exclusively by the clergy as a symbol for the deity of Christ. It was even held for many years in the same regard as the diamond. It wasn't until the discovery of more abundant supplies of amethyst that it became a gemstone enjoyed by more than just the wealthiest buyers. Many wearers of amethyst throughout history and even today prize the gem for its symbolism as well as its beauty. Leonardo da Vinci once said that amethyst helps to quicken intelligence and get rid of evil thoughts. Other qualities like peace, stability, courage and strength are said to be derived from this gemstone. Today, many wearers simply prize the amethyst for its beautiful shade and the way it complements both warm and cool colors.

HOW TO BUY AMETHYST

Whether you're purchasing an amethyst for yourself or a loved one, you're making an investment in beauty that will stand the test of time. Amethyst makes a great gift for individuals born in

February, or as a celebratory milestone for a 6th or 17th wedding anniversary. Of course, you're also welcome to purchase amethyst "just because." It's a beautiful gemstone that ranges in color from a light pinkish violet to a deep red or blue purple violet and complements a number of metals and settings. It's a durable gemstone that works well with warm or cool colors, so it's safe to say it goes well beyond special occasion jewelry and can be worn every day, as well. When looking to purchase amethyst, first visit a trusted jeweler, who is able to ensure that you have the best information to make a great purchase. Next, check the color of the stone. Amethyst often has "stripes" or layers of color from how and when it was formed, so it takes a skilled gemologist to cut and polish the stone to show the overall color of the stone evenly. Avoid brownish or rust colored tints to the stone and be careful the color is not too deep or it can appear black in some lights. Like diamonds, you can also look for clarity in an amethyst. Most gemologists will favor a richly colored stone with some minor inclusions (not eye-visible), since the color of this gem is so highly prized. In lighter colored amethysts, visible inclusions will greatly reduce the value of the gemstone. Since amethyst is relatively plentiful, the price differential in carat sizes isn't usually terribly significant, so this can be a great gemstone for statement jewelry pieces (though you may not be able to cost-effectively recreate some of Elizabeth Taylor's memorable amethyst jewelry or the "Kent Amethysts" owned by the British crown). Larger rings, earrings or pendants can make a stunning addition to a jewelry collection, but even smaller amethysts can be deeply and richly colored, making subtler pieces beautiful, too. 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 jmills@pineforestjewelry.com.

Sheldon ISD Board recognizes Operations Department Employees

Members of the Sheldon ISD school board recognized the district's Operations Department Employees of the Month for November at the Jan. 17 school board meeting in the Ney Administration Building Board Room. Pictured (from left) are Fred Rivas, School Board President; Gloria Sanchez, Custodial Employee of the Month; Kris Boring, Maintenance Employee of the Month; Peggy Reyna, Transportation Employee of the Month; and King Davis, SISD Superintendent.



Sheldon ISD Board recognizes Educators of the Month for January



Members of the Sheldon ISD school board recognized the district's Educators of the Month at the Jan. 17 school board meeting in the Ney Administration Building Board Room. Educators of the Month included (in alphabetical order) Stephanie Ashley Abner, Garrett Elementary; Abshire, Cravens ECA; Luz Cantu, Royalwood Elementary; Lauren Cardenas, Sheldon ECA; Sara Evans, Sheldon Elementary; Robyn Jones, C. E. King High School; Sandra Menchaca, C. E. King Middle School; Sheryl Saeed, Sheldon Early College High School; Ashley Villanon, Monahan Elementary; Natalie Vital, Null Middle School; and Atiya Wortham, Carroll Elementary. Also pictured are SISD School Board President Fred Rivas (left) and SISD Superintendent King Davis (right).

Campus 'Watt Watchers' recognized

Principals at Royalwood Elementary and Monahan Elementary received Sustainable School Awards at the January 17 Sheldon ISD Board meeting for running energy-efficient campus. Sheldon ISD Energy Services Manager and Ancillary Programs Manager Mike Malkowski surprised principals with monetary awards for their campuses as well as framed certificates. Pictured from left are Royalwood Elementary Principal Gail London; Sheldon ISD Energy Services Manager and Ancillary Programs Manager Mike Malkowski, and Monahan Elementary Principal Cheri Dixon.



