

# NORTH CHANNEL STAR

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## GALENA PARK MEDIATION OFF, LAWSUITS RESET

GALENA PARK – City leaders have returned to their contentious ways, as word came from Mayor Moya's attorney, that they will not agree to mediate the differences between parties, but wish to re-set the lawsuit that Moya filed against City Manager Robert Pruett and City Council (Commission) members. In her suit, Moya is asking the court to affirm her authority to run the city, specifically to authorize payments, preside over meetings, appoint charter committee members, and other issues. She has asked for a jury trial. The charter election set for May contains many of the issues she seeks resolved.



In a second suit, filed by a private citizen, Barry Ponder, he is suing Council members, the city manager, even the Mayor for denying his request for a special charter election. He also charges Councilman Simms with receiving illegal insurance benefits, and Pruett with racism.

In another lawsuit filed by Ponder, he asked for a temporary injunction to enjoin the May 9th charter election. A TRO or Temporary Restraining Order was denied by a judge, and a new hearing on this has been delayed as of this week. It is set to be rescheduled in "a few weeks."

## PONDER IS COUNTERSUUED

To answer the charges made by Barry Ponder against City Manager Robert Pruett, council and the city, a countersuit has been filed on Feb. 28 by Pruett and Simms. In that suit, they ask the court to rule on a "Defamation of Character" and to find Ponder's See LAWSUITS, Page 3



## Ship Channel Collision and spill close waterway Congresspersons, Environmentalists express concern

HOUSTON – After the collision of two large cargo vessels on Monday, in foggy conditions, and the subsequent spill of thousands of barrels of a highly flammable toxic chemical known as MTBE, authorities and environmentalists have become concerned over the economic and environmental effects of the accident.

The Coast Guard closed the Houston Ship Channel to all ship traffic after the accident, affecting incoming and outbound cargo ships. Although the leak has been stopped, the investigation and clean-up are expected to take several days, according to Capt. Brian Penoyer of the Coast Guard.

After a helicopter tour of the site, by two Congressmen, they issued statements of concern and looked for answers to avoid the problems in the future.

Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee held a news conference after her tour, saying the \$850 billion in business conducted at the port is at stake, and she thinks the answer is for the U.S. govern-



Rep. Babin talking with U.S. Coast Guard Cap. Brian Penoyer.

ment to widen and deepen the channel.

U.S. Representative Brian Babin (TX-36) personally surveyed the damage and response today to the Houston Ship Channel collision, which occurred Monday within Babin's Congressional District. Babin was provided with an aerial survey and briefing by U.S. Coast Guard Capt. Brian Penoyer, who is overseeing the

response. Babin offered his steadfast support and commitment to Capt. Penoyer and all those involved in cleaning up and reopening the channel.

"Since this unfortunate incident occurred Monday, I have been in close contact with the Port of Houston, our local mayors, and the U.S. Coast Guard," said Congressman Babin. "I was glad to have had the opportunity today to per-



Rep. Babin receives U.S. Coast Guard helicopter tour while surveying the damage and working on response efforts.

sonally survey the incident and response efforts. I believe the situation is being handled well and I am pleased with the progress being made towards reopening the ship channel. I commend U.S. Coast Guard Capt. Penoyer and the entire response team for their leadership and priority on public safety. I look forward to working closely with everyone involved to ensure that they

have everything they need in terms of federal support so that they can safely and quickly reopen the channel."

## Need to Protect neighbors after disaster

The Healthy Port Communities Coalition (HPPCC) called

See COLLISION, page 8

## Chamber hears of Youth-Reach intervention work

NORTH CHANNEL – The Chamber of Commerce luncheon featured a presentation by Curt Williams, the director of Youth-Reach. Founded in 1984, this little known institution has worked with over 2,200 boys who were "troubled and delinquent."

Youth-Reach was started by Williams, after experiencing in his own youth addiction and pain, many problems of the boys that he eventually decided to help. In 1984 he changed, committing his life to Christ.

In the early years, Williams ministered to boys on the streets of Montrose, but later he was given a home in east Houston, and he began to serve boys with hope of im-



CURT WILLIAMS, Director of Youth-Reach.

proving their lives.

The original campus, on a side street off Old Beaumont Highway, has grown to 26 acres, as well as a second campus in Gulf Shores, Alabama. The Houston campus serves boys from 12 to 17 years of age, and the Alabama location from 18 to 21. This second campus is now 81 acres large. Boys learn life skills, responsibility, and a high school education.

Williams emphasized that the organization does not charge for any services, and does not receive any government help. Income is completely from donations and foundations. The state licenses the facility as a long-term residential foster-care home.

Youth-Reach is administered by a board of directors, including many community leaders, such as Judge Mike Parrott, and others.

Boys taken in must commit to Christian principles, although religion is not taught there. A child can stay at Youth-Reach for as long as they need a home and continue to make progress.

Approximately 20 boys are present on the Houston campus, and Williams long-term plan is to expand to 35 boys, and eventually 35 girls.

Williams points to the progress his boys make, including the one who now runs the day-to-day operations, a graduate of the organization.

## PETER PIPER PIZZA MURDER:

### Man arrested, charge in death of woman at local pizzeria



Maythan Alsaedy, charged with murder



Peter Piper pizza parking lot where the woman's body was found by a security guard patrolling the area.

HARRIS COUNTY - Authorities have arrested a man in connection to a murder of a woman whose body was found outside pizzeria in East Harris County.

Maythan Alsaedy, 24, has been charged with murder in the killing of Kella Bracken, 22.

Police said a security guard saw the car parked for two days in the same

spot in the rear part of Peter Piper Pizza on East Sam Houston Parkway near Wallisville Road. On the second day, a Saturday afternoon, February 28, he looked inside the car and discovered the body, police said.

