

NORTH CHANNEL STAR

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

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JULY 23, 2014

www.northchannelstar.com

CHANNEL CHATTER

North Channel Chamber events

COFFEE NETWORKING

The North Channel Area Chamber of Commerce will have a Free COFFEE NETWORKING event on Tuesday, July 29, 2014.

At this Networking Together meeting, you will have 30 seconds to talk about yourself or your organization. Also an opportunity to build business relationships and meet community leaders.

Networking will start at 9:30 a.m. at La Quinta Inn & Suites located at 5520 E. Sam Houston Pkwy N., Houston, TX. 77015.

Register at 713-450-3600 or blanca@ncchamber.com.

MONTHLY LUNCHEON

The North Channel Area Chamber of Commerce will hold their regular monthly luncheon on Friday, August 8 starting at 11:30 a.m.

The location will be the Jacinto City Town Center, 1025 Oates Road. Speaker will be Harris County Attorney Vince Ryan.

Reservations at 713-450-3600 or blanca@ncchamber.com before Aug. 5 at \$20, otherwise \$25 at the door.

Networking with Sen. Sylvia Garcia

WEDNESDAY, JULY 30

State Senator Sylvia Garcia will host a Networking Event at the Harris County John Phelps Courthouse Annex, 101 S. Richey Road, Pasadena, from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m.

Join Senator Sylvia Garcia for the East Harris Community Partner Networking Event. This event gives stakeholders, educators, and the community partners a chance to share ideas, voice concerns, and get to know the resources and providers available in the community.

RSVP to Derek Darnell at 713-453-5100 or email derek.darnell@senate.state.tx.us.

CIP Meeting

THURSDAY, AUGUST 7

The monthly meeting between the Community and Industrial Partners will take place at the Baggett Community Building, starting at 5:45 until 8:15. Contact Diane Sheridan for additional information, at 281-326-5253. The public is welcome.

GALENA PARK

Air quality report cites health dangers

GALENA PARK – Belinda Vasquez-St. John spoke to the city council at their last meeting on July 15, and summarized a report her organization, Air Alliance Houston, had just issued on air quality issues in Galena Park. A summary of the report follows:

“Galena Park, Texas is an environmental justice community of some 10,000 residents on the Houston Ship Channel. The community is surrounded by the ship channel; industry, particularly that associated with Houston petrochemical industry; rail lines; and high traffic roadways, including I-10 to the north and 610 to the west.



Belinda Vasquez-St. John places monitors at Galena Park City Hall.

Air Alliance Houston has been active in Galena Park for several years. It is a community in which concerns about pollution and public health

run high. However, a lack of resources and knowledge leads to very little public engagement on issues that impact environmental quality and health. Although citizens are worried about their health, there is little sense that they can personally affect change.

Air Alliance Houston and Global Community Monitor conducted a community health impact survey, and community mapping workshop, and a community air monitoring project. Air monitoring was conducted over the course of a year for fine particulate matter and elemental carbon, a surrogate for diesel pollution. The results of the yearlong community air monitoring project form the basis of this

report. An independent report was produced by a graduate student at the Rice University Department of Statistics.

Diesel pollution presents an unacceptable health risk in Galena Park. Cancer risk due to diesel pollution exposure may exceed 1 in 10,000. Fine particulate matter pollution may exceed federal health standards as well.

Galena Park must act now to reduce diesel and particulate matter pollution in order to protect its residents' health. We recommend aggressive steps to limit diesel pollution by banning older, dirty trucks and diverting trucks from Galena Park roads. We also recommend further testing to determine the extent of air

pollution in Galena Park, and its impacts.

Galena Park recently elected a new mayor and city council. This new administration has an opportunity to take a fresh look at the pollution challenges their residents face. It is our hope that Galena Park will work with the Port of Houston Authority, Harris County, and the City of Houston to address these challenges and protect the health of the citizens of Galena Park, Texas.”

In an accompanying hand-out, Air Alliance had the following recommendations to reduce pollution:

1. Truck Traffic should be

See AIR QUALITY, page 8

Supreme Court to define EPA “suit” for Waste Pits

AUSTIN – The Texas Supreme Court accepted certification from the Fifth Circuit Court to decide if the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) orders a company to clean up something, is that a “suit.” This will determine who pays for clean-up of the waste pits in the San Jacinto River.

The high court will hear this case of whether an insurer has to pay for lawsuits that are in fact administrative actions of government agencies in Texas law. At present, a number of such decisions have been made in Texas and throughout the nation. The decisions reached before have fallen

into three categories: those that require a formal complaint by the government agency, others saying if a letter has been issued by the agency that is like a suit, while others have determined that it may depend on how coercive the action is to the company before it is considered a suit.

Presented to the courts are documents that will allege that McGinnes Industrial Maintenance Corporation, a waste disposal company, removed waste from a paper mill and released it in three ponds adjacent to the San Jacinto River during the 1960s and early 1970s.

About then McGinnes pur-

chased commercial general liability policies from Phoenix Insurance Company and the Travelers Indemnity Company. The policies provided that the insurer “shall have the right and duty to defend any suit against [McGinnes] seeking damages on account of . . . property damage, even if any of the allegations of the suit are groundless, false or fraudulent, and may make such investigation and settlement of any claim or suit as it deems expedient.”

The policies in no way defined the term “suit.”

See EPA Suit Continued on page 5

Texas Democrat Representatives: “No troops to the Texas-Mexico border”

HOUSTON, Texas – Gov. Perry announced last Monday, July 21, his plans to deploy about 1,000 National Guard troops to the Texas-Mexico border since Obama’s administration is still struggling to deal with the influx of more than 50,000 unaccompanied minors, most from Central America, who have crossed into the United States in the last year.

After Gov. Perry made the announcement, several Texas Democrat Representatives expressed their disagreement.

