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

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CHANNEL CURRENTS

Port says dredge material okay

The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is currently dredging material from the upper reaches of the Houston Ship Channel between the IH 610 bridge and the upper turning basin (Wayside Dr.). The USACE is pumping the material into the placement area between Holland Avenue and Mercury/Main Street (Clinton Placement Area). All materials placed into the Clinton Placement Area have been carefully tested prior to being placed into the site. The turning basin dredge material has not been impacted by the ITC spill, which is approximately 15 miles downstream. Dredging activities in the upper turning basin are scheduled to be completed early summer 2019.

Additionally, no public dredging operations are occurring near the ITC Terminal. Port Houston is available to answer any questions regarding our business and operations via our Community Information Line, 713-670-1000.

Washburn Tunnel to close for improvements Mar. 29-Apr. 8

HOUSTON, Texas - The Washburn Tunnel will be closed for 10 days, beginning at 8 p.m. on Friday, March 29th to 4 a.m. on Monday, April 8th. During this time, crews will be conducting in-depth maintenance to the Tunnel lining as part of the Washburn Tunnel Concrete Repairs project, which was planned proactively to preserve the life of the Tunnel.

Drivers are reminded to use alternate routes during the closure. Alternate routes include I-610 East Loop Freeway, Sam Houston Parkway, and Highway 146.

ITC Fire event is not over, says OEM director Lina Hidalgo

DEER PARK -- Well into the second week after the huge chemical storage tank fire at the ITC site in Deer Park, authorities and emergency crews are still busy trying to deal with the aftermath of the blaze.

ITC, or Intercontinental Terminals Company, has issued dozens of press releases and conferences, but many of the public feel that the facts of the fire have still not been revealed.

Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo, who is also the head of the OEM, or Office of Emergency Management, held a press conference on Monday. She thanked all those first responders and other government agencies that had worked quickly and in a coordinated way to deal with the disaster.

However, she had a clear message for all, saying "This Incident is not Over." She emphasized that the immediate problem was containing the chemicals and to minimize contamination of the air and water around the site.

Multiple agencies are dealing with the problems, including the EPA, TCEQ, Harris County Pollution Control, Harris County Health Department, Fire Marshal's office, and various



JUDGE LINA HIDALGO, head of Office of Emergency Management, holds a news conference on Monday to update the public on status of the ITC fire and clean-up. (photo Gilbert Hoffman)



CLEAN-UP continues at the ITC site in Deer Park. In this photo, taken over a week after the fire, foam is being sprayed to seal tanks, and a pump truck at center is removing chemicals that still pose a hazard. (Photo courtesy KPRC)

first responders around the area.

Judge Hidalgo revealed that the county had issued a subpoena and a preservation order to ITC, asking for information to be preserved for an investigation. In addition, several agencies including the state of Texas and Harris County have announced they will sue ITC for air quality violations, and costs involved in responding to the fire. In addition, hundreds of private suits are expected. So far the company has received over 300 claims.

Francisco Sanchez, of the OEM, stated that the incident was still at a Level 3 alert. Hidalgo noted that this was the second longest activation in the last ten years by the OEM, only exceeded by Hurricane Harvey.

Chemicals and foam that leaked into the Ship Channel have caused the Coast Guard to close it, and restrict ships on the San Jacinto River. They have deployed 2700 feet of containment booms.

The Harris County Health Department advised the public to contact their doctor if they feel effects of the fire. If you do not have a healthcare provider, you can contact "Ask-My-Nurse" at 713-634-1110 from 8am to 8:30pm.

Channelview ISD holding first bond election in 10 Years

This May, Channelview ISD residents will have the opportunity to vote on a \$195.4 million bond election.

A bond is similar to a home mortgage. It is a contract to repay borrowed money with interest over time. Bond elections allow communities to vote to give the Board of Trustees authority to sell bonds to pay for items such as school construction, capital projects and land acquisition.

A school district's tax rate is comprised of two parts. Part one is Maintenance and Operations

(M&O) which funds day-to-day expenses such as salaries, general maintenance, bus repairs and fuel, educational materials and utilities.

Part two is Interest and Sinking (I&S) which funds debt repayment for the purchase of new building construction, existing building renovations, land purchases, program-specific equipment, technology and school buses. The Channelview ISD bond election would only affect the District's I&S rate. By law, I&S funds cannot be

used to pay teacher or staff salaries.

Currently, Channelview ISD's I&S tax rate is \$0.356 with the M&O tax rate standing at \$1.04 for a total tax rate of \$1.396. The current rate is the lowest it has been in seven years and is the second lowest tax rate when compared to surrounding school districts. Over the past seven years, the Channelview ISD Board of Trustees has lowered the tax rate \$0.10 from \$1.496

See Bond Election, Page 8

Cody Bill passes House 145 to 0

AUSTIN -- The Final vote in the House of Representatives got unanimous approval of those attending the session on Tuesday for HB 76, the Cody Stephens Bill.

According to Scott Stephens that has made it his mission to get Texas to use E.C.G. machines in addition to the exam a doctor does with a stethoscope, "The Texas House of Representatives voted to pass HB 76 today with no opposition! Tis was a huge step for us and for Cody's Law, bringing us so much closer to getting heart screening into every school across Texas.

