NORTH CHANNEL & STAR

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Serving all of the North Shore -- Channelview, Cloverleaf, Sheldon, Galena Park, Jacinto City VOLUME 9, NO. 20/21 (#373) THURSDAY, MAY 20&27, 2021 www.northchannelstar.com

CHANNEL CURRENTS

THURS. JUNE 10 EPA holds Virtual Meeting for Waste Pits

The EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) will hold a Microsoft TEAMS Video and Call Conference on Thursday, June 10 from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm.

Topics for discussion include: Changes to Remedial Design Schedule, Upcoming Design Investigation Sampling, and Overall Remedial Design Update.

The public is invited to join, at the Web Address https://www.epa.gov/tx/sjrwp.
Or you may join by calling in by telephone. SEE MORE DETAILS on Page

PUBLIC may use the group VIEWING SITES: San Jacinto Community Center Highlands,

Channelview Fire Department, Dell Dale.

Jacinto City, Galena Park each receive \$5m+ in flood mitigation money

AUSTIN - Texas Land Commissioner George P. Bush announced last Tuesday that the Texas General Land Office (GLO) approved more than \$90.4 million in drainage, water and wastewater infrastructure projects to mitigate the effects of widespread flooding that has long impacted eastern Harris County.

The cities of Baytown, Galena Park, Jacinto City and Pasadena prioritized large-scale, majority low-to-moderate income (LMI) projects that would serve our most vulnerable populations and the community at large by protecting public health,

safety and welfare.
"In recent years Texas has led the nation in disaster declarations, and the historic funding we're announcing today will go directly to projects that will businesses and critical infrastructure against future disasters," said Commissioner Bush. "The GLO received more than \$6.5 billion in requests for mitigation project funding income communities. underscoring the urgent need for increased resiliency throughout the Texas coast. We continue to work hard every day to put these federal funds to work protecting our coastal resources and communities, from our ports to our most vulnerable residents."

"While I am disappointed that the City of Houston was not awarded flood mitigation funding, I am pleased that Pasadena, Galena Park, Jacinto City and Baytown in Senate District 6 received money for their proposals," said Senator Carol

CONTINUED. SEE FLOOD

Fallen Heroes Ceremony at JC Police Station

By Linda Jamai

Jacinto City, TX. - Saturday, May 15, 2021 police officers, firemen and members of the arm forces gathered with wreaths identifying the branches honored. After a prayer by Allan Jamail and the Pledge of Allegence to the flag led by Chief Joe Ayala which was at Half Staff comments were made in remembrance of the nation's fallen heroes who died in the line of duty. Cake and refreshments were served inside the new police station.

May 15th was designated by President Joseph Biden as the day to honor both law enforcement officers and members of the



ceremony on behalf of the Fallen Hereos of law enforcement, firefighters and the members of the Armed Forces.

L – R: Emcee Allan Jamail, Galena Park Fire Chief Tom Ehlers, Sgt.
E. Ramos, Dispatcher Kasey Aguilar, F. Benavides, Chief Joe Ayala,
J. Pizano, S. Lopez, Lt. D. Walker, N. Frazier, C. Perez, & Sgt. S.

Attendees at the Jacinto City Police station held a commemorating

Armed Forces, May the 4th was Firefighters Day.

(Photo by Linda Jamail)

Attendees expressed gratitude to both men and women in the Armed Forc-

es for their military service to the nation; ensuring

Continued. See FALLEN HEROES, page 3 DEDICATED TO THE PEACE OFFICERS,
FIREMEN AND VETERANS OF WAR
WHO HAVE GIVEN THEIR LIVES
IN THE PURSUIT OF DUTY
DONATED BY
JACINTO CITY POLICE OFFICERS ASSOC.
, 1973

Photo of the granite monument and the words at the base of the flag pole in front of the Jacinto City police station.