“Our state leaders should not be using the humanitarian crisis along the border for their own political gamesmanship. Children are fleeing violence and abuse, and seeking a safe place. State leaders

have already requested \$1.3 million a week for the “border surge” of state troopers. Activating the Texas National Guard and militarizing the Rio Grande border does not address the problem given that these immigrants are voluntarily turning themselves in and according to local law enforcement there has been no increase in crime. Let’s continue to work to find a substantive solution to this complex situation and stop sending political messages,” said State Rep. Ana Hernandez.

Senator Sylvia Garcia stated: “While I agree that the border should be secure, today’s actions by the Governor are

See TROOPS DEPLOYMENT, page 8

GALENA PARK

EPA to hold Aug. 5 public hearing

Community, public health, and environmental advocates to provide testimony

The EPA will hold hearings in Houston on a key proposal to strengthen emissions standards for refineries and improve air quality around them. As part of a nationwide effort to get input, the EPA scheduled two hearings in heavily affected cities - one in Los Angeles, the other in Houston on Aug. 5.

EPA’s proposal would, for the first time, require monitoring of air concentrations of benzene around the fence-line perimeter of refineries to assure that emissions are controlled and these results would be available to the public. When the proposed updates are fully implemented, the EPA estimates toxic air emissions, including benzene, toluene, and xylene, will be reduced by 5,600 tons per year. Volatile organic compound emissions would be cut by approximately 52,000 tons per year.

The Healthy Port Communities Coalition will attend the hearing, providing testimony and comment from physicians and residents affected by heavy

pollution around refineries. HPCC includes Air Alliance Houston, Texas Organizing Project (TOP), Texas Environmental Advocacy Services (TEJAS), and Public Citizen’s Texas office.

The hearing will be held from 9 am to 8 pm on Aug. 5 at Alvin D. Baggett Recreation Building, 1302 Keene Street in Galena Park.

The current federal standards fail to protect public health because they are weak, lack monitoring requirements, are outdated and have big loopholes, like exemptions that allow for far greater emissions of hazardous pollution during malfunctions. Communities face unlimited, unmonitored flaring, or waste gas burning, which is another way excessive pollutants get into the air.

Communities often have little or no information on what they are breathing. People living in these areas just see extreme flaring light up the sky, smell or learn of pollution

spikes, feel unexpected health problems, and fear accidents and explosions. Studies have shown that emissions and health risks are vastly underestimated by as many as 100 times what is being reported to the EPA.

Communities of color are disproportionately affected. Half of the people who are at the greatest risk of cancer from refinery pollution are black, Latino or Native American and these groups have at least twice the cancer risk from exposure to pollution from refineries that white Americans face.

EPA was taken to court for failing to comply with the Clean Air Act and now they must address these problems with a more protective standard. The law requires EPA to prevent unacceptable health risk and assure that all sources follow the best practices of the industry to reduce pollution.

See EPA MEETING, page 6

ASTRODOME PROPOSAL CRITICIZED BY EMMETT:

Demolition plan called “silly”



The iconic “DOME” may be converted into a green area like the one shown in this diagram after County leaders recently expressed that they are open to consider a \$66 million plan devised by the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo and the NFL’s Houston Texans to demolish the Astrodome and become a green area like Discovery Green in downtown.

Photo courtesy of Gensler

See DEMOLITION PLAN CALLED SILLY story on page 8

COMMUNITY NEWS



Students receive CPR kits

Seventh grade athletes at Baytown Junior School show off the CPR kits they received from Laurie Terry (back, third from left), vice president of Houston Methodist San Jacinto Hospital, and Donna Gares (right), chief executive officer and president, as they showed them the basics of CPR. Student participants are (bottom, l to r) Miranda Rull, Brianna Velfling, Haleigh Carpenter, Abigail Gomez, (top, l to r) Jaden Svoda, Breanna Moody, Faith Strobe, Mariah Cortez and Eileann Avila. Houston Methodist San Jacinto Hospital donated more than 100 CPR kits to Baytown Junior School students.

Motorcyclist dies in a head-on accident in Highlands

HIGHLANDS, Texas – Last Saturday night a motorcyclist died and another ended in critical condition after a head-on crash. The accident happened around 8:15 p.m. near the intersection of Barbers Hill Road and Danek Road. According to police reports, a motorcycle driver was speeding eastbound on Barbers Hill Road and entered the west-bound lanes to go around two slower-moving cars. As he was traveling in the oncoming lanes, another motorcyclist was driving toward him and the two crashed head-on. The motorcyclist passing



One of the two motorcycles laying on the ground on Barbers Hill Road after the head-on crash.

the cars was pronounced dead at the scene; the other driver was taken by LifeFlight to Herman Memorial Hermann Hospital in critical condition.

Teachers honored at GCCISD education foundation students choice awards

By Susan Passmore

Fifteen Goose Creek CISD teachers across the District were honored at the recent fifth annual Goose Creek CISD Education Foundation Students Choice Awards Banquet. The event took place at the Woodforest Bank Tower Club at Royal Purple Raceway Park and included dinner as well as entertainment by the Goose Creek Memorial High School Orchestra under the direction of Reuben Chance.

Earlier in the year, seniors from Goose Creek Memorial, IMPACT, Robert E. Lee and Ross S. Sterling high schools submitted letters to the Goose Creek CISD Education Foundation nominating teachers who had made an impact on their lives. Fifteen teachers were selected to attend the Students Choice Awards. Each teacher received a plaque and gift card, along with a video by Carrie Pryor-Newman in the GCCISD Communications Department commemorating the event. The nominating students received gift cards and a video.

"This is one of my favorite school events every year," said Sandra Bell, vice president of marketing/events for the Goose Creek CISD Education Foundation. "Teachers deserve to be recognized for making a difference in the lives of their students."