This is a wonderful cause for celebration. We definitely want to take a moment to acknowledge all the hard work from Rep. Dan Huberty, lobbyist Kathy Grant, everyone who testified at the Public Education Committee hearing and all of you who called and wrote letters to your representatives to vote in favor of HB76."

This is the fifth year the Cody Bill has been presented and some but minimal changes have been made. It is now an "opt in" rather than an "opt out" proposition.

The bill moves to the Senate, now.

COMMUNITY INFORMED

Community leaders hear from newly positioned legislators

By Allan Jamail

Houston, TX- Saturday, March 23, 2019 - Yolanda Alvarado a well known and respected civic leader invited community leaders to a meeting with legislators serving in new positions. Elected officials present were Congresswoman Sylvia Garcia of the 29th Congressional District, Senator Carol Alvarado of Senate District 6 and State Representative Christina Morales of District 145.

Congresswoman Garcia said, "It's been somewhat of a challenge adjusting to the cold freezing snowy weather and its effect on one's ability to move about in D. C., but I'm managing it okay."

"I'm very concerned with the ITC fire and will be closely monitoring the



Photo By Allan Jamail

Congresswoman Sylvia Garcia of the 29th Congressional District, Senator Carol Alvarado of Senate District 6 and State Representative Christina Morales of District 145.

after-affects it could pose on the air and water quality and the impact it can have on the health of residents. We must investigate its cause and how to prevent similar disasters in

the future. The 29th District encompasses large portions of the Houston ship channel including the Port of Houston, cities of

See New Legislators, Page 8

DEER PARK FIRE AFTERMATH

Commissioner Adrian Garcia closes parks for safety

HARRIS COUNTY, TX -- Friday, March 22nd 2019-- As a precaution, Harris County Precinct 2 Commissioner Adrian Garcia is closing eight Precinct 2 parks with waterfronts in the Intercontinental Terminals Company (ITC) incident area. A number of school districts have also closed, as a precaution.

"After the news of the ITC dike breach earlier today, I decided to close some of our parks out of precaution because my main priority is keeping our residents safe," Garcia said. "We want to ensure our parks are safe and able to function in the way our community expects and deserves. I want to give the EPA, TCEQ and others the time they need to continue their testing."

The following Precinct 2 parks will be closed with all scheduled events cancelled

until further notice:

- Bay Area Park in Houston ((Bay Area Community Center is open)
- Clear Lake Park in Seabrook
- Sylvan Beach in La Porte
- Juan Seguin in La Porte
- Rio Villa Nature Trail
- Meadow Brook
- River Terrace
- Moncrief Park

The Lynchburg Ferry remains closed to the public.

LA PORTE: Seabreeze Park and Klein Retreat in La Porte will remain closed until further notice.

Health Recommendations

According to Harris County Public Health (HCPH), and based on current air monitoring reports, there continues to be a low health risk for the community.

HCPH operated three-day Mobile Health Clinics in the Deer Park area that had a tremendous community response. At this time,

HCPH has not scheduled additional clinics.

If you do not have a health care provider, the Harris Health System's Ask-My-Nurse helpline remains open today, from 8 a.m. to 8:30 p.m., to help answer health questions. The number is 713-634-1110.

What you need to do:

- Listen to local officials for updates on the situation and for any actions you may need to take.

- Monitor local weather forecasts.

- If you do not feel well, contact your healthcare provider, or, if more serious, call 9-1-1.

Where you can learn more:

- Air Quality Data: ReadyHarris.org
- Health Information: Harris County Public Health
- Fixed Air Monitoring Sites: TCEQ

COMMUNITY NEWS

Crosby-Huffman markets to members at Crawfish Shack



Southern Lace Estates surprises their host with a display photo of their host from a wedding of Dan Meaux's daughter at their wedding event center. It was marketing your business to other members event at the Crawfish Shack last Thursday. In attendance were governmental agencies as well as a variety of private enterprises. Members accepted the challenge to display their wears and speak of their products and services.

There is a lot of business developing in Crosby. New folks are coming in and new fresh business ideas are being represented locally.

Attendees got a chance to experience the latest electronic circulation aiding devices, get coupons for Huddle House in Huffman and a myriad of the latest products and services. We learned that Confections has been voted

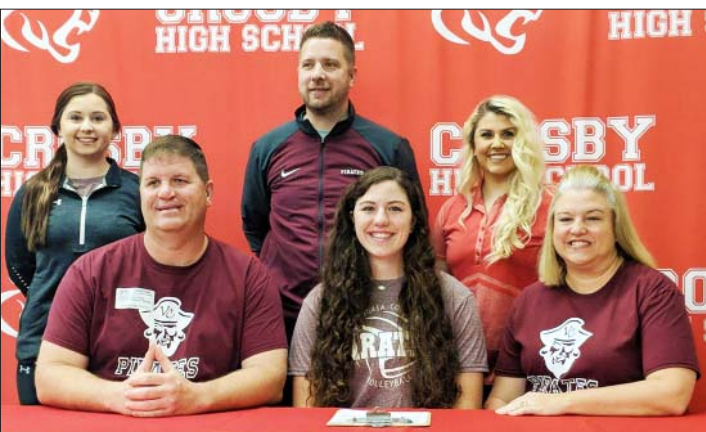
best coffee house in Crosby.