New Pyburn Elementary Groundbreaking Ceremony

By Allan Jamail

Galena Park, TX. – May 11, 2021 At the GPISD Pyburn Elementary School Superintendant Dr. John Moore, Board Trustees and school officials came together for the ground breaking ceremony of a new school. Dr. Moore and Principal Conrad Rivera welcomed attendees and stated how the new school once completed will create a modern state of the art learning center with the



 $\hbox{\it PYBURN GROUNDBREAKING "Building Strong Foundations For Our Future Learners"} \\$

 L - R: Herbert Alexander Sanchez (Trustee), Conrad Rivera (Principal), Dr. John Moore (Superintendent), students Sebastian Elizondo, Colton Baldwin, Valeria Garcia, Noe Esparza (Trustee), Angelica Cuellar (Assistant principal) & Adrian Stephens (Trustee's Secretary). (Photo by Allan Jamail) most latest technological advances available.

H. Sonny Fletcher III, Senior Director for Facilities Planning said the school will have a functional capacity of approximately 725 students. The School Board is currently negotiating to obtain the best price possible and plans to present that at the June 14th board meeting. Tentatively the project is to begin this June 24th with a anticipated completion date of July 1, 2023.

Jose Jimenez wins North Shore Rotary Raffle

North Shore Rotarians gathered last Saturday afternoon at Turner Chevrolet in Crosby, to pull raffle tickets for their benefit Raffle event, and award prizes.

The raffle this year was in place of their annual Catfish Fry and Crawfish Broil, which they did not hold because of the health concerns from the COVID-19 pandemic.

In spite of that, and due to the hard work of the members of the club, they were able to sell over a thousand tickets, which will fund their projects in Harris County and internationally for the next year. The club through ticket sales, sponsorships,



live and silent auctions typically raises several hundred thousand dollars, which allow them to put the money back into the community for projects, scholarships and more. They are strong supporters of FFA programs in three school districts, and other educational projects.

As excitement and anticipation mounted, club president Lowell Everitt and Raffle Chairman

At left, Rotarian Shawn Silman reads the name on Ticket #25, and Jose Jimenez is the winner of a new vehicle in the raffle. club president Lowell Everitt, right, pulled each of the 25 tickets for Shawn. Shawn Silman spun the drum filled with ticket stubs, and pulled each of 25 winning tickets.

The luckiest person of the afternoon was Rotarian and Pct. 2 employee Jose Jimenez, who not only won the top prize of a new vehicle from Turner Chevrolet, but actually won three other prizes, too.

Of course that immediately led to a lot of joking about taking a trip to Las Vegas with him, to share his luck.

Jose will have his choice of a new Chevrolet Colorado pickup, or a Chevrolet Camaro. At press time he had not made a decision, but either way he will have great new wheels.

GLO, Feds deny flood funds to Harris County; but okay Jacinto City, Galena Park projects

Harris County and Houston officials learned Friday that the state GLO (General Land Office) and the federal HUD (Housing and Urban Development) had determined that these two governments would not receive any Flood Mitigation funding of the approximately \$1 billion that was available, in the first round of allocations by the state.

The allocations are based on a formula to determine which communities are the neediest, according to GLO. Within Harris County, approximately \$90 million was allocated to Baytown, Pasadena, Galena Park, and Jacinto City for flood mitigation projects that they had applied for.

Harris County had submitted an application asking for \$900 million, according to Pct. 2 Commissioner Adrian Garcia. Commissioner Gar-





cia, Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo, and Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner issued statements expressing their displeasure and disbelief in news of the allocations not including local jurisdictions.

Commissioner Garcia said that he was upset, and "incredibly frustrated." Judge Hidalgo said "It is unconscionable that the very community hit with the most flooded structures by far during Hurricane Harvey received nothing as part of this Harvey Mitigation allocation."

Mayor Turner said "For the State GLO not to give one dime in the initial distribution to the City and a very small portion to Harris County shows a callous disregard to the people of Houston and Harris County."

Judge Hidalgo said that she plans to ask HUD for a review of the criteria used, and assurance that the County will receive future fund allocations. She said the formulas that are used disadvantage large urban areas that are hardest hit.