Many students nominated their high school teachers, but several wished to honor elementary and junior school teachers who had helped them on the road to success. Pablo Chavez, who recently graduated as salutatorian from IMPACT Early College High School, receiving an associate degree from Lee College his junior year, expressed his gratitude to Cedar Bayou Junior School's Carlos Zelaya, former language arts teacher at Lamar Elementary School, for helping him overcome his language barrier and encouraging him to pursue his interest in math.

"He is one of the people who has impacted my life the most. When I began his class, it had only been a year since I migrated from my home country, Mexico," said Chavez. "He pushed me to the limit some days where I wanted to just quit and go back. But he was always there to help me finish whatever I did not understand."



Students from Goose Creek Memorial High School honor their teachers at the recent Goose Creek CISD Education Foundation Students Choice Awards. Pictured are (front, l to r) Hiral Waghela, Hannah Alfred, Lori Yarbrough, Connor Clegg, Scott Griffin, (back row, l to r) Sharron Carroll, Shelby Schlesselman and Tim Fox.

Jason Sartor, who graduated fourth in the Class of 2014 from Ross S. Sterling High School, nominated Candice Dotson, speech therapist at Stephen F. Austin Elementary School, for helping him overcome his speech problems.

"Speech was my constant battle as an elementary student. I was able to be successful and overcome this struggle through the help of Mrs. Dotson," said Sartor.

Sartor has had the opportunity to serve as a delegate to the NRA's Texas Youth Education Summit (YES) at the State Capitol, presenting speeches and debates. He is an ambassador for YES and has spoken before more than 500 people.

"This is quite a feat, accomplished only with Mrs. Dotson's help, for a boy who did not really speak at all until age eight," said Sartor.

Over the past five years, 75 teachers have been celebrated at the Students Choice Awards. For the 2013-2014 school year, Goose Creek Memorial High School students and their teachers were Hannah Alfred and teacher Lori Yarbrough from GCM, Connor Clegg and teacher Scott Griffin from GCM, Shelby Schlesselman and teacher Tim Fox from GCM, and Hiral Waghela and teacher Sharron Carroll from Lorenzo De Zavala Elementary School.

Students from IMPACT Early College High School and their

teachers were Pablo Chavez and teacher Carlos Zelaya from Cedar Bayou Junior School, formerly from Lamar Elementary; Shelby Sylvester and teacher Susan Hillin from Stephen F. Austin Elementary School; Gicela Trejo and teacher Ashley Mehrens from IMPACT, and April Watkins and teacher Wendy West from IMPACT.

Robert E. Lee High School students and their teachers were Rosa Dominguez and teacher Jennifer DeHart from Lee and Asucena Melendez and teacher Sherry Burr.

Ross S. Sterling High School students and their teachers were Alfredo Guerrero and teacher Sandra Cole from David Crockett Elementary School, Savannah McDaniel and teacher Anissa Cantin from Cedar Bayou Junior School, Karli Ramirez and teacher Kelley Start from Sterling, Jason Sartor and teacher Candice Dotson, and Eric Valverde and teacher Betty Benskin from Sterling.

"Teachers play an important role in the lives of their students. We appreciate the Goose Creek CISD Education Foundation for allowing our students to honor these deserving teachers who have helped prepare them for the future," said Dr. Salvador Cavazos, GCCISD superintendent.

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CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

JULY
North Channel Library events
-Thursday, July 24, 10:30 am Baby time; 4 pm Teens-Bollywood dance moves.
-Monday, July 28, 2:30 pm Monday Movie Madness (tickets required)
-Tuesday, July 29, 10:30 am Toddler time; 1:30 pm Preschool story time; 4 pm teens-The Marshmallow Project.
-Wednesday, July 30, 2:30 pm Puppet Pizzazz!; 4:30 pm Tween-Time Skins and skulls.
-Thursday, July 31, 10:30 am Baby Time; 4 pm Teens-Molecule Build.
Library Hours: Sunday: Closed; Monday 1-8 pm; Tuesday-Thursday 10 am - 8pm; Friday 1-6 pm; Saturday 10 am - 5 pm. Library is located at 15741 Wallisville Rd., Houston, TX. 77049. Call 281-457-1631 for more information.

JULY
Galena Park Library events
-Thursday, July 24, 11 am Baby time; 3 pm Mrs. Frizzle's Extraordinary Bees.
-Monday, July 28, 3 pm Teen time Game Day.
-Tuesday, July 29, 1 pm Internet Basics II; 4 pm Internet Basics II.
-Wednesday, July 30, 11 am Children's Story Time.
-Thursday, July 31, 11 am Baby Time; 3 pm Paleontology (please register for classes at circulation).
-Monday, August 4, 3 pm Teen Time Tangle in Art & Zentagle art making.

Please call the library at 713-450-0982 for more details. The library is located at 1500 Keene St. Galena Park, TX. 77547.

SATURDAY NIGHTS
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.

ASK DIAMOND JIM



Diamond Jim... My future mother-in-law gave me a beautiful string of pearls to wear on my wedding day. I was wondering why pearls are so often associated with weddings. Is there any history behind this? And why are pearls considered lucky?

According to the Cultured Pearl Information Center, pearls were most likely discovered thousands of years ago by people searching for food along the seashore. And thanks to their fabulous shimmering iridescence, this organic gem has been prized ever since. In one legend, Cleopatra is said to have dissolved a pearl in a glass of wine before drinking it, simply to win a wager with Marc Antony that she could consume the wealth of an entire country in just one meal. But in a variation of that tale, the dissolved pearl was intended to help her seduce Antony. In ancient Rome, the pearl was the ultimate symbol of wealth and social standing, while the ancient Greeks associated the pearl with love and marriage, and unrivaled beauty. The Greeks also believed the pearl would promote marital harmony (Are you listening, guys?) and prevent newlywed brides from crying. During the Dark Ages, knights wore pearls on the battlefield, believing they had the magic to protect them from harm. During the Renaissance, pearls were so highly regarded that several European countries passed laws forbidding anyone outside the nobility from wearing them. And during European expansion in the New World, discovery of pearls in Central American