We learned that Eddie Foster is on the Crosby Municipal Utility District Board and that an election is to be held in May. Velma Ellison is also running for that board.

Debbie Holmelin explains the benefits of her in-home wine experience and food matching service to Eddie Foster of the Chamber board at her marketing station inside the Crawfish Shack last Thursday.



Victoria College signs Crosby volleyball standout



Crosby senior Brooke Oney signed a letter-of-intent Wednesday to play volleyball at Victoria College. Seated with Oney are her parents, Eric and Traci Oney. Standing are, from left, VC Assistant Volleyball Coach Skylar Chreene, VC Head Volleyball Coach Josh Moore and Crosby Assistant Volleyball Coach Marissa Simmons.

CROSBY – The Victoria College Pirates added the fourth player to their inaugural National Junior College Athletic Association volleyball team on Wednesday by signing Crosby middle blocker Brooke Oney to a letter-of-intent.

“What excites most about Victoria College volleyball is the ability to play the sport that I love at the next level at a college that has everything I was looking for - a remarkable nursing program, beautiful

campus, and smaller class sizes,” Oney said. “I am so incredibly excited to be on the first NJCAA Division I team from Victoria College. I know that there will be lots of challenges ahead, but I’m so grateful that I get to face them as a Victoria Pirate.”

The 6-foot Oney was an honorable mention selection on the All-District 21-5A team her senior season. She was also named to the academic all-district team the last three seasons.

“What influenced me most to play volleyball was the simple fact that I wasn’t ready to be ‘done,’” Oney said. “I didn’t want my career to end when I knew I still had so much potential. I also feel like playing collegiate sports is a huge privilege, so I am glad that I was good enough to make it.”

The Pirates will begin the 2019 season at home on Aug. 22 against Wharton County Junior College.

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Tees-N-Tails

Crosby-Huffman Chamber of Commerce will host its 27th Annula Tees-N-Tails Golf Tournament on Wednesday, April 17, 2019 at Red Wolf Golf Resort, 27350 Afton Way, Huffman, TX 77336. Registration at 10:30 am. Please contact Chamber Office at 281-328-6984 or chamber@crosbyhuffmancc.org with any questions.

Huffman Education Foundation Casino night

It's all in for Casino Night on April 26, 7 pm - 11 pm at the Walden Country Club to benefit the Huffman Education Foundation. The event will feature Texas Hold 'Em, roulette, craps, blackjack, a live auction, with door prizes per drawings.

Regular tickets are \$100 per person and with that the hors d'oeuvres, open bar, \$3,000 in casino Chips, and possibilities for 6 prizes drawn by the hostess. Space is limited so first come first served. To obtain tickets call (281) 328-7601 or visit www.huffmanef.com to buy tickets on-line.

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CROSBY'S HOME TOWN HOME CARE

COMMUNITY NEWS



Next Chamber Luncheon April 5

Speaker for the next luncheon is Robert Guerrero, of SeAH Steel USA, a new industry in the North Channel area. At San Jacinto College, reservations 713-450-1114.

Channelview ISD Teacher Job Fair

April 12, 2019 from 5:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. at Channelview High School, 1100 Sheldon Rd., Channelview, TX 77530.

GP/JC Rotary Club Cake Auction

Cake Aution will be April 16, 2019, during regular meeting, 12 p.m. at Baggett Community Center. Galena Park/Jacinto City Rotary Club chapter seeks to collect funds to assist college students whom find themselves faced with the obstacle of financial hardship.

North Shore Rotary Fish Fry

Go Big for Rotary at the 44th Annual Catfish & Crawfish Boil, May 18, 2019 at the North Shore Rotary Pavillion, 14350 Wallisville Road. Serving time 11 am - 3 pm. Live auction, entertainment and 20 prizes in raffle drawing.

Police investigate shooting on Maxey Road

Houston police are investigating the shooting of a man and woman that occurred on Maxey Road about 2 a.m. on March 21.

According to Houston Police Detectives , Shawn Taylor, 21, and Terriona Dozie, 24, were sitting in their vehicle in a parking lot at 490 Maxey Road-when they were shot by an unknown suspect.

The victims were transported to an area hospital with what are believed to be non-life-threatening wounds.

Anyone with information on this case is urged to contact the HPD Major Assaults & Family Violence Division at 713-308-8800 or Crime Stoppers at 713-222-TIPS.

Commissioner Garcia updates health concerns

During the Deer Park fire, the high readings of benzene in the air were a result of chemicals escaping the foam blanket covering the tanks at ITC. Crews applied foam to the site to eliminate the source of the chemical and monitor the air quality.

Air quality is being monitored in coordination with the Environmental Protection Agency, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Harris County, and other federal, state, and local agencies.

“My number one priority is ensuring the safety of our residents,” Harris County Precinct 2 Commissioner Adrian Garcia said.

Residents are still encouraged to monitor their symptoms. Harris County Precinct 2 Commissioner Adrian Garcia has partnered with Harris County Public Health System to station mobile health units open to the public and available to everyone for provide health screenings and assessment. Those units were stationed at 500 W. 13th Street at the Jimmy Burke Activity Center in Deer Park for about 3 days beginning last Wednesday.