You are invited to participate in the San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund Site Virtual Community Meeting June 10, 2021



The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will hold a virtual community meeting to provide an update for the San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund Site (Site). As we navigate our way through this unique time, the health and safety of our staff, contractors, and the communities we serve is our top priority. As a result, EPA and its Superfund Site teams are conducting virtual meetings in lieu of in-person public meeting events to reflect current COVID-19 guidance from federal, state, tribal, and local officials discouraging gatherings of more than ten people at a time.

During the virtual meeting, EPA staff and stakeholders will provide information and answer questions about the status of the Site. The virtual meeting will be held online and/or over the phone via Microsoft Teams Video and Call Conferencing on: Please test your computer or mobile app prior to attending the meeting using the link below. Technical support is limited and subject to significant delays. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, EPA will host the Site Update Meeting over the phone via Microsoft Teams Video and Call Conference.

Meeting Format	Microsoft Teams Video and Call Conference
Community Meeting	Topics for discussion include: Changes to Remedial Design Schedule, Upcoming Design Investigation Sampling and Overall Remedial Design Update
Meeting Web Address (URL)	https://www.epa.gov/tx/sjrwp
Date and Time	June 10th, 2021 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
Toll-free Audio for Meeting	(469) 607-1035 or toll free (844) 608-7693 Conference ID: 187 538 612#

There are <u>Two</u> ways to attend the virtual meeting:

Visit EPA's San Jacinto River Waste Pits website: https://www.epa.gov/tx/sjrwp to access virtual meeting information and web link.

Click on this link that says "Click here to join the meeting" When the Teams page launches, select "Use Teams" or current browser or "Go to Teams App" and follow the instructions. Browsers may vary by computer. Microsoft Teams currently supports the following browsers: Microsoft Edge, Google Chrome, Firefox, and Safari. Ensure you're running the latest browser version on your device to avoid any limitations in terms of features. Alternatively, you can download the Microsoft Teams app to your desktop computer or mobile device prior to the meeting.

- 2. Call in using this phone number and Conference ID (Audio only):
 - Phone number: (469) 607-1035 or toll free (844) 608-7693
- Conference ID: 187 538 612#

If you have any problems joining by phone or online on the day of the meeting, please contact Jeff Criner at (713) 985-6627 for immediate assistance.

Copies of fact sheets, information bulletins, the administrative record, and other information are available online at the San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund Site: https://www.epa.gov/tx/sjrwp or on the National Superfund Program website: www.epa.gov/superfund.

Or at the following Site information repositories:

Stratford Branch Library P.O. Box 260 Highland, Texas 77562 (832) 927-5400 Texas Commission on Environmental Quality Building E, Records Management 12100 Park 35 Circle Austin, TX 78753 (800) 633-9363

Should you have any specific needs or questions about the online virtual meeting, please contact: Janetta Coats, Senior Community Involvement Coordinator, at (214) 665-7308 or coats.janetta@epa.gov. Any request for accommodation should be made to Janetta 1 week or more in advance so that EPA will have sufficient time to process the request such as closed captioning.

All news media inquiries should be directed to the EPA Region 6 Press Office at (214) 665-2200 or (214) 665-2261.

Community Calendar

CHIC Community Meeting Thursday May 27

C.H.I.C.

Channelview Health & Improvement Coalition
A voice for Channelview
Contact us at C.H.I.C.77530@gmail.com
C.H.I.C. has organized in a continuing effort by residents
to share information, to
educate each other and to work together with governing
and other agencies to address
the issues impacting Channelview to bring awareness
and to document, prevent and
improve the issues and conditions affecting our residents.