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Published each Wednesday by GrafikPress Corp. Any erroneous statement which may appear will be corrected when brought to the attention of the publisher. Liability for errors is limited to the reprinting of the corrected version. Submissions are encouraged, in person, by mail, by Fax, or by email, to: northchannelstar@gmail.com

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Down: 1. Any of 150 in the Bible, 2. DeeJay's domain, 3. Starts, 4. Last few notes, 5. Battery terminals, 6. Jim at the Alamo, 7. Church service, 8. "The Greatest", 9. Kin of "i.e.", 10. -- out a living, 11. Homer's neighbor, 17. Bourgeois, to Brits, 21. Parsley serving, 23. Revue segments, 24. Conger or moray, 25. Roulette bet, 26. Mimic, 28. Request, 30. Sch. org., 31. Embrace, 32. Spring mo., 33. Bachelor's last words, 36. Needle case, 37. Corsage bloom, 40. Point of view, 42. Milk dispenser, 43. Moe's brother, 44. Rulebook compiler, 45. A "Desperate Housewife", 46. Director, 48. Doo follower, 49. Praise in verse, 50. Took the prize, 51. Peacock network.

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that Original Letters of Administration for Docket No. 454,164; Estate of WILLARD W. WICKLAND, Deceased; In Probate Court No. 4, of Harris County, Texas, Deceased, were issued on January 17, 2017.

ANNABEL WICKLAND

The residence address of the administrator is in Harris County, Texas. The mailing address is:

c/o Weston Cotten
5223 Garth Rd.
Baytown, TX 77521

All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them within the time and in the manner prescribed by law. Dated this February 2, 2017.

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HERITAGE MUSEUM

The Wall That Heals Vietnam Veterans Memorial Replica & Mobile Education Center. Cuero Municipal Park. February 9th-12th, 2017. Open to Public. Free admission. Open 24 hrs. A day. www.cueroheritagemuseum.org.

SPORTING EVENTS

The Yards of Cameron opening day! Pitch ceremony. Run the bases ages 4 to 9. Farmers market. Wiffle Ball Tournament. Home Run Derby. CH Yoe High Alumni Game! Saturday, February 18th 9am-4pm.

LOCAL FAIR

MOTHER EARTH NEWS FAIR! Bringing the magazine to life. Get Half-Price Admission Today at www.motherearthnews.com/store/offer/memfth3 *February 18-19, 2017

LOCAL RODEO

San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo. February 9-26. PRCA LARGE INDOOR RODEO. For full entertainment lineup and to purchase tickets, go to www.sarodeo.com. For information call 210-225-5851.

AVIATION

AIRLINE MECHANIC TRAINING - Get FAA certification. Approved for military benefits Financial Aid if qualified. Job placement assistance. Call Aviation Institute of Maintenance, 1-800-475-4102.

King Crossword

ACROSS

1. Paid player
4. Taxi
7. Expert
12. Potential syrup
13. Lennon's lady
14. Similar
15. Citric beverage
16. Underwent reduction
18. Jeremy of basketball
19. Tijuana toodles-oo
20. Rolling stone's lack
22. Poetic night-fall
23. Antitoxins -- de deux
29. Maintenance shape
31. Quibblers split these
34. Senorita's wiggle?
35. "Rabbit, Run" author
37. Feedbag morsel
38. Piratic quaff
39. Paving goop
41. "is life!"
45. Con game
47. Pair
48. Absolutely
52. Use a towel
53. Photoshop company
54. Reading matter, for short

DOWN

1. Any of 150 in the Bible
2. DeeJay's domain
3. Starts
4. Last few notes
5. Battery terminals
6. Jim at the Alamo
7. Church service
8. "The Greatest"
9. Kin of "i.e."
10. -- out a living
11. Homer's neighbor
17. Bourgeois, to Brits
21. Parsley serving
23. Revue segments
24. Conger or moray
25. Roulette bet
26. Mimic
28. Request
30. Sch. org.
31. Embrace
32. Spring mo.
33. Bachelor's last words
36. Needle case
37. Corsage bloom
40. Point of view
42. Milk dispenser
43. Moe's brother
44. Rulebook compiler
45. A "Desperate Housewife"
46. Director
48. Doo follower
49. Praise in verse
50. Took the prize
51. Peacock network

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