“We know not everyone has insurance or can afford to go to the doctor,” Commissioner Garcia said. “We are taking action to make sure residents are getting checked out and are getting their health questions answered.”

Harris County Public Health has also established a hotline to assist residents with health-related questions. Residents can call the Harris Health System’s Ask My Nurse hotline (713-634-1110) from 8 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. seven days a week. Calling 9-1-1 should be reserved for life-threatening situations.

To stay up to date please check www.readyharris.org/Deer-Park-Fire, or www.deerparktx.gov/itc-fire

County Attorney Ryan sues ITC over dangerous fire at Deer Park Facility



County Attorney Vince Ryan

Harris County Attorney Vince Ryan has sued Intercontinental Terminals Company LLC (ITC) over the dangerous fire that began March 17 at that facility in Deer Park.

Harris County Commissioners today approved the lawsuit which seeks a temporary restraining order and temporary and permanent injunctions in an environmental enforcement action. The County Attorney charges that ITC is responsible for burning and air emissions in violation of the state’s Clean Air Act, discharging industrial waste into nearby waters in violation of state law and county regulations, and violation of county floodplain regulations by not having development permits for structures at its facility.

“This company put the health of Harris County residents in danger in many ways for several days,” said County Attorney Ryan. “We will hold them responsible for their actions.”

Harris County’s Pollution Control, Emergency

The lawsuit seeks a temporary restraining order forbidding ITC to reopen until a third-party expert appointed by the Court finds it is safe to resume operations. The order would also forbid the company from disposing of any wastes by opening tanks where it is stored and venting it into the atmosphere and it would require ITC to maintain all records and water, air and ground samples it has collected.

The lawsuit also asks for civil penalties for violations of state and local regulations and that ITC reimburse the County for its response to the fire and for attorney’s fees.

“When we allow companies like ITC to locate in our community, they have a responsibility to operate in a safe manner,” said County Attorney Ryan. “That’s why we have local and state regulations and laws to ensure that our residents are protected. Violations of those laws are unacceptable and we will work to ensure that they are enforced.”

REP. ANA HERNANDEZ INFORMS

Update from TCEQ regarding ITC Fire site

DEER PARK, Texas – March 22, 2019 – The dike surrounding the fire-damaged chemical storage tanks at the Intercontinental Terminals Co. in Deer Park was breached on Friday. Previously, booms were put in place by ITC’s environmental contractor at the direction of the Coast Guard. Unified com-

mand is taking action to contain runoff from the breach with additional booms. Also, the Coast Guard closed traffic on the water in the vicinity of Tucker Bayou and the ITC site.

ITC’s contractor, at the direction of TCEQ, and the Coast Guard are skimming and pumping contaminat-

ed runoff into storage containers. TCEQ is working to fully assess and mitigate any wider impact.

No threat to local public water systems has been detected, and no local water system draws its source water from the Houston Ship Channel, which is adjacent to the ITC site.

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Spring Cleaning Tips From Connie

Let's get out the cleaning supplies and tackle "spring cleaning."The number one piece of equipment is your vacuum cleaner, so don't overlook the maintenance.

- Change the bags frequently and the filters every 10 bags. Bagless vacuums need the filters checked and cleaned.Dirty filters bog the machine down and can cause damage to the circuit board and the motor.
- Check the beater bar/brush roller (the spinning brush underneath the vacuum that brushes dirt out of carpet). Use scissors or your hands to remove anything wrapped around/or caught in the brush roller.
- Check the electric cord. Take time to rewind cord properly and remove gently from wall socket. This will save the cord from damage.
- For hardwood or laminate floors see us for cleaning and refreshing products.
- Dusting blinds, pictures, window frames and hard to reach places will be easier with an ostrich feather duster.

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OPINION

TEXAS
SENATE NEWS
By Richard Lee

Senate gives
unanimous approval to
teacher pension fix

(Austin) The state's teacher pension plan would meet statutory requirements for fiscal soundness under a bill approved by the Senate without objection Monday. The Teacher Retirement System provides monthly annuity payments for more than 420,000 retired Texas teachers and other public school employees, but doesn't meet the legal standard of "actuarial soundness", that is, the ability to meet all of its outstanding obligations within 31 years. That period currently stands at 87 years representing almost \$47 billion in unfunded liabilities. SB 12 author and Houston Senator Joan Huffman warned that if the Legislature takes no action, the program's unfunded obligations would reach \$124 billion by 2050. "This is long-term planning showing fiscal responsibility," she said. "This plan is far more cost efficient than simply attempting to contribute one-time infusions of cash every so often." Under the plan approved by the Senate, the fund would be actuarially sound by the next fiscal year.

The bill would achieve soundness by gradually increasing rates from the three major contributors:

the state, local school districts and active public school employees. Districts would see their contribution rate rise from 1.5 percent today to 2 percent by fiscal year 2025. Both the member and state contribution rates would go up to 8.25 percent by fiscal 2024, up from 7.7 percent for employees and 6.8 percent for the state. Also in the bill are provisions for a bonus check, up to \$500, to be paid to beneficiaries during the next biennium. It's the first such "13th check" that retired teachers have received since 2013.