A day before Bracken's body was found, Alsaedy was arrested and charged with robbery to a woman at knife

point. Sylvia Galindo, 25, said she was at Walmart on Sam Houston when a man attacked her from behind demanding her car keys and cell phone. Galindo obeyed but Alsaedy could not start the car and ran away. She said she is lucky to be alive.

Authorities have not released a motive of the killing of Bracken.

## COMMUNITY CONCERN:

### SJR Coalition says EPA too slow to remediate Waste Pits

Expert releases new report, says removal necessary

HOUSTON – Jackie Young and the San Jacinto River Coalition held a press conference on Tuesday morning, at the main public library in downtown Houston.

The purpose of the conference was to present the findings from a new report, written by Dr. Kathleen Garland, a geologist and environmental management expert with the University of Houston Clear Lake.

Dr. Garland's report compares the San Jacinto River Waste Pits (SJRWP) with seven other similar Superfund Sites around the country. The report highlights that larger sites in more complex settings have been fully remediated in order to meet EPA guidelines.

In this comparison, she says that the proposal to contain the waste pits and leave them in the river, made by the Potentially Re-



Dr. Kathleen Garland

sponsible Parties, (Waste Management, McGinnis Industrial, and International Paper), does not meet previous EPA policies and past practices. She says that the containment cap in place, was allowed by the EPA as an emergency measure and not a permanent solution.

Her study concludes that by following other examples of EPA remedies, "...selection for dioxin-contaminated sediments included physical removal of the most highly contaminated

sediments unless such removal would cause channel or bank instability..."

She states that "such a removal appears to be feasible at the SJRWP site..." Therefore, "no other options exist to reduce the toxicity of these contaminants of concern."

In presenting the findings and introducing Dr. Garland, activist Jackie Young said that "Four Decades of Pollution is Long Enough."

Dr. Garland is the second local expert to make a firm argument for removal of the toxins in the river. In June of 2014 Dr. Sam Brody of Texas A&M called the Waste Pits a "loaded gun" and pointed out that in a neighborhood near the site, nearly 1 in 4 residents is under the age of 5, and subject to the effects of the toxins. He was especially concerned about the release of contaminated sediment after storms and hurricanes.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Two Crosby girls to perform at Nataniel Center

Two young Crosby female singers will appear in the Curtain Call Cafe's production of "Robbie Johnson Goes to Camp" on March 28 and 29. Sisters, Victoria and Maryann Weis with father, Dean have singing parts in the play in addition to regular voice demands at Sacred Heart Catholic Church.

The musical drama is a focus on a fine arts camp or bust theme and will be at the Nataniel Center at 804 Russell Palmer Rd. in Kingwood, telephone 281-797-8386. Tickets are less money in advance, go to [www.curtaincallcafe.com](http://www.curtaincallcafe.com) and select Weis from a list so the local performers can get credit for attracting audience members.



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GOOSE CREEK ISD: Students to compete at Regional History Fair



The 47 Goose Creek CISD students to participate in the State History Day in Austin.

By Susan Passmore

Forty-seven Goose Creek CISD students qualified to compete in the State History Day contest in Austin May 2, 2015, by winning first or second place at the recent Regional History Day competition at Lee College.

"We are so excited to be able to sponsor such a large group for this competition," said Faith Longorio, social studies coordinator. "Our students learn so much through this experience, and we are proud of their hard work and effort."

For Individual Historical Paper, junior school winners were Benjamin Warford-Johnston, 1st place, Gentry Junior School under the direction of Toni Rosenbaum and Shaily Yadav, 2nd place, Highlands Junior School under the direction of Alexsia Shankle. High school winners were Astrid Guevara, 1st place, Ross S. Sterling High School under the direction of Stephanie Cottle and Arlene Hastings-Hill and Tomas de la Rosa, 2nd place, Ross S. Sterling High School under the direction of Molly Fridley.

Individual Documentary junior school winner was Evelyn Longorio, 2nd place, Baytown Junior School under the direction of Tara Fountain. High school winner was Divya Singh, 2nd place, IMPACT Early College High School under the direction of Ilija Milovanovic.

For Group Documentary, junior school winners were Heather Tarver and Carli Norris, 1st place, Gentry Junior School under the direction

of Allison Liner and Daniel Guerrero and Peyton Nerf, 2nd place, Baytown Junior School under the direction of David LaGrange. High school winners were Kyleigh Fanning and Logan Fanning, 1st place, Ross S. Sterling High School under the direction of Donna Britt; and Michael Fanning, Cody Nethery, Abby Gregory and Annie Jones, 2nd place, Ross S. Sterling High School under the direction of Arlene Hastings-Hill.

Individual Performance junior school winners were Skylar Newton, 1st place, Baytown Junior School under the direction of Michael Gill and Grace Garcia, 2nd place, Highlands Junior School under the direction of Adam Clemmons. High school winner was Matthew Broussard, 1st place, IMPACT Early College High School under the direction of Steve Koester.

Individual Exhibit junior school winners were Brienne Schrull, 1st place, Highlands Junior School under the direction of Michella Jones, Bev Joseph and Alexsia Shankle as well as Hannah Christensen, 2nd place, Baytown Junior School under the direction of David LaGrange. High school winner was Havi Nguyen, 1st place, Ross S. Sterling High School under the direction of Molly Fridley.