Join Us to Voice Your Community Concerns Learn What Is Happening In Your Community Date: May 27, 2021 Thursday Time: 18:30 (6:30 p.m.) Place:

Channelview Fire Department Sta. 3 1210 Dell Dale Channelview, TX 77530 Topics:

Presentation by Channelview Fire Dept. – K-Solv fire, ECOM facility on Ridlon St. and Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating change achieved

and benefits
Organization & Volunteers
Issues addressed and relationships developed since Feb.
27, 2020

Issues Affecting the Channelview Community





SHELDON ISD NEWS

King High School students build on their future

Students enrolled in King High School's career and technology architecture and construction program took part in a work-based learning event where they completed a masonry challenge to enhance their skills. The Texas Mansory Council is a non-profit group with masonry contractors and suppliers who work to promote the industry. They spoke with students enrolled in the course who were interested in a field in construction and provided hands-on experience.

The vision of the Sheldon ISD Career and Technical Education program is to equip students with industry certifications aligned to the needs of the community and to provide students with the skills to either begin high-skilled, high-wage careers or to continue their post-secondary education. There are multiple opportunities for students to learn more about career and technical courses in Sheldon ISD. For more information, visit www.sheldonisd.com.



King High School career and technical education students had an opportunity for hands-on training with the Texas Masonry Council where they learned more about architecture and construction.

Sheldon staff gives back to senior class

On Friday, May 14, Sheldon ISD employees celebrated the Class of 2021 at Senior Decision Day at Panther Stadium. A tradition started roughly five years ago, Senior Decision Day recognizes students who have committed to a college, university or the military. They are entered into a drawing to win prizes donated by Sheldon ISD. Gift baskets are filled with helpful items for college, as well as other prizes for the lucky winners. The Class of 2021 is set to graduate at 7:30 p.m., Friday, June 11 at Panther stadium.

Senior Decision Day celebrates the Panther Class of 2021 with prizes and a movie on the big screen at Panther Stadium.

Lady Panthers athletes selected to All-District

Congratulations to eight Lady Panthers softball players for their All-District Selections. Results are listed

1st Team All-District
Turiya Coleman (senior, third base)
2nd Team All-District
Jayla Flores (junior, catcher)
Valerie Mares (sophomore, short stop)
Honorable Mention
Emily Grimaldo (sophomore, pitcher)
Lexy Gutierrez (junior, second base)



All-Academic Turiya Coleman, senior Emily Grimaldo, sophomore Valerie Mares, sophomore Aleesia Torres, sophomore Ziya Donaldson, freshman Dorian Parrish, junior

Turiya Coleman, senior and third base for the King High School Lady Panther softball team has been named 1st Team All-District, as well as All-Academic. This year, eight softball athletes received too honors from All-District.

Sign up for community news from Sheldon

Sheldon's new community enewsletter offers information and community wide events held for residents in Sheldon ISD and surrounding neighborhoods. Sign up by going to: https://mailchi.mp/6125d4c2319a/sign-upfor-community-news.

Sheldon ISD Education Foundation to host Sheldon Summer Scramble

To support the mission of raising funds for innovative teaching grants, Sheldon ISD Education Foundation is hosting its inaugural Sheldon Summer Scramble at 8 a.m. Thursday, June 3 at the Golf Club of Houston. Teams are still available. To register, go to www.sheldonisd.com/sef/.

Sheldon ISD Education Foundation surprises teachers with \$39,000 in

On Friday, May 21, the Education Foundation Board of Directors, Superintendent of Schools, SISD Board of Trustees and administrators presented 18 innovative teaching grants to Sheldon ISD educators at seven schools across the district. The Foundation awarded a total amount of \$39,286, surprising teachers with oversized checks, photographs, and more.

The Sheldon ISD Education Foundation is a non-profit organization that exists to raise funds for teachers who apply for innovative teaching grants. Teachers can apply for funding annually by submitting an application for an idea, lesson or project they want to implement in the classroom. To date the Foundation has awarded approximately \$121,000 in innovative teaching grants. To learn more, go to www.sheldonisd.com/sef/.



Photo caption (bookvending machine.jpg) The Sheldon ISD Education Foundation Prize Patrol awarded more than \$39,000 in grants May 21. Members of the patrol are pictured with grant recipient Melissa Cunningham from Cravens Early Childhood Academy. Cunningham has won funding for a book vending machine. Students will earn tokens for good behavior and spend the token to buy a book from the machine.