The money covering the state portion of the bill, more than \$500 million from the Economic Stabilization Fund, was approved by the Senate as part the supplemental budget bill on March 13th. That measure's author and the chamber's lead budget writer Senate Finance Committee Chair Senator Jane Nelson of Flower Mound, said that Huffman's proposal demonstrates the state's intention to protect the future income of the state's retired educators. "What we put in last session was just to keep [TRS] afloat," she said in reference to a one-time infusion to the fund in the 2017 session. "This is a

more permanent fix and a commitment on the part of this Legislature that we care about our retired teachers."

The bill now heads to the House for consideration. That body's version of the bill, as filed, would raise only the state's contribution rate, up to 8.8 percent.

In committee Monday, the Senate State Affairs Committee considered a bill intended to pre-empt what its author called a "growing attack on freedom of speech and expression of religious beliefs." Lubbock Senator Charles Perry worries when licensing boards adopt standards or rules that violate religious expression, it could cause people who work under an occupational license to choose between their job and religion. His bill, SB 17, would prevent licensing boards from adopting rules that unreasonably restrict a person's free exercise of religion. It also creates a new defense for people facing disciplinary action from regulators. "If a person comes in front of the occupational licensing board based on their speech or conduct, this bill provides a defense to losing their license as long as their conduct or speech is based on sincerely held religious beliefs," said Perry. The bill would not protect a person from being fired, sued or losing their license for violations of the law or standards of care. It would also not apply in situations involving the administration of life-saving medical care or law enforcement.

The Senate will reconvene Tuesday, March 26 at 11 a.m.

Air pollution from tank
fire sparks lawsuits

AUSTIN — Images of a stream of billowing dark smoke drew the nation's attention last week to a fire that engulfed 11 petrochemical storage tanks at the Intercontinental Terminals Company about 15 miles southeast of Houston in Deer Park.

On March 17, Gov. Greg Abbott ordered that all state resources be made available to local and industry officials and urged residents to heed the warnings of local officials. Governmental bodies in nearby affected areas ordered residents to shelter in place because of concerns about unhealthy air quality. Deer Park Independent School District and other districts canceled classes for several days.

The fire was extinguished on March 20. Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton on March 22 announced that his office, acting on behalf of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, had filed a lawsuit naming the tank storage company as the defendant. The lawsuit alleges that the fire caused air pollution from benzene, xylene, toluene and other contaminants, in violation of the Texas Clean Air Act.

In a statement accompanying the lawsuit, Paxton said, "No company can be allowed to disrupt lives and put public health and safety at risk."

The Chemical Safety Board, an independent federal agency charged with investigating industrial chemical accidents, announced March 21 that an investigation into the fire would be opened.

STATE CAPITAL
HIGHLIGHTS
By Ed Sterling

Jobless rate stays
low

Texas' seasonally adjusted unemployment rate held at 3.8 percent in February, according a March 22 news release by the Texas Workforce Commission.

The Midland Metropolitan Statistical Area recorded February's lowest unemployment rate with a non-seasonally adjusted rate of 2.2 percent, followed by the Odessa at 2.7 percent and Amarillo at 2.9 percent.

Growth in the Texas economy continued in February, with 17,700 seasonally adjusted non-farm positions added over the month.

TWC Chair and Commissioner Representing Employers Ruth R. Hughes said her agency "is committed to engaging with all employers across Texas to strengthen our economy and to create and expand opportunities for all."

TWC Commissioner Representing Labor Julian Alvarez added, "To ensure positive growth, we must continue to invest in necessary training and education for subsequent generations."

Ticketing system
targeted

Photographic traffic signal enforcement systems would be banned under Senate Bill 653 by Sen. Bob Hall, R-Edgewood.

Hall seeks to prohibit municipalities and other local jurisdictions from us-

ing red-light cameras as a means of issuing traffic tickets.

In laying out his bill before the Senate Transportation Committee, Hall said that under the red light camera enforcement, "the innocent owner has then the burden of proof and often great expense of proving that they did not commit the alleged violation. This turns our judicial system completely and utterly upside down by requiring the accused to prove their innocence."

More than two dozen people testified for or against the bill in a March 20 Senate Transportation Committee hearing.

Regents to examine
policies

Gov. Abbott on March 18 sent a letter to all Texas public university boards of regents following the U.S. Department of Justice's investigation into an alleged college admissions bribery scheme.

In his letter, Abbott called for governing boards of Texas' institutions of higher education "to examine and investigate admissions policies and procedures to ensure that no university employee engages in fraudulent schemes, quid pro quo arrangements or improprieties of any sort." He added that Texas parents and students "must have confidence that the system is not rigged."

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2nd Annual Rock'N C Steak Cook-Off held March 23

CROSBY – Anytime there is a national competition originating in Texas there is considerable local interest but that is doubled when it is about cooking out.

Crosby Fair & Rodeo held their second Steak Cook-Off to Steak Cook-Off Association's (SCA) guidelines here last weekend where one could buy a steak done right after the contest and listen to Coby Carter play some Western Swing, grab a partner and dance, afterwards.

The fund-raiser like most of the Crosby Fair & Rodeo activities is dedicated to enriching life in Crosby, primarily by enabling local youth to continue their education beyond high school. The standing joke is, "Ignorance had a long run, we work to try something different."