Group Exhibit junior school winners were Priscila Garcia and Danielle Garcia, 1st place, Cedar Bayou Junior School under the direction of Carrie Kinnaman and Ruth Patino along with Johana Chavez, 2nd place, Horace Mann Junior School under the direction of Anna Spears and Clay Gar-

rison. High school winners were Bailey Beck, Mallory Jackson, Bailey Odom, Clayton Maddie and Dylan Gill, 1st place, Ross S. Sterling under the direction of Stephanie Cottle, Amanda Phillips and Molly Fridley.

Group Interpretive Web Site junior school winners were Janelle Baham and Kayla Baham, 1st place, Highlands Junior School under the direction of Michella Jones, Bev Joseph and Alexsia Shankle along with Jaylon Thomas and Lawrence Benard, 2nd place, Highlands Junior School under the direction of Ruben Rivas and Michella Jones. High school winners were Lauren Hillin, Megan Clausen, Casey Benskin, Sarah Gregory and Emily Thomas, 2nd place, Ross S. Sterling High School under the direction of Stephanie Cottle.

Individual Interpretive Web Site junior school winners were Tra My Nguyen, 1st place, Highlands Junior School under the direction of Luke Goodin and Zachary Zeglin, 2nd place, Gentry Junior School under the direction of Toni Rosenbaum. High school winners were Utkarsh Sharma, Goose Creek Memorial High School, 1st place under the direction of Angie Lewis and Alexia Reed, Ross S. Sterling High School, 2nd place under the direction of Stephanie Cottle and Molly Fridley.

Winners of State History Day in Austin will qualify to compete in the National History Day competition at the University of Maryland in June.



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OPINION PAGE

TEXAS  
With Russell A. Graves

A Prairie in Pieces -  
Part 3

Despite the bad news, acres of pristine prairie do remain. Sixty miles north-east of Dallas, nestled between Blue Ridge and Celeste, are a couple of places of ecological significance.

Collin County-owned Parkhill Prairie and the nearby Nature Conservancy easement, Clymer Meadow, protect some of the last

industrial water to the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex. "One of the things prairies appear to do is capture and store water," Eidson tells me as we stand in the grass near an old prairie homestead. "We observe multi-inch rainfall events that produce little runoff. Normal gilgai on the tops of hills will be full for a



remaining pieces of tallgrass prairie left in the state. The two parcels protect more than 1,400 acres of prairie that have never been developed or turned by a plow.

One fall day, Jim Eidson of the Nature Conservancy and I walk through the grass. Historic drought conditions have desiccated the grasslands, but botanical diversity is still evident. Maximilian sunflowers are shedding their seeds after a lackluster fall bloom, and many of the seasonal grasses are far past their peak. By conventional measures of natural beauty, most would probably think that the prairie isn't too impressive. To the uninitiated it appears to be not much more than an overgrown field. That seems to be part of the problem. Even though beautifully sublime, prairies generally lack the monumentalism of other natural features. A prairie's beauty is more microscopic. Eidson helps me see the beauty of the details.

"See these low depressions?" Eidson asks, motioning to swale patches as big as cars. "These are gilgai. When it rains, it catches and holds water and creates these little potholes of habitat."

Within the gilgai, I see the obvious difference in soil color - darker and perhaps richer in organic matter. Grasses like Eastern gamma (a moist-soil-loving tallgrass) grow in these depressions. Even though far away from permanent water, crayfish stools are evident in the low spots. This is such a specialized habitat, a species of crayfish unique to just these prairies exists here. Even in drought, Eidson sees the potential for prairies to conserve and replenish groundwater, which in turn benefits nearby reservoirs that supply drinking and

week or two and slowly percolate down through the soil. A few weeks later, seeps form at the bottoms of the hills."

In prairie-covered open spaces, the land holds water like a sponge instead of running off into creeks, carrying sediments with it. Without this benefit, the area becomes flashy, meaning that the status of most Blackland Prairie streams is either "raging torrent" or "bone dry." Eidson says he thinks these dry creeks were once constantly flowing, but the disappearance of the prairie disrupted the area's hydrological system.

"Repairing this broken hydrology is key to improving water quality and reducing sediment loads, which can drastically reduce the capacity of reservoirs," Eidson says. "The second benefit is that if the water gets underground, it is not lost to evaporation."

Even though much of the prairie Eidson and I walk across consists of knee-to-waist-high grasses, two-thirds of the prairie's biomass, an estimated seven tons, lies beneath the surface. Eidson explains that the average root depth is 6 feet, up to 20 feet for some species. The variety of grass and forb species is important for the soil's water absorption capabilities. "Each year, a large portion of this root mass dies off and is replaced, providing micro and macro channels through the soil for water to move," Eidson says. He explains to me that this life/death plant cycle increases the organic matter in the soil, helping it act like a sponge and retain water even during the heaviest rainfall events.



Senate bills set stage for  
tax, debt relief

AUSTIN - A trio of powerful state senators, along with Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick, on March 5 jointly announced the filing of legislation they coauthored to cut taxes and pay off state debt.

Patrick, who presides over the 31-member Senate, Senate Finance Chair Jane Nelson, R-Flower Mound; Senate Business & Commerce Chair Kevin Eltife, R-Tyler; and Senate Finance Vice Chair Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa, D-McAllen, each delivered brief statements.

Patrick said the state constitution limits spending to no more than the growth of the Texas economy and appropriations intended to cut taxes or reduce state debt also count against the spending cap. The legislation, in the form of a bill and a joint resolution, if passed and signed into law, would allow voters to decide whether or not to exempt tax cuts and debt payments from the state's constitutional spending limit.

"Debts today become taxes tomorrow," Hinojosa explained. "As Texans we pride ourselves as a pay-as-you-go state, but in the past 12 years our state and local debt has skyrocketed. As responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars we need to rein in our dependence on debt and get serious about paying off our current outstanding debt. Exempting appropriations for tax relief and debt relief from the spending cap will free up more dollars for critical areas like education and infrastructure in the state budget without busting the constitutional spending cap."