waters meant that pearls, like gold, added to the wealth of Europe. In the early 1900s, the advent of culturing pearls brought prices down to mainstream levels. But even today, pearls are still worn by royalty, especially at weddings. Queen Elizabeth II wore them at her wedding in 1947, as did Sarah Ferguson. And here in the United States, Jacqueline Bouvier wore a strand the day she became Mrs. Kennedy. From "The Knot" magazine...www.TheKnot.com. As to the folklore concerning pearls and luck... Cultured or freshwater pearls are considered to offer the power of love, money, protection, and luck. Pearls are thought to give wisdom through experience, to quicken the laws of karma and to cement engagements and love relationships. They are thought to keep children safe. Early Chinese myths told of pearls falling from the sky when dragons fought. Ancient legend says that pearls were thought to be the tears of the gods and the Greeks believed that wearing pearls would promote marital bliss and prevent newlywed women from crying. If you have questions pertaining to jewelry, watches, diamonds, precious stones, precious metals, and other questions related to the jewelry industry, email jmmills@pineforestjewelry.com.

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North Shore Rotary supports College



HOUSTON - At the regularly scheduled meeting of the San Jacinto College Board of Trustees on Monday, July 7, 2014, the North Shore Rotary Club Foundation presented \$25,000 to the San Jacinto College Foundation to set up an endowed scholarship, with plans to add to the endowment in the future. Those attending the check presentation include, from left, San Jacinto College Provost and North Shore Rotarian Dr. Bill Raffetto; San Jacinto College Chancellor Dr. Brenda Hellyer; Dr. Allatia Harris, San Jacinto College Vice Chancellor of Strategic Initiatives and North Shore Rotary Club President; Ruth Keenan, San Jacinto College Foundation Executive Director; San Jacinto College Board Chairman and North Shore Rotarian Dan Mims; and Kevin Morris, San Jacinto College South Campus Dean of Business and Technology and North Shore Rotarian. Photo by: Rob Vanya.

French Limited Site under review

CROSBY- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) are in the process of reevaluating the ground water remedy chosen in the 1988 Record of Decision for the French Limited Site based on investigation and performance of the former selected remedy. A Public Meeting is to be held August 4 from 6:30 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. at the Harris County Public Library, Crosby Branch at 135 Hare Road. EPA and TCEQ representatives will participate and the meeting will be followed by a question and answer session. This re-evaluation is only about changes to the ground water remedy and not about changes to lagoon sludges and soil remedy selected in the 1988 Record of Decision. A Proposed Plan recommends preferred remedial alternatives for the Site ground water and identifies steps to be taken for continual protection of health and the environment. The idea is to contain ground water contaminant plumes into two ground water zones, and prevent exposure to contaminated ground water by implementing restrictions on

See French Limited Continued on Page 5

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Pineforest Jewelry, Uvalde Rd
San Jacinto College North, Student Center & Library
Fonteno Court House, Wallisville Rd
East Houston Hospital, I-10
Foodtown, Uvalde Rd
Sellers Brothers Market, Uvalde Rd
YMCA, Wallisville Rd
Fiesta Market, I-10
HPD Substation, I-10
Federal Road Barber Shop, Uvalde @ Halifax
Panera Restaurant, Beltway 8 @ Wallisville
CiCi's Pizza, Uvalde @ Woodforest
Kroger's, Woodforest @ Beltway 8
Fuddruckers, Normandy Rd
Walgreens, Maxey Rd @ Woodforest
Senator Sylvia Garcia office, in Woodforest Bank Bldg
North Channel Library, Wallisville Rd
North Shore High School, at Wallisville Rd
Walgreens, 155111 Wallisville Rd
United Comm. Credit Union, Normandy
United Comm. Credit Union, Wallisvilleß

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

SHELDON
Sheldon ISD Admin Bldg.
C. E. King High School, Tidwell Rd
Kroger's, Normandy at Woodforest
Parkway Feed, CE King Blvd
Community Bank of Texas, Tidwell Road

CLOVERLEAF
HC WCID #36, Hollywood St
Grayson Community Center, Corpus Christi St
Galena Park Admin Building, Beltway 8 at Woodforest
CommunityBank of Texas, I-10 E @ Freeport
Gatti's Pizza, Uvalde
North Channel Assistance Ministries, Bonham @ Freeport

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

GALENA PARK
Baggett Community Center, Keene St
Galena Park High School, Keene St
Galena Park City Hall, Clinton Drive
Galena Park Library, Keene St
United Comm. Credit Union, 16th St.

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OPINION PAGE

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STATE CAPITAL
HIGHLIGHTS

By Ed Sterling

Dewhurst appoints
Senate Finance chair

AUSTIN — Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst on July 17 appointed Sen. Jane Nelson, R-Flower Mound, as chair of the powerful, state budget-writing Senate Finance Committee. The two-year state budget totals close to \$200 billion.

Nelson, the first woman in the history of the state to chair the committee, called the appointment “a tremendous honor and responsibility” and pledged that under her leadership the committee would “keep the Texas miracle moving full steam ahead.” She has served as a member of the committee for seven legislative sessions, including the current session. The committee soon will be at work, as state agency legislative appropriation requests pour in.

Dewhurst, who presides over the Texas Senate, also named additional members of the committee: Sens. Brian Birdwell, R-Granbury; Kelly Hancock, R-North Richland Hills; Robert Nichols, R-Jacksonville; and Sen. Charles Schwertner, R-Georgetown. Those senators replace Sens. Tommy Williams, R-The Woodlands, who resigned to take a position with Texas A&M; Bob Deuell, R-Greenville, who was defeated in the March Republican primary elections; Robert Duncan, R-Lubbock, who resigned to become chancellor of Texas Tech University; and Glenn Hegar, R-Katy, who is running for state comptroller.