According to trusted insurance man and announcer, Rick Loggins, "We did in the neighborhood of \$2500 at the auction. Sold over 120 steak dinners. Had 29 cook-teams, down from last year due to an overlap with the Crosby Sports Association Opening Day. Calcutta paid out over \$2,400 and Crosby Fair & Rodeo paid out \$2,800. We had great volunteers including Erin Fuchs in charge. We always want to have more local people. We had more folks from out of town this year, some came from the other side of Waco, Lake Whitney, Dallas, and Louisiana. We are planning for bigger and better next year. We were pleased with the music Cody Carter of New Mexico. Had a lot of people dancing and we love to see that."

There were four contests in all. The Steak Cook-off, the Kids' Division, Michelada, and Appetizer all awarded points to the World Championship coming this winter. Applicants are encouraged to compete in several contests to earn the right to go on to the World Championship awarded automatically to the Steak Cook-Off winner.



Winner of Steak Cook-Off John Butler holding his payout and a ticket to the Oct.5 World Championship in Fort Worth.



Robert Erwin holds his second place steak payout and plaque as he stands with S.C.A. judge Rob Bailey.



Joe Castillo at right, stands with the man that purchased his Calcutta, holding his steak plaque and third place payout.



S.C.A. Judge Rob Bailey congratulates Joe Castillo on winning Michelada.



Bailey with the Tyler Whitehead Team as they earned second place in Michelada.



Sheree French was third in in Michelada, here representing French Hlcks Team a.k.a. Hula Hut Girls!



SCA Judge Rob Bailey presents plaque and payout to Renee Rodriguez winner of Appetizers.



Second Place Appetizers went to Micha Butle, wife of the Steak winner. Bet that family can cook!



Kerrie Larkin earned third place Appetizers. Her husband accepted 9th in Steaks for Backseat Cookers.



Rob Bailey persents Robby Erwin the winning plaque for the Kids Cook Division.



Alexa McGinnis accepts her second place in the Kids Cook.



Braydon Heath placed third ni the Kids Cook Division.

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and strengh, a
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in trouble
Psalm: 46:1



OBITUARIES

David Brian Perkins

David Brian Perkins, 60, passed away March 25, 2019 in Houston, Texas. David was born on January 20, 1959 to parents Robert and Gloria Perkins in Kingsville, Texas. He married the love of his life, Chrystal, on August 21, 2003 and they enjoyed many years together. David was a superintendent at Glex, Inc where he worked for 35 years. During that time, he developed some of his most treasured friendships. He was an avid golfer, often found on the golf course before the sun rose. While his golf partners rode in golf carts, David insisted on carrying his clubs all 18 holes. He also enjoyed barbequing, especially ribs, spending time on the beach, and gambling, where he was always a winner. David was a dedicated husband, son, brother and friend. He is preceded in death by his parents and is lovingly survived by his wife of 16 years, Chrystal Perkins; step-son, Matthew Dent; granddaughter, Alyssa Dent; brother and sisters, Jesse Perkins and wife Carla, Terri O'Brien and husband Mike, Donna Rother and husband Reggie, Laura Carrion and

husband Roland; as well as numerous nieces, nephews, extended family members and many friends. Friends are welcome to join the family for visitation from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 27, 2019. Funeral services officiated by his cousin, Ken Jamison, will be held at 10:00 a.m. Thursday, March 28th in the chapel of Carter-Conley Funeral Home. Graveside services will immediately follow at San Jacinto Memorial Park under the direction of Carter-Conley Funeral Home.

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What we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory He will reveal to us later
ROMANS 8:18

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

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Be alert. Continue strong in the faith. Have courage and be strong.
1 Corinthians 16:13

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

ASK THE EXPERT

ASK DIAMOND JIM

Diamond Jim: What is the birthstone for April?"

APRIL BIRTHSTONE - Diamond HISTORY OF THE DIAMOND AS THE APRIL BIRTHSTONE

Natural diamonds are a rare and unique ultimate gift for a loved one. Thought to be one of the hardest substances on the globe, diamonds date back billions of years. The diamond is the traditional birthstone of April and holds significant meaning for those born in that month, thought to provide the wearer with better relationships and an increase in inner strength.

Wearing diamonds is purported to bring other benefits such as balance, clarity and abundance. It's also symbolic of eternal love, and those fortunate to call April the month of their birth will enjoy the following history behind this rare gem.

Diamond Gemstones

Adopted from the Greek word adamas, meaning "invincible," diamonds come in a wide range of colors such as black, blue, green, pink, red, purple, orange and yellow. The color is dependent upon the type of impurities that are present in the stone. For instance, yellow stones have minuscule traces of nitrogen while blue ones contain boron.

During ancient times, theories touting the magical powers of diamonds were prevalent:

some thought lightning bolts formed diamonds, while other theories asserted that diamonds were the tears of God.

The Healing Powers of Diamonds

During the Middle Ages, diamonds were thought to hold healing powers and to cure ailments stemming from the pituitary gland and brain. By heating the crystal and taking it to bed, it was thought to draw out the harmful toxins that were crippling the body. It was also believed that diamonds could have an effect on an individual's balance and clarity and could boost their energy when combined with other crystals like amethyst.