The legislation has been sent to the Senate Finance Committee for consideration, and companion bills have been filed in the House by state Rep. Jim Keffer, R-Eastland.

STATE CAPITAL  
HIGHLIGHTS  
By Ed Sterling



Transportation bills  
pass

On votes of 28-2, the Senate tentatively approved two measures intended to increase transportation funding.

Committee Substitute Senate Bill 5 and Senate Joint Resolution 5 by Transportation Committee Chair Robert Nichols, R-Jacksonville, would let voters decide whether to approve a split in the state motor vehicle sales tax. The bills have moved to the House for consideration.

As CSSB 5 is presently worded, the first \$2.5 billion in that class of revenue would go into general revenue and the next \$2.5 billion would be dedicated to the Texas Department of Transportation. Further revenue collected by the state would be split so the comptroller would deposit 50

percent to the State Highway Fund, 30 percent to the general revenue fund and 20 percent to the Available School Fund.

Sens. Rodney Ellis, D-Houston, and Kirk Watson, D-Austin, cast votes in opposition. In an excerpt from a longer statement explaining his vote, Ellis said, "Dedicated funds are poor public policy simply because they limit flexibility. This year a critical need may not be as critical next year, and funding cannot follow problems. By constitutionally dedicating this funding, we are creating a new multi-billion dollar hole that is going to be difficult to fill during years when the budget is tight."

Unemployment rate  
falls

Texas' seasonally adjusted unemployment rate fell to 4.4 percent in January down from 4.6 percent in December 2014, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics announced last week.

Texas Workforce Commission on March 6 reported the adding of 20,100 seasonally adjusted non-farm jobs in January for a total increase of 392,900 jobs over the year. "We are pleased to see that the growth of jobs in our state is continuing," said Andres Alcantar, chair of the Texas Workforce Commission.

Texas employers added 20,100 jobs including growth in nine of 11 major industries in January, which is a great testament to the strength and resilience of our economy and labor market, Alcantar said.

Hope Andrade, commissioner representing employers with the Texas Workforce Commission, added, "The latest labor market data indicates that Texas is approaching the 12 million jobs milestone, with 11,769,600 jobs now in Texas. Employers continue to propel Texas on a path paved with growth and innovation."

DPS increases  
enforcement

Texas Department of Public Safety on March 6 announced an increase in DWI patrols from March 7 to March 22.

State troopers will focus on high-risk locations at times when alcohol-related crashes are most frequent and in areas with high concentrations of Spring Break activity.

During last year's Spring Break enforcement period, state troopers made 1,389 DWI arrests, some 18,886 speeding citations, 3,343 seat belt/child safety seat tickets and about 23,600 other citations. Also, state troopers made 861 fugitive arrests and 728 felony arrests during the period, the agency reported.

OPINION  
By Congressman  
Brian Babin

Restoring the  
Rule of Law

The United States is a nation of immigrants, but it is also a nation of laws. And our nation's elected leaders have a sworn duty to abide by those laws.

On twenty-two different occasions, President Obama told the American people that he lacked the legal authority to bypass Congress and grant amnesty through Executive Order. However, in November he reversed course and issued an Executive Order to grant amnesty to millions of individuals living in the United States illegally.

As the U.S. Constitution explicitly states, all changes to our laws must be done legislatively through the U.S. Congress. Laws are not to be unilaterally "rewritten" by the President, nor should the courts change them. The President's decision to grant amnesty through executive action makes a mockery of our laws and the U.S. Constitution.

In February, U.S. Federal Judge Andrew Hanen temporarily halted the President's amnesty plans. But the Administration has already filed an appeal and is vowing to fight the court's ruling. While the court's decision is an important first step, more must be done to restore the rule of law and block executive amnesty.

As a past mayor and local school board member, I know firsthand how the Administration's amnesty plan is taxing the budgets of our local governments - schools, social services, hospitals, jails, and law enforcement.

Executive amnesty also undermines our national security by perpetuating open borders - making Americans less safe. I recently toured the Southwest border with law enforcement and met with those living along the border. I saw the severity of the situation firsthand. Simply put, our border is not secure and it is putting our security at risk. Sadly, the current Administration's amnesty plan and refusal to first secure our borders will only make things worse.

There are millions of American citizens who are unemployed or under employed. We have others on the lower rungs of the economic ladder that want to climb higher, to earn more money, and to support their families with a higher wage. If the President's amnesty plan is allowed to go into effect, the plight of these millions of hardworking Americans, including many recent legal immigrants, and the families they support will be further harmed.

To make the United States stronger and put American citizens first, we must stop the President's unilateral amnesty plan and return to the rule of law.

That's why I have fought so hard to reverse these misguided executive actions. One of the first bills I cosponsored was H.R. 191, the Repeal Executive Amnesty Act, which would fully repeal the President's Executive Orders. We attached these provisions to the Department of Homeland Security Funding bill.

Unfortunately, the President and Senate Democrats rejected these efforts and refused to negotiate over any bill that included provisions that upheld the rule of law. In the end, House and Senate leaders passed, over my objections, a DHS funding bill that was stripped of our provisions that would have blocked the Administration's executive amnesty plans. I joined my conservative colleagues in voting against the bill - but our opposition came up short of the votes needed to block it.

Despite the outcome, I remain fully committed to fighting to reestablish the rule of law not just on immigration policy but also across the board. The balance of power between the Executive and Legislative branches of government must be restored. The survival of our Constitutional Republic depends on this balance of power.