Dewhurst also appointed Nelson and three senators to another powerful panel, the Legislative Budget Board. The three are Sens. Kevin Eltife, R-Tyler; Craig Estes, R-Wichita Falls; and Juan “Chuy” Hinojosa, D-McAllen. The board is a body of five members of the Senate and five members of the House of Representatives. The body sets the constitutional spending limit and develops the draft appropriations bill.

Dewhurst’s term of office ends Dec. 31. Sen. Dan Patrick, R-Houston, and Sen. Leticia Van de Putte, D-San Antonio, are vying to be the state’s next lieutenant governor. Whoever wins will have the power to appoint all Senate committees.

Election law case is heard

A state House redistricting plan passed by the 2011 Texas Legislature was challenged in a San Antonio U.S. district court last week.

The lawsuit, brought by minority voting rights plaintiffs and joined by the U.S. Department of Justice, alleges the Texas Legislature intentionally diluted the voting strength of minorities in several districts. Also in question is whether Texas should return to the federal voting rights law’s “preclearance” requirement that the state had been subject to since the law was passed in 1965 — until 2013 — when federal preclearance of election laws passed by covered entities such as Texas was struck down in a 5-4 decision by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Shelby County (Alabama) v. Holder*.

Later this summer, the court will hear other cases over the Texas Legislature’s 2013 House redistricting plan and 2011 and 2013 congressional redistricting plans. A decision by the three-judge court panel is to be rendered after all of the cases have been heard.

Texas adds jobs in June

Texas Workforce Commission on July 18 announced the state economy added 19,100 seasonally adjusted total non-farm jobs in June for a total of 371,000 jobs added since June 2013.

Texas’ seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in June was 5.1 percent. In June 2013 the rate was 6.4 percent. Nationally, the unemployment rate for June 2014 was 6.1 percent, an improvement of 1.4 percent over the previous year, as calculated by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Ranger reaches high rank

Texas Department of Public Safety on July 17 announced the promotion of Texas Ranger Wende Wakeman to the rank of lieutenant, making her the highest-ranking woman in Texas Ranger history, according to an agency news release.

The promotion is effective Aug. 1. Wakeman joined the DPS as a highway patrol trooper in 1998. She became a DPS narcotics sergeant in 2003 and moved to the Texas Rangers in 2008.

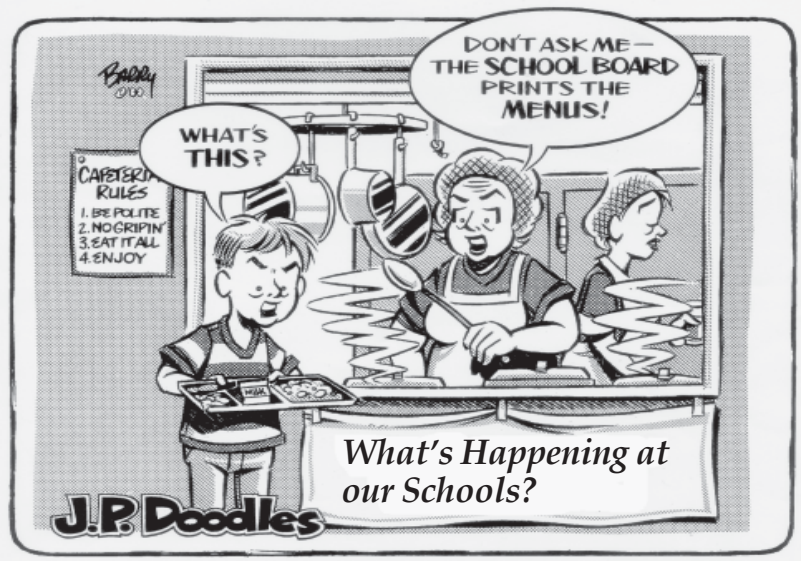
Council rejects proposed ban

Denton City Council, at its July 15-16 meeting, voted down a citizen-driven proposed ordinance to ban hydraulic fracturing by the oil and gas industry within city limits. A citizen petition, however, gained enough signatures to put the proposal on the November election ballot.

Court OKs admissions policy

The U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, in a 2-1 decision on July 15, ruled the University of Texas’ method of achieving racial diversity in selecting incoming freshmen did not violate the constitutional rights of a white student who did not gain admission to the institution in 2008 and sued.

Heard by the U.S. Supreme Court in 2012, the case was remanded to the Fifth Circuit for “strict scrutiny,” that is, to determine if the university’s policies were necessary and effective toward enrolling a “critical mass” of minority students.



A Call to Arms

7-22-2014
Open Letter to the Public
“A Call To Arms”

Our school district is in trouble and it is up to you to save it. Yes, you. A few brave souls have talked to, written, called, or emailed the seven Board members recently to ask for action regarding the current Superintendent. 400 or more expressed their opinion by personally attending the Board meeting on July 14. Now, the Board members need to hear from the rest of the thousands of you who care about the future of GCCISD. You need to demand that they stop the damage that is being done by the Superintendent’s personnel actions, as it is negatively affecting our schools, our principals, our teachers, our administrators, our counselors, our operations and support staff, and most importantly our children. Very

★

LETTERS

To the Editor

simply, we made a mistake when we hired Salvador Cavazos and then allowed him to dismantle the very fabric and soul of our district. You need to demand that your school Board do the right thing, right now, and terminate this Superintendent’s employment with GCCISD immediately.

Dr. Cavazos recently told the Baytown Sun that he and the Board were going to “assess the concerns” that they heard at the July 14 Board meeting. This is such a ridiculous and condescending statement for him to make since what the people said was that they want a “change in the position of Superintendent of GCCISD”, not an analysis of their concerns. The assessment” has been made by the people of Baytown and Highlands.

Reader alert... IRS phone scam targets everyone!!