The diamond as the April gemstone has garnered the hearts of many and is the most coveted crystal to date. Deemed as the "King of all Birthstones," diamonds make the ideal choice for an April birthday gift. (She'll love you for it!)

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

If you have questions pertaining to jewelry, watches, diamonds, precious stones, precious metals, and other questions related to the jewelry industry, email jmills@pineforestjewelry.com.

CHARLOTTE'S WEB



Checking In

Over the past few weeks as I have transitioned to my new position working with senior citizens I have seen an increased value in checking in with those in our lives. I have also realized just how blessed I am to have a wide circle of people who I talk with throughout each day.

One Thursday, I spoke to a precious older woman and she shared her favorite scripture and told me about her sewing circle at the local community center. The following week, as I was making phone calls, I learned she had passed away. My heart broke yet knowing that she loved God, I could not let the sadness steal my joy. Later that same day, a young lady in my life for years reached out and asked me to pray for her and to help her find some help. Her mother passed away when my friend was only 18 and then shortly afterwards, her dad made some poor choices and is now he is incarcerated for the next 40 years. She is distraught and feels hopeless.

Before the week was over, I heard from her younger brother on social media. He was very disillusioned about life and unable to put one foot in front of the other, was at a point questioning if there was any point in living. I immediately contacted a mutual friend and asked her to not only join me in prayer but to reach out and see what the needs were.

My children have always rolled their eyes when I have told them that I love them and to call me later, yet in a world of so many

changes and so many choices, it is more important than ever. We are all guilty of not knowing our neighbors and occasionally wondering who the people are that we see yet not paying much attention. On St. Patrick's Day, my daughter and I had dinner and I noticed she was not in her vehicle. She had a friend working on her radio so she used the friend's truck to meet me. And for some reason, I took a picture of the license plate. Who would have known that within a week I would have to give that plate number to the police, as my daughter had become a missing person? When I went to the authorities, they were impressed as to how much information I had with me. Between my daughter in law and myself, we gave them what seemed like pages of information and they began the search statewide. The officers questioned why I believed something was wrong and it was simple, she had NOT checked in with any of us in four days. By the grace of God we have finally located her and the road ahead is not going to be easy yet we will be okay. And instead of sitting around worrying about her, until we heard from the police, I continued to stay focused on my purpose and trust Him.

Please make a point to touch base with your family and friends, especially the older adults as well as the young people who seems fine at first sight but as you stop and ask intentional questions, really need to talk and usually need some assistance. Be present and check in.

New Health Bill to lower health costs, reverse GOP health care sabotage

Rep. Sylvia Garcia (TX-29) Cosponsors the Protecting Pre-Existing Conditions & Making Health Care More Affordable Act

- Providing funding for reinsurance, to help with high cost claims, improve Marketplace stability, and prevent the Trump Administration's sabotage from raising premiums.

WASHINGTON, D.C. – March 27, 2019 – Congresswoman Sylvia Garcia cosponsored sweeping new health care legislation that will lower Texans' health insurance premiums, crack down on junk health insurance plans, strengthen protections for people with pre-existing conditions, and reverse the Trump Administration's health care sabotage.

The Protecting Pre-Existing Conditions & Making Health Care Affordable Act was introduced the day after the Trump Administration asked a federal court to strike down not only the Affordable Care Act's protections for people with pre-existing conditions, but every other part of the health law.

"Just yesterday, the Trump Administration filed a brief here in Texas indicating their intent on continuing their war on affordable health care and people with pre-existing conditions," said Rep. Garcia. "Sadly, even after the 2018 election, Republicans have not learned the lesson that Americans want increased access to quality health care and to protect those with pre-existing conditions."

"With the Protecting Pre-Existing Conditions & Making Health Care Affordable Act, Democrats are taking another step forward in delivering our promise to lower health costs for the American people, and I am proud to be an original cosponsor of this bill that will make our families happier and healthier."

The Protecting Pre-Existing Conditions & Making Health Care More Affordable Act of 2019 includes provisions that will:

Lower health insurance premiums with strengthened and expanded affordability assistance

- Strengthening tax credits in the Marketplace to lower Americans' health insurance premiums and allows more middle-class individuals and families to qualify for subsidies;
- Ensuring that families who don't have an offer of affordable coverage from an employer can still qualify for subsidies in the Marketplace; and,

Strengthen protections for people with pre-existing conditions

- Curtailing the Trump Administration's efforts to give states waivers to undermine protections for people with pre-existing conditions and weaken standards for essential health benefits, which would leave consumers with less comprehensive plans that do not cover needed services, such as prescription drugs, maternity care, and substance use disorder treatment.

Stop insurance companies from selling junk health insurance plans

- Stopping the Trump Administration's efforts to push Americans into junk health insurance plans that do not provide coverage for essential medical treatments and drugs, and that are allowed to discriminate against people with pre-existing medical conditions.

Reverse the GOP's health care sabotage that has needlessly driven up premiums and uninsured rates, and empower states to innovate and invest in enrolling more people in affordable health coverage

- Reversing the Trump Administration's sabotage by requiring open enrollment outreach, education, and funding for navigators;
- Investing in state efforts to conduct outreach to increase enrollment, educate consumers of their rights, and help individuals navigate the health insurance system;
- Empowering states to implement new approaches to increasing enrollment and allows states to set up their own Marketplaces; and
- Holding the Administration accountable for its use of federal dollars dedicated to increasing enrollment, outreach and running the federal exchange.