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LIFESTYLE

Quilts at San Antonio's Texas Cultural Center

Each year while I am visiting with my son Dave in Crosby we make our way to several of the Texas cities and towns. We did again this year-my 15th winter to be spent in Crosby. Almost all of those years we have found our way to San Antonio, one of my favorite American cities. The winter of 2015 was no different.

We went to San Antonio last week for about five days and found our way to the usual haunts. On all of our trips we have visited two of the SA sites, The Alamo and Riverwalk. We visit the Alamo for obvious reasons-out of respect of those who fought and died there. As for the Riverwalk, I go because I have always found it enjoyable and Dave, perhaps because he knows I want to go tags along. We always take a leisurely stroll along the river, usually take a boat ride although that was not so this year, and then pick a restaurant, for a fine evening meal.

We have never been disappointed with our choice of an evening meal there nor have we ever been disappointed with our visits to San Antonio. It is a great place.

On two or three occasions we have taken the trolley to the Texas Cultural Center but hadn't for three or four years so we went again in 2015. It is located on the site adjacent to the Tower of America so we went there as well, rode the elevator to the top and spent some time looking down on this great Texas town.

Entering the cultural center we began the trip around the circle on a self-guided tour and viewed

TOUCH OF LIFE  
By Don Springer



once again many of the exhibits we had seen previously. As we made about 1/3rd of the circle we came upon a live exhibit that took me back to my childhood. There were several women spinning, weaving and quilting, something I had watched my grandmother, mother and aunts doing many years ago on my grandparents farm in rural southeastern Ohio. This was a familiar sight three or four generations ago and once was a recognized occupation. Today it is more of a hobby for those participating and they find it an enjoyable one.

We spent a good half-hour talking and photographing these six ladies and thoroughly enjoyed it. It brought back vivid memories of my elder family members doing much the same. I still have about five quilts that came off of quilting racks of that era. Three of those were my grandmothers and two belonged to my mother-in-law that had been handed down to my late spouse, Linda. I'm sure in my pre-teen and teen years I slept under more than one of these on the farm.

Frances Rios was working the spinning wheel where she took raw cotton, removed it from the seeds by hand, carried it a few times and when it was clean and very soft spun it

into thread. Frances told me she had been working with spinning wheels, looms and quilting racks since 1955. I mentioned I was 84 and she replied, "I got you by three years." Like I heard from the others, she said she was doing this now as an exhibit for the center "as a labor of love" and had been there since 1981. During the time we were there she entertained at least two school age groups as she explained the art of spinning to them.

As I moved on I found four ladies working on a beautiful piece of work attached to the quilt rack. Gail Cardon, Geneva Gusman, Arminda Lopez and Susan Linville each talked to me and never missed a stitch as their fingers moved smoothly, stitch by stitch, across the piece of work beneath their fingers. Cardon explained to me they were the Friday group working on the quilt "from 9 a. m. to 12 noon." She and Linville explained that a group such as they were there every weekday morning working on quilts and showing visitors such as me how it is done.

Of course, one of the obvious questions is, "how long does it take to complete a quilt?" Lopez said, "that varies based on the type and size of the quilt, but we probably will complete one about every

350 to 400 hours." They explained the quilts they work on are usually owned by a friend or associate and are not sold. However, I can well remember quilts sold at church auctions back in the 1950's that went for more than \$1,000. They would be worth far more today. With that much work in them they are worth every cent.

There were two looms in the area and sitting toward the back of the exhibit at the larger of the two, weaving away, was Sherry Durringer. I interrupted her effort for a few minutes and found out she and Rios were the two that did much of the loom work. "We usually use salvaged material on our looms as that is our choice," She told me the work she was doing and showed me three or four pieces that varied widely in size. One was a small piece she was wearing around her neck and another was as large as a throw rug or small lounge cover. This weaver said she had been weaving for "more than 30 years," and again called it "a work of love."

As I moved on I was quite refreshed, my thoughts returned to the present rather than the days of my youth. My chances of ever seeing any of these six women who reside some 1,500 miles from my West Virginia home are slight. However, I shall never forget this visit and the information I received from all six as they practiced their "labor of love."

Such are the people, places and things that have touched my life in my home!



It is a labor of love for these women as they quilt during the morning hours at the Cultural Center. They are: (from back left): Gail Cardon, Geneva Gusman, Arminda Lopez, and Susan Linville. All are experienced quilters who appear regularly at the center.



Spinner Frances Rios works on spinning wheel at Texas Cultural Center as she has done since 1981.



Weaver Sherry Durringer talks with writer Don Springer as she takes break from her duties on the loom.

Photos by Dave Springer

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OBITUARIES

Daniel Joseph Squibb

Daniel Joseph Squibb went home to be with the Lord on Sunday, March 1, 2015. He was 17 years old.

Daniel was born September 4, 1997, in Baytown, Texas, to Kevin D. and Daniella Mae Lowe Squibb. He was a student at James Bowie High School, at Simms ISD, and was a member of Rock Creek Baptist Church in Maud, Texas. Daniel had a great love for sports, especially baseball. He played varsity baseball, basketball, and football for James Bowie High School.

He was preceded in death by his mother, Daniella Mae Squibb.

He is survived by his father, Kevin Squibb, of Simms, Texas; grandmother, Billie Evans, of Simms, Texas; grandparents, Lyle and Katherine Squibb, of Louisiana; two sisters, Sarah Cooper of La Porte, Texas, and KaiDee LouRhe Squibb of Dayton, Texas; one brother and sister-in-law, Justin and Melissa Squibb of Louisiana; three nieces and three nephews; and numerous aunts, uncles, and other relatives and friends.