MEDICARE COLUMN

By Toni King

To My Readers of the Toni King Medicare Column: This is a national alert to warn everyone about the largest scam of its kind which is targeting everyone nationwide. The scam is the IRS phone scam. It does not matter what age, if you are over 65 or a business owner or a stay at home mother. These false taxmen tricksters are calling everyone all day long. Below is what to look for and please inform your elderly family members or friends what to do.

Governmental authorities are surprised that the bogus (fake) IRS agent phone scam has continued long after the April 15th tax filing season is long over. This scam is working for these evil con

artists because if they were not receiving money from innocent bystanders, then they would stop doing this.

This is how the scam operates and knowing the signs can stop you, your friends or an innocent loved one from being taken advantage of financially.

These fraudsters pose as agents of the IRS (who really likes to talk with the IRS) or the U.S. Treasury Department in “live” phone calls that threaten arrest or deportation, including the seizure of property, business- and drivers license.

Now these villains have incorporated robocalls (automatic phone dialers) in this widespread attack on your money.

Let me explain the ways in which these criminals try and swindle your hard earned money from you.

-Scammers claim that the phone call recipients owe money for back taxes.

-The call has the IRS toll-free phone number of 1/800-829-1040. You see the IRS is calling; you will answer the phone immediately. Instead of letting your answering machine screen your calls.

-The scammers all have American names such as John Smith, Sean White etc and many of the callers have foreign accents.

-Beware...because their biggest play is that they may accurately cite the last 4 digits of your Social Security numbers. Public officials have no idea how these criminals are able to obtain

Now, to those who receive their paychecks from the District, it is clear to us that the vast majority of the current and past employees of GCCISD believe that the district is going in the wrong direction but cannot speak up for fear of retaliation from the Superintendent. Our input to you is “we have your back”. So, please immediately send an email to the Board members and tell them what is in your heart and on your mind. If all you guys that have the personal knowledge of the damage that is being inflicted by Dr. Cavazos will speak up, then no one can be singled out for retaliation. There is indeed power in numbers and especially when you are right and righteous. Finally, we would like to see 1,000 folks attend the next Board meeting scheduled for next Monday, July 28, to reinforce to the Board that we want action now. The meeting starts at 6:30 PM- please get there by 5:30 PM.

Mike Wilson

your last 4 number of your Social Security card.

-Hanging up on the low life’s only causes them to follow up with an email with similar threats.

-You might receive another phone call with the same or another imposter using a different American name threatening arrest for failure to pay the supposedly owed money.

-They are asking you to pay them with Green Dot MoneyPak or a wire transfer... Payment methods the real IRS does not use. The IRS does not take credit cards by phone.

If you receive a call like this, then call the IRS at 1/800-829-1040 and report what has happened. Currently over \$1million dollars have been scammed and this is growing.

-The IRS will send a letter if they need to contact you about back taxes or an IRS problems.

-Call the IRS or credit bureau if your last 4 or your Social Security card are made public, to help reduce identity thief.

-Remember do not give anyone any personal information about yourself over the phone.

-Confused about Medicare and Social Security workshop Tuesday, July 29th at 2:00-4:00 pm. Join Toni King at her new Toni Says Houston office at 10998 S. Wilcrest Dr, Suite 120, Houston, TX 77099. RSVP 832-800-4674. Reservations are required because seating is limited to 20.

★

LETTERS

To the Editor

What’s
Happening
to Our
Schools?
It’s not
good

Dear Editor,

My name is Dickie Woods. I came to the delightful little town of Highlands about 30 years ago. I saw good people, a great school system, little traffic and awesome landscape. I bought some properties and got involved in the community and started some businesses. I took leadership roles in Rotary, the Chamber of Commerce, and Water District # 1. I have been a supporter of the Volunteer Fire Department and the School District with donations and participated in Partner’s In Education and the Goose Creek Education Foundation.

At one time, I had four grandkids in GCCISD. Now, I have two. One graduated and is in college (my oldest) and one moved away because of a job change by her dad. I never took time to personally get involved in the schools other than with the Chamber or Rotary. I didn’t see the need until this past year. I was asked a couple of months ago, as a chamber director, to represent the Highlands Community on the Citizens Bond Advisory Committee. I filled out the application and was accepted, so that began my involvement with the administration. Now, I am hearing more about what is happening in the District and it is disturbing.

A couple of years ago, the Board made a change in upper management that brought about a different philosophy and leadership style. What had been a casual, community oriented, family atmosphere has become one of uncertainty and bullying (akin to what we have in Washington). Teachers and administrators who have spent their lives in this district, building programs for students and in many cases their own families, are being shoved aside or forced out to make way for staff with often times less qualifications and little or no investment in the district. Why? No one will answer this question. The Board needs to look closely at why these changes are taking place? What are the benefits to the district here? And the answer is not new young talent in many cases.

GCCISD may have become a victim of synchronicity. I think the Board should address this and now would be the best time, not after we have lost more of the great talent we have remaining.

Dickie Woods
July 21, 2014

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LIFESTYLE

French Limited

Continued from page 3

access or use of contaminated water within the defined boundary. Finally, more monitoring wells and short-term monitoring to verify the proposed Defined Boundary; conduct long-term monitoring to ensure that the contaminant plumes are not expanding. Along with those two steps comes the promise of an extensive evaluation of data periodically and then take appropriate contingency measures as needed.

Located near the San Jacinto River at Old Beaumont Highway and Gulf Pump Road, the French Limited Site was a sand quarry in the 1950s and 1960s that left a 6-acre sand pit. The location then accepted industrial waste material from 1966 until 1971 taking in an estimated 90 million gallons of chemical waste, transforming it into a lagoon. This site is within the San Jacinto River flood plain in a floodway subject to potential flooding. PCBs, arsenic, volatile organic compounds, benzene and DNAPLs have been found in the soil.