Sheldon offers Blue Card program for senior citizen residents

The Blue Card Program is an initiative to honor all of our supporters in the district who are age 65 or older. One of Sheldon ISD's goals is to create and foster an environment where all stakeholders are engaged and actively involved in the work we do for children. The success of our students is a shared responsibility of community members, parents, and educators, and we believe a community's collective power is greater than individual efforts. To sign up to be a Blue Card member, go to www.sheldonisd.com/bluecard/

Members receive free entry to district-sponsored fine arts and sporting events as well as a free luncheon each year with an opportunity to learn more about the district and engage with district leaders.

GP Jacketeers endure inspite of Virus Setbacks

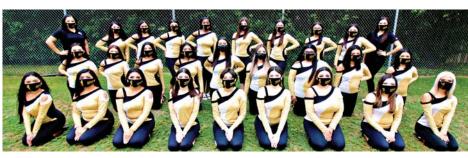
By Allan Jamail

Galena Park, TX. – May 13, 2021- The 2020-2021 Galena Park High School Jacketeers dance team has shown to be courageous and determined not to let the deadly COVID-19 virus knock them out of their year of dancing and performing.

These young ladies endured the hardships the virus brought them, guiding them through the dif-ficult year was their exceptionally talented and experienced Dance Team Director Mrs. Vanessa Boyce and her Assistant Director Ms. Alyza Vasqu-

The contagious virus forced the dance team recruits to audition virtually, and then they could practice just 2 or 3 times a week, and were only allowed to attend 4 of the 10 Yellowjackets football

Director Boyce said. "I



2020 - 2021 GALENA PARK JACKETEERS

Top Row I - R: Mrs. Vanessa Royce, Dance Director, Valeria Sias, Samantha Romero, Andrea Coreas, Nadiva Timmons, Alisa Salinas Karla Salinas, Teresa Diaz, Mariah Mercado, and Ms. Alyza Vasquez, Assistant Dance Director

Middle Row L - R: Giselle Meza, Celeste Pena, Emily Cruz, Karissma Sierra, Katelynne Galvan, Jaylinne Cazares, Alizah Morales, Miryam Monrroy, and Jackie Hernandez

Bottom Row L - R: Victoria Garcia, Marian Camacho, Sr. Lieutenant-Melanie Perez, Isabela Salinas, Laura Gonzalez, President-Emily Arredondo, Giselle Coreas, Jr. Lieutenant-Rebecca Gonzalez, and Captain Angel Ramirez. (Photo by Allan Jamail)

love teaching dance, it's my profession, passion, and purpose in life." In her 9 years with the Jacketeers she's experienced Grand Champion Awards and trips to New York and Los Angeles. At age 4 she began ballet and jazz dance classes, but it was

high school drill team that she first gained meaningful dancing experience, earning Captain rank her senior year.

At the University of During this time she also Texas Pan American she continued her dance education by joining the UTPA $\;\;$ dio. She was also a part of

with her junior high and Dance Team for 2 years, the Ballet Folklorico and the Modern Dance Company for 3 years. She graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Dance Education. taught and performed at Pointe' & Plie Dance Stu-

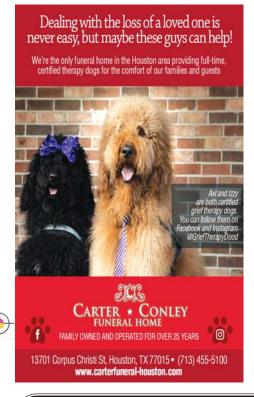
the first arena football Dorados Dance Team for 2 seasons, where she also served as Captain.

After graduating college Mrs. Boyce moved to Houston to dance in the NBA. She danced for the Houston Rockets for 5 Seasons. During this time she got to

dance in the NBA All Star Game and travel to Europe for a USO Tour. She spent a couple of more years as a dancer, Captain, and Di-Stallions Arena Football Dance Team.