Congresswoman Sylvia R. Garcia was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in November 2018, becoming the first Latina ever to represent Texas 29th Congressional district.

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Bond Election,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



The bond proposal was developed and recommended by the Citizens' Bond Planning Committee (CBPC), a diverse group of CISD parents, staff, local citizens, and community leaders.

in 2012 to the current rate of \$1.396.

The last time Channelview ISD held a bond election was a decade ago, in November 2009. Projects included in the 2009 bond were completed on time and on budget by November 2012.

Since the 2009 Bond, the district has continued to grow, which prompted the Board of Trustees to analyze a new demographic report. With 620 new homes slated for construction within the school district's boundaries, it is expected that the student population will continue to grow, and additional space will be needed for both classroom instruction and special programs.

The District also conducted a third-party facility assessment along with a financial analysis. This information was presented to the Citizens Bond Plan-

ning Committee, which was made up of a diverse cross-section of the community including CISD parents and staff and local community members. The group studied the information, heard from principals and department leaders, and toured campuses in order to get a complete, firsthand look at the needs of the district. The committee then developed a bond proposal that was unanimously approved by the Board of Trustees to go before voters in May.

The May 2019 Channelview ISD bond includes replacing aging facilities, enhancing student programming opportunities and increasing capacity at Channelview High School, campus renovations, upgrading safety and security systems, refreshing technology district-wide, land purchase for future

school sites and new buses.

If approved, this bond equates to an increase of approximately \$9.30 a month for the average home valued at \$120,000. State law freezes the tax rate of homeowners 65 years of age and older and have filed their exemption with the Harris County Appraisal District. Therefore, senior citizens with an exemption on file will not see an increase associated with this bond.

The deadline to register to vote in the May 4, 2019 election is Thursday, April 4, 2019. Early voting begins Monday, April 22 and ends Tuesday, April 30. Election day is Saturday, May 4.

If you have questions about the bond election, or if you would like more information, visit the Channelview ISD bond website at cvisdbond.org.

New Legislators,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Houston, Pasadena, Galena Park, Jacinto City, South Houston, and Aldine.

Garcia said, "My committee assignments on the House Financial Services Committee and the House Judiciary Committee are vital to the Houston region, the State of Texas, and the nation. I've always fought for working families, and my appointments will allow me to use that experience to continue these efforts."

State Senator Carol Alvarado is serving her first term in the Texas Senate. She is Vice-Chair of the Senate Select Committee on Texas Ports and represents Senate District 6 encompassing the Eastern portions of Harris County along with the cities of Baytown, Pasadena, Galena Park, Jacinto City and South Houston.

Alvarado said, "The fire at the Intercontinental Terminals Company (ITC) facility in Deer Park is a local disaster that is still ongoing. While the threat of the fire has passed, the clean up and investigation that must follow has just begun. I am closely moni-

toring each stage of recovery including clean up at the facility, clean up and containment in the nearby bodies of water and investigation into the cause. We are receiving ongoing updates from various agencies and organizations including TCEQ, EPA, Harris County Emergency Management and ITC themselves. There are still many unanswered questions at this time but I can assure residents that we will push to get the answers our community deserves."

The Senator stated this issue has impacted South East Harris County heavily and raised concern across the city. She's expecting all agencies involved in this incident to strictly enforce any standards that were not met by ITC leading up to this disaster. She anticipates ITC will be held fully accountable for damages caused and to be charged accordingly. On a larger scale, Alvarado feels this accident brings to light questions of safety standards, environmental protections and regulatory laws for all companies similar to ITC.

She'll be making sure the communities in South East Houston have all possible safety precautions in effect and they're enforced consistently. "We must ensure that these companies are acting as good neighbors, with the wellbeing of the residents surrounding them in mind," Alvarado said.

Representative Morales who was elected just two weeks ago said, "I've just been in office a few days and still getting settled into my office, but I've hit the ground running."

"I'm meeting with other local area representatives to educate myself on bills and pending legislation so I can ensure we have as much support as possible to help improve the lives of my constituents and the citizens in the East Harris County area," Morales said.

"I'm very concerned about the health risk of the East End residents after the ITC fire. I want an environmental investigation on the long-term effects on the water and air quality from this catastrophe, and to determine the impact it'll have on our economy" she said.

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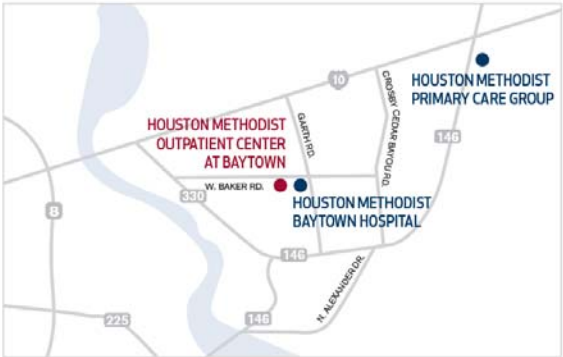
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