So, after taking out con-

taminated ground water, remaining contamination was to weaken to levels below the federal and state drinking water levels. From 1992 until 1996, a ground water pump and treat system was in place working on affected water bearing zones. Since 1996 ground water monitoring has been performed to document if residual ground water contaminants can meet drinking water levels. No, it is not as safe as drinking water.

Those parties named as potentially responsible for the pollution formed the French Limited Task Group in 1988. The French Limited Task Group has investigated and implemented remedies at the Site but hazardous substances remain in the ground water at the Site are addressed in the new plan.

The plan is waive drinking water levels in the two zones. Prevent installing wells nearby and do statutory reviews every five years. The pump and treat remedy previously used are not capable of achieving results safe for drinking water.

EPA Suit

Continued from page 1.

contending that it had contributed to the hazardous waste contamination at the site.

The EPA demanded that McGinnes make reimbursement, prevent further contamination, and that the company fund a Remediation/Investigation/Feasibility Study.

When the company presented this to their insurance companies, insurers indicated these were not law-suits but government suits. McGinnes then filed a declaratory judgment action seeking a ruling. They contended that a defense was owed to them based on the policy as well as payment for more than \$2 million in attorneys' fees from the start of the action.

A federal district court judge granted summary judgment for the insurers, determining that the EPA CERCLA Action was not a suit triggering the duty to defend. So the company appealed to the Fifth Circuit Court with the argument that "suit" was ambiguous in this contest but insurers argued a "suit" was a court proceeding.

Royalty in the Barrett Station Homecoming Parade



The Queen and King of Barrett Station grace Saturday's parade down Main Street last Saturday there were three other queens for Barrett Station as well.



PARADE UNITS in the Barrett Homecoming celebration. Here are the Crosby Middle School Cheer Steppers.

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Congratulations to Brian and Chrissa Teel for Yard of the Month for July! This photo was taken Wednesday July 9th at the Teel Home on East Canal in Highlands. What beautiful hard work they have put in!

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Phillipians 4:13

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COMMUNITY NEWS

GALENA PARK

Teachers attend training program with Arkema scientists



Pictured (l/r): Kim Marak, Arkema Science Teacher Program Director, Leticia Alvarado, Thomas Hinckley, Arkema Training Specialist, Nemio Carpio, Cheryl Stapp, Arkema Logistics Clerk, Karen Bernal, Milagros De Larrazabal, Amalia Torres, and Jessie Angelle.

Arkema, an international leader in specialty chemical and performance materials, invited six talented GPISD teachers to participate in the Arkema Science Teacher Program, held July 8th through 10th. The three day Arkema Science Teacher Program paired three sets of partner teachers with Arkema scientists to explore a professionally-developed, grade-specific science experiment kit. Each kit contains up to eight weeks

of exciting and engaging classroom instruction material. Teachers spent three days along side Arkema scientists exploring their kits and gaining valuable insight as to how to apply the concepts of weather and environmental systems to their classroom. At the conclusion of the intense training program, the kits are donated to the teachers' for their classroom use. Arkema also made a \$500 donation to each of the three selected campuses to

help enhance their science program.

Leticia Alvarado and Nemio Carpio from Jacinto City Elementary (JCE), Karen Bernal and Jessie Angelle from Woodland Acres Elementary (WAE), and Milagros De Larrazabal and Amalia Torres from Cloverleaf Elementary (CLF) had an amazing experience and felt very fortunate with the opportunities Arkema provided.

East Houston Regional Medical Center welcomes Dr. Naveed Zafar

Houston, TX, June 2014 - HCA Affiliated East Houston Regional Medical Center (EHRMC) is pleased to welcome Dr. Naveed Zafar, General Surgeon.

Dr. Zafar completed his Surgical Residency at Seton Hall University, St. Francis Medical Center in Trenton, NJ, and served as Surgical Chief Resident there as well. He followed up with a Fellowship in Minimally Invasive Surgery at the Texas Endosurgery Institute in San Antonio, Texas. Before moving to East Houston Regional Medical Center, he held the position of Vice Chief of Medical Staff at South Texas

Regional Medical Center.

Dr. Zafar maintains several professional memberships including American College of Surgeons, American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons, Society of American Gastrointestinal and Endoscopic Surgeons and Association of Physicians of Pakistani-descent of North America where he served as Secretary of the South Central Texas Chapter.

He brings a great deal of professional medical training and surgical experience to the North Channel area and is currently practicing at Surgical Associates: Greater Houston, 1140 Westmont Dr,



Dr. Naveed Zafar

Houston. Please join with us in welcoming Dr. Naveed Zafar to East Houston Regional Medical Center.

EPA MEETING,

Continued from page 1

The EPA's proposed standards

The agency has proposed new standards for refineries that would significantly limit exposure to these hazards by removing 5,600 tons per year of toxic air pollutants from communities' air, along with 52,000 tons of volatile organic compounds, and 700,000 metric tons of greenhouse gases (carbon dioxide equivalent). The proposed standard would dra-

matically reduce the health threats, including cancer risk for at least one million people, while also reducing the pollution all nearby communities must breathe.

There are significant changes in this rulemaking, including:

-Community fence-line air monitoring and a fence-line benzene standard for the first time, which would require refineries to measure toxic air pollution at the property line as it goes into the local community's air. Monitoring data will be made publicly available for communities to use. If benzene levels exceed the fence-line

standard, EPA is requiring a plan for corrective action.

-New monitoring and combustion efficiency requirements for flaring (or the burning of waste gas) which is, too often, used routinely and which creates harmful new pollution.

-Tighter control requirements on emissions from various parts of refineries like delayed coker units and storage tanks, which are major contributors to the toxic air pollution in communities near refineries.

-Removal of the unlawful loopholes in the existing standards, so that refineries can no longer get away scot-free with violations during startups, shutdowns, and malfunctions.