A Memorial Service celebrating Daniel's life will be 2:00 P.M., Saturday, March 7, 2015, at the James Bowie High School Auditorium with Bro. Steve Minter officiating. Services are under the direction

of Bates Family Funeral Home.

Memorial donations may be made in Memory and Honor of Dana Squibb to: MD Anderson Cancer Center  
P.O. Box 4486  
Houston, TX 77210-4486  
\*Please include the name of Daniel J. Squibb with your memorial gift.

Or go to:  
www.mdanderson.org/gifts (scroll down to "More ways you can help" and choose Make a memorial gift)

In the section "your information" there is a box to check "...Where my donation will go" Choose "Fund designated by family". Online registration at www.batesfamilyfuneralhome.com.

Hey God!

Are you upset with God? Tragedy came and left you in despair. You were betrayed by a loved one or someone you thought was your friend. Someone less qualified got promoted over you. You have a hurt that will not go away and you would just like to tell God how you really feel.

Go ahead, just go ahead and tell Him. A naked man full of demons once flew into the face of Jesus. However, before the conversation was over this man sat clothed and in his right mind at the feet of Jesus.

I have always believed that a "bad" prayer was better than no prayer at all. Any conversation with Jesus has great potential. No one ever intimidated God.

Danny R. Biddy, Pastor of the Church on Old River since 1977.  
www.olderiverbaptist.com

BIBLE TRIVIA  
by Wilson Casey

1. Is the book of Pharisee in the Old or New Testament or neither?  
2. In Matthew 21, to what type of tree did Jesus say, "Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever"? Cedar, Oak, Apple, Fig  
3. From 2 Corinthians 6, what did Paul warn Christians about being "yoked" with? Debt, Unbelievers, Shame, Abundance  
4. In biblical times, what was a tambourine or small hand drum called? Timbrel, Cornet, Tartu, Cymbal  
5. How many days and nights was Jonah in the belly of the great fish? 2, 3, 5, 8  
6. Who was the father of Michal? David, Titus, Saul, Stephen  
ANSWERS: 1) Neither; 2) Fig; 3) Unbelievers; 4) Timbrel; 5) 3; 6) Saul

★  
LITTLE BIDDY BITS  
By Danny Biddy

Hey God!

Are you upset with God? Tragedy came and left you in despair. You were betrayed by a loved one or someone you thought was your friend. Someone less qualified got promoted over you. You have a hurt that will not go away and you would just like to tell God how you really feel.

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ANSWERS: 1) Neither; 2) Fig; 3) Unbelievers; 4) Timbrel; 5) 3; 6) Saul

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# SCHOOL NEWS

## GALENA PARK

### Students experience skills - Become College & Career Ready

Galena Park Independent School District (GPISD) Career & Technical Education (CTE) students from North Shore Senior High School (NSSH) and Galena Park High School (GPHS) recently participated in the Regional SkillsUSA competition held at San Jacinto College Central. Over 30 GPISD students took part in Automotive Technology, Criminal Justice, and Welding events. The mission of SkillsUSA: "To empower students to become world-class workers, leaders and responsible American citizens". GPISD Career & Technical Education Director Laura Mann said, "Competitions such as Skills USA intrinsically motivate students to pursue their career interests, and inspire them to continuously improve their communication, interpersonal, teamwork and time management work skills." Her words echo the thoughts of the CTE Department's mission of "Learning Today, Earning Tomorrow."

Students in a number of CTE programs will represent Gale-



Replicas of the "Twin Sisters" cannons, built by the Galena Park High School welding class, will be on display at the state SkillsUSA competition March 25 - 28. (pictured l/r): Jose Perez; Dominic Gonzalez; Adrian Yado; Joseph Gaul, Instructor; Alberto Porras; Aldo Cortez; Samuelle Mendoza; and Erick Perez.

na Park ISD in the upcoming SkillsUSA contest that will be held in Corpus Christi March 25 - 28. The students' projects will

be judged, students will present and perform tasks in hopes of becoming the best in Texas. CTE competitions such as

SkillsUSA ignite student's ambitions, allow them to define their career plans, identify an appropriate course of study, and in turn gain employment that can help pay for tuition.

Instructors James Elliot, Damon Starr, Joseph Gaul, and Ken Fisher agree, whether students are applying to college or entering the workforce upon graduation, this type of experience will help them prepare for the future. In fact, many college-bound students are often able to gain employment because they have a competitive edge over non-CTE graduates.

Elizabeth Lalor, Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, added, "In GPISD, we strive to ensure our students graduate college and career ready; the benefits students receive by gaining not only a solid foundation in academics, but also hands-on technical experience and the ability to prove their know-how through competitions like that of Skills USA is invaluable and will ensure they are successful while pursuing their future career endeavors."

## CHANNELVIEW

### FCCLA students win several awards



The Channelview High School STAR Events team of Elisha Bolden, Ashlee Stelzer and Alicia Gonzalez took first place at the Region IV Families, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) competition. FCCLA students also captured bronze and silver medals at the event.

Several Channelview High School students received medals at the Region IV Families, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) competition.

The STAR Events team of Elisha Bolden, Alicia Gonzalez and Ashlee Stelzer won first place in the Entrepreneur category. The three students designed and developed a detailed business plan as part of the competition.

Other students winning

medals included:

Silver Medals in Job Interview:

- Stevie Barton
  - Elisha Boland
  - Alicia Gonzalez
  - Ashlee Stelzer
  - Felicia Trevino
  - Courtney Williams
- Bronze Medals in Job Interview:
- Nelda Martinez
  - Valerie Pena
  - Jessica Silva
  - Jane'e Whitaker

## Sheldon ISD Wins State Awards



Pictured left to right are Ana Marie Nieto, district translator, Vic Bushfield, district webmaster, Ashley Shibley, community and business relations coordinator.

Sheldon ISD received nine Texas School Public Relations Association (TSPRA) Star Awards, including three Best of Category medals for excellence in school communications. The awards were announced at the association's annual conference in San Antonio.

TSPRA had over 970 entries from districts all over the state. The judging panel divides all entries into the three categories of gold, silver and bronze. Out of all the gold en-

tries, an overall Best of Category winner is selected.

Sheldon ISD received prestigious Best of Category medals for the Sheldon ISD website, original artwork, and the Spanish version of the annual newsletter. The Sheldon ISD logo, the newsletter front cover design, and a printed advertisement all received Gold Star Awards. The district received Silver Star Awards for an image/identity package, a convocation program and the external newsletter.



## SHELDON ISD:

### Students and Educator of the Month honored

At the North Channel Chamber luncheon last week, the Students & Educator of the Month in Sheldon ISD were recognized. Pictured above, Superintendent Dr. Vickey Giles, Marcus James (C.E. King High School), William Figueroa (C.E. King Middle School), Summer Bridges (Null Middle School), Keon Banks (Teacher/Coach/ Campus Athletic Coordinator C.E. King Middle School).

## Channelview HS student's natural talents rewarded with spot in state competition

For Luis Ovalle, creating works of art comes naturally.

He's only in his second year of formal art classes, but his drawings have caught the eyes of expert judges in one of the largest and most prestigious secondary school art competitions in the state.

And, for the second consecutive year, Ovalle's talents have been rewarded as his charcoal drawing earned him a spot in the Texas Art Educators Association's Visual Art Scholastic Event (VASE) State Competition.

"Words cannot describe how much this means to me," said Ovalle, after his instructor Abraham Quintanilla informed him about the award. "Art is something I enjoy...it's a natural way of expression."

Quintanilla said the Houston and Dallas regions of the VASE competitions are among the largest in the state.

"When your work advances to state from either one of those regions, it shows that your talent is at a high level," he said. "I'm so proud of Luis. He is really discovering how truly talented he really is."

This year, more than 100 art students at Channelview High School submitted artwork for judging in the VASE competition.

During the competition, the students' artwork was not only displayed, but judges asked the students questions about their compositions, uses of the elements and principles of art.

The artworks are judged by a team of certified adjudicators comprised of art educators, university instructors and area artists. Jurors looked for originality of concept, technical expertise, understanding of the Texas Essential Knowledge and



Channelview High School student Luis Ovalle shows his medals, including his gold state qualifying medal, he won at the regional Texas Art Education Association's Visual Arts Scholastic Event.

Skills (TEKS) for visual art, and the interpretation of the student's stated intent.

The Texas Art Education Association (TAEA) has sponsored VASE since 1994. VASE is the only art event of its kind in the nation. Students are provided the opportunity to bring artworks created in their art classes to their regional event where they are interviewed by a certified juror who evaluates their work based on a standard based rubric and their understanding of the art processes involved in the development of their artwork.

The mission of the TAEA Visual Arts Scholastic Event is to recognize exemplary student achievement in the Visual Arts by providing art students and programs a standard of excellence in which to achieve.

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# COMMUNITY NEWS, SPORTS

## COMMUNITY WATCH

### FREEPORT STREET

## Pedestrian killed in a hit and run accident



Deputies closed the street to traffic while investigating the accident.

HARRIS COUNTY - Deputies are investigating the fatal hit-and-run of a pedestrian in east Harris County. According to Harris County Sheriff's deputies, the driver of a white Ford F-150 struck a man crossing the street in the 1100 block of Freeport near the East Freeway in the Cloverleaf area around 6:45 a.m. last Monday.

The pedestrian was walking along the road in a construction zone while talking on a cell phone at the time of the accident. The driver of the pick up truck did not stop. The victim landed in a ditch and died. The investigation continues, and deputies are looking for a pick-up truck with significant damage to the front grill and fender.

## COLLISION

Continued from page 1

on Houston's petrochemical giants to act now to protect their neighbors after a collision in the Houston Ship Channel led to a shelter-in-place order for several ship channel communities.

"Houston's petrochemical industry is often called the 'economic engine' in the region," said Adrian Shelley, Director of Air Alliance Houston. "For many residents of ship channel communities, though, the industry is an engine of uncertainty and fear. It is disproportionately low-income and minority communities that suffer these negative impacts."

The people and environment of the Houston ship channel need better protection from the deadly risks associated with this industry. Today's spill of MTBE in the ship channel is only the most recent disaster.

"Dangerous and deadly chemicals are also transported daily through our communities by trains," said Juan Parras, Director of Texas Environmental Justice Advocacy Services. "Residents do not know what is in the trains passing through their communities, what safeguards are in place to protect them, and what potential disasters could mean for them and their neighbors."

Many remember the deadly explosion at a fertilizer plant in West, TX last year. But the agricultural chemicals

that caused that tragedy are only one class among many that present serious health and safety risks for many Houston area communities. Community members are unaware of and unprepared for the catastrophic risks that these chemicals present.

"The legislature needs to take advantage of modern cellular technology and provide citizens with real time notices of the how to protect themselves from toxic exposure," said Tom "Smitty" Smith, Director of Public Citizen's Texas office, "We can alert people via reverse 911 calls or texts, emails, tweets and other social media, and live links to maps showing where the toxins are and where they are going."

For more than one hundred years, Houston has been the source of massive economic activity and profits for the petrochemical industry. Today we call on these petrochemical giants to reinvest in their communities and protect the most vulnerable of their neighbors. People have the right to know the risks they face and that the companies creating those risks are doing everything in their power to minimize them.