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28-2

LEGAL NOTICE

Crosby Independent School District Invitation for Bids Sale of 23.918 Acres of Land

LEGAL NOTICE

Fred Fargo at 713-455-0246. Any legal questions should be directed to Maureen Singleton at 713-554-6750.

LEGAL NOTICE

Crosby Independent School District Invitation for Bids Sale of 2.4 Acres of Land

The Crosby Independent School District (CISD) is soliciting sealed bids from interested parties for the sale of a tract of land containing 2.4 acres out of the Restricted Reserve "A", in Block 1 of Newport Elementary, an addition in Harris County, Texas according to the plat recorded under Film Code No. 526050 of the Map Records of Harris County, Texas such property being located at the northwest corner of N. Diamondhead Boulevard and FM 2100 (Crosby-Huffman Road) in Crosby, Harris County, Texas. The bid documents may be picked up weekdays between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. beginning July 10, 2014 at the CISD Superintendent's Office at 706 Runneburg Road, Crosby, Texas 77532. Interested parties also may contact Fred Fargo at 713-455-0246 to obtain a copy of the bid package.

All bids should be completed in accordance with the bid instructions, sealed and returned to the Superintendent's Office on or before 5:00 p.m. (local time) on August 18, 2014 and will be publicly opened and read aloud at that time. CISD reserves the right to reject any or all bids for the above-described property. Any questions about the property should be directed to Maureen Singleton at 713-554-6750.

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ASTRODOME:
Demolition plan
called “silly”

HOUSTON, Texas – Last Thursday, July 17, 2014 Judge Ed Emmett called “silly” a new proposed plan to demolish the Astrodome and replace it with a design for a park-like green space with structures.

The Houston Texans and the Livestock Show and Rodeo have proposed to convert the iconic “Dome” into a green area, which they say will be like Discovery Green in Downtown Houston. The design was shown with renderings by the architectural firm, Gensler Associates.

Even though there is not a specific proposal nor is one under consideration by Harris County Commissioners Court, Judge Emmett said that demolishing the dome could be a waste of a valuable taxpayers asset. He noted that the partners that proposed this new scheme did not say how much money they were willing to put into its construction, and did not have a real use in mind for the space. They said the preliminary cost of this scheme was \$66 million.

Most importantly, they proposers did not say how long the “park” would remain, and whether there were any guarantees that it would not someday be removed in favor of parking or other uses.

“The Astrodome is the only building in the world that’s 350,000 square feet of column-free space,” Judge Emmett said. “There are a lot of creative people in the world who would love to figure out ways to use the space if we just keep it and make it an option for them.”

Judge Emmett also mentioned that his plan last year for a \$217 million bond sale to turn the Astrodome into an events center was poorly managed and presented, and voters turned down the plan last fall. Nevertheless, his comment about the new scheme emphasized that “It’s just a silly plan.”

AIR QUALITY,
Continued from page 1

removed from Clinton Drive.

2. The Port of Houston should provide trucks with appropriate Waiting Areas.

3. Increase Planting specific trees and vegetation in areas between the Port and the population.

4. Paving and using roads within the Port rather than Clinton Drive for major truck traffic.

5. Reducing truck and ship emission idling by providing power through electrification.

The monitoring activity on which the report is based, was conducted for one year in 2012, according to Vasquez-St. John.

Monitors were placed on the Galena Manor Recreation Building, Galena Park Resource and Training Center, Galena Park Police Department, City Hall, and the Galena Park ISD Early Head Start building.

Your comments and thoughts on this subject are welcome. Please send a Letter to the Editor, 5906 Star Lane, Houston, TX 77057 or email to northchannelstar@gmail.com.

You may also want to attend the EPA meeting on August 5 at the Baggett Community Center, to express your views or share your environmental health experiences with the government representatives that will be at the meeting. See details on Page 1.

NEW EQUIPMENT
New ambulance for
Galena Park FD



FROM THE NEWEST EQUIPMENT in the Galena Park Fire Department, to the Oldest, the department prides itself on being fully equipped and trained to safely protect the citizens, according to Fire Chief Paul Gregory. Gregory has been chief since July 2013, and during that time added personnel and equipment to bring the department up to date. Above, MEDIC 1 is a new ambulance put into service the last few months, and below, a classic ENGINE that only sees parades these days.



TROOPS
DEPLOYMENT,
Continued from page 1

not only misguided, but also a red herring. We know that resources for border patrol agents are stretched due to unaccompanied children and families surrendering to border patrol agents in an attempt to seek asylum in the United States. This is not an example of a weak border needing military support. This is a humanitarian crisis. Our resources should be going toward addressing the current problem at hand. What we need are more blankets, not bullets.”

“Putting military troops on the ground is the exact opposite of what we should be doing. We should be asking the President and Congress to put politics aside to help our border patrol agents deal with this unprecedented refugee situation and to put resources on the ground for the people who are actually tasked with securing the border and those who are sheltering the unaccompanied minors.”

“By militarizing the situation, we are going to encourage these children and families to avoid the authorities and cause more deaths

and confusion.”

Rep. Armando Walle said “Today’s announcement from the Governor is a cheap attempt to militarize the border. Despite today’s lip-service insinuating otherwise, Governor Perry said just days ago that these National Guardsmen are to ‘push forward a show of force,’ in dealing with the influx of Central American refugee children.

The contributions and sacrifices made by our military and their families are ones that our country cannot repay in our lifetimes. Sending National Guard troops in to merely ‘send the message and present a ‘visual’ to kids, whom Guardsmen cannot even apprehend under federal law, is an insult to the spirit of our armed forces, not to mention a misuse of our resources.”

“Sending troops in to scare children is only the latest chapter in Governor Perry’s pandering to resurrect his failed presidential run. Gov. Perry’s inappropriate, simplistic, and heavy-handed rhetoric and decision-making in this crisis showcase an ability and willingness to appeal to fringe elements of his party while also serving as an alarming showcase of bad policymaking,” Walle concluded in his statement.



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