The Healthy Port Communities Coalition includes Air Alliance Houston, Pleasantville Environmental Coalition, Public Citizen, Texas Environmental Justice Advocacy Services, (t.e.j.a.s.), and Texas Organizing Project (TOP).

## SanJac Women's basketball advances at Region XIV tournament, 66-63 win over Angelina

JACKSONVILLE, Texas - The San Jacinto College women's basketball team hung on for a 66-63 thrilling win over Angelina College in the opening round of the Region XIV tournament, played on Wednesday, March 4 at the Jacksonville Independent School District gym in Jacksonville, Texas.

With the win, San Jac (23-8) advances to face top seeded Trinity Valley Community College in the semifinal round, to be played Friday, March 6 at 1 p.m.

Head coach Brenita Jackson was proud of the hard-fought "team win" over Angelina. "We split with Angelina during the regular season, and they have a very good team that plays aggressive, so I knew it might be a close game," Jackson commented. "In a way it was good for us to get tested in the first game to find out what we are made of, because we will need to be tough against Trinity Valley."

San Jacinto College lost both games they played against Trinity Valley College during the regular season.

Freshman forward Kaelynn Wilson (San Antonio / Wagner High School) and sophomore forward Anika Nottingham (Trinidad & Tobago / Mucurapo West Secondary School / Colombia State Community College) led the San Jacinto College offense, each scoring 14 points. Nottingham also added 8 rebounds. Sophomore guard Kendra Howard (Dallas / Cedar Hill High School) was also a key contributor, scoring 11 points. Freshman guard Miranda Lejune (Pearland / Pearland High School) was solid at ball handling, dishing out 8 assists.

The 2015 Region XIV tournament runs through Saturday, March 7. The tournament winner advances to the NJCAA national championship March 16-21 in Salina, Kansas. For more information, including a complete schedule of



Freshman forward Kaelynn Wilson jostles for rebound position in San Jacinto College's Region XIV tournament win against Angelina College on Wednesday. Photo credit: Rob Vanya, San Jacinto College marketing, public relations, and government affairs department.

Region XIV tournament games, visit the Jacksonville College website. For more information about the San Ja-

cinto College women's basketball program, please visit sanjacsports.com.

### CHANNELVIEW HS:

## “Shattered Dreams” program shows realities of drinking, driving

Students filed out into the parking lot of Channelview High School and saw one of the worst automobile accident scenes they had ever witnessed.

It was only a simulation. It definitely got the students' attention. It was all too real.

This is Shattered Dreams. Shattered Dreams is an educational program designed to prevent teen drinking and driving. The event was hosted by Ben Taub Hospital's Trauma Services Department, a part of the Harris Health System. The event was coordinated on the CHS campus by teacher Karen Hebert.

As part of the program, a simulated crash took place near the south side of the school on Crockett Street on the first day of the two-day event. Channelview EMS and Fire, Harris County Constable Precinct 3 deputies, along with other local emergency personnel participated in the event as "first responders" to the staged accident scene, where students were portrayed as fatal accident victims.

"Our students have often heard about the dangers of drinking and driving, but his program enables the reality of it to hit home in a very realistic and dramatic way," Hebert said. "When they saw some of their friend and fellow classmates bloodied and their parents crying, it shows how life can be changed because of poor choices such as getting behind the wheel of a vehicle under the influence of alcohol."

The night following the

event, some students were allowed to visit the trauma center of Ben Taub Hospital and see emergency medical procedures being conducted on accident victims and shooting victims.

"The victims were saw were real and the trauma we saw was eye-opening," Hebert said. "It shows again that lives can be shaped by the choices that people make."

In addition to the accident victims, other students known as the "living dead" left their classrooms representing those who died in alcohol-related car crashes nationwide. A memorial service was for the victims was held during the second day of the program at the Bill Neal Center and several speakers will address the dangers of drinking and driving.

Shattered Dreams accident victims were required to write letters to their parents and loved ones expressing their thoughts after their "death."

Christian Metz was one of several CHS students who uttered the difficult beginnings to their letter, opening with the line: "Dear Mom and Dad... today I died." He continued, "I am so sorry things hap-



Channelview High School recently held its Shattered Dreams program designed to prevent teen drinking and driving. The event was hosted by Ben Taub Hospital's Trauma Services Department, a part of the Harris Health System. As part of the program, a simulated crash took place near the school on the first day of the two-day event. Channelview EMS and Fire, Harris County Constable Precinct 3 deputies, along with other local emergency personnel participated in the event as "first responders" to the staged accident scene, where students were portrayed as fatal accident victims.

pened this way. I want you to know I love you more than anything and want to thank you for always being there for me."

As the letters were read, they clearly affected the students and faculty members as they could be seen sobbing in the audience.

"The Shattered Dreams program has had such a powerful effect on our students," said Cindi Ollis, CHS principal. "They see that the consequences of poor decisions can have such a far-reaching impact. After going through the program, they leave forever changed."

MARCH 11, 2015

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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  
GiGi's Pizza, Uvalde @ Woodforest  
Kroger's, Woodforest @ Beltway 8  
Fuddruggers, 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  
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#### CHANNELVIEW

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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

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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.

If you would like to be a PICK-UP LOCATION, let us know. 281-328-9605 or northchannelstar@gmail.com.



# GARDENING TIME AT MARKET STREET FEED

- ▶ Vegetable Plants
- ▶ Tomato Cages
- ▶ Onion Plants
- ▶ Bulk Seed





12844 Market Street, Houston, TX 77015  
(713)453-7269