Assistant Director Ms.Alyza Vasquez is from Houston and began dancing in the 5th grade at Star System Dance Co. where she trained for 3 years in ballet, tap, jazz, & hip hop. She attended both North Shore 9th grade Campus and North Shore Sr. High where she was a member of the North Shore Scarlets Dance Team for 4 years.

After high school, Vasquez went to Texas State University, where she was trained in ballet, jazz, modern, Improv & Laban. After graduating with a Bachelors degree in Fine Arts in Dance Education she was hired two years ago as Jacketeers Assistant Dance Director.



Fallen Heroes,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

protection and peace for their country.

The role of firefighters was acknowledged for their dedication, commitment, and sacrifice as they fight together to save lives and property against one common enemy-FIRE. It doesn't matter where in the nation they serve or what state, county or city they're called into service at, their duty is to fight

It was said our law enforcement officers are some of the most dedicated and courageous public servants there is. They are peace is broken they must respond and restore calm. Police Chief Joe Ayala

expressed his appreciation for those in attendance and gave morale boosting words of encouragement.

Coming from the neighboring city of Galena Park, Fire Chief Tom Ehlers said he was honored to be a part of the Fallen Heroes Day. He communicated his gratitude for the ultimate sacrifice of the fallen heroes and suggested ways to improve it. Next year the chief wants his department to play a larger role in the event.



ANA HERNANDEZ UPDATE 5-20-21

HB 16 Heads to Governor's Desk

On Wednesday, May 12, Rep. Hernandez concurred with the Senate amendments to House Bill 16, which will protect residential consumers and small businesses from price-gouging electric plans and ensure that costs resulting from any future electric grid failures are not passed on directly to consumers. The Senate amendments extend protections to small business consumers to ensure that our local businesses are not burdened with exorbitant electric prices.

The additional protections include:

- prohibiting deceptive wholesale-indexed rate products for residential and small commercial consumers;

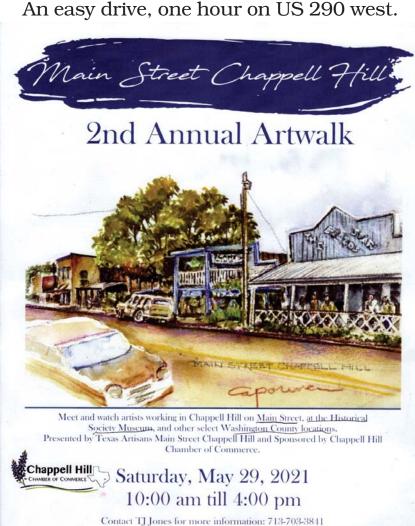
- requiring companies provide 3 written notices to residential consumers with the expiration date of their plan; and

– providing a default plan for consumers who do not receive the 3 written notices or do not choose a renewal



www.facebook.com/ NorthChannelStar

Spend this Saturday in the Country. The Artwalk in Chappell Hill is where you will see artists painting along the street. 10am to 4pm. Awards ceremony 4pm.





Passage of HB 3697

On Tuesday, May 4, the Texas House passed Rep. Hernandez's House Bill 3697, which would prohibit unemployment insurance applicants from being disqualified from consideration for involuntarily leaving the workplace to care for a minor child due to an unforeseen emergency in which no alternative care was available.

Muffins for Moms Event

Team Hernandez was honored to join Constable Silvia Treviño and Judge Victor Treviño III, Justice of the Peace 6-1, to host a free, drive-thru Mother's Day celebration on Thursday, May 6! Thanks to the hardworking volunteers and staff, we were able to celebrate and distribute goodies to more than 300 amazing moms!







OPINION PAGE



Clearance Rates for Crimes Continue to be Abysmal

The Texas Department of Safety has finally released its annual crime report by jurisdiction for 2019.1 This is the only place I have been able to find data on the number of reported crimes that are "cleared"2 by individual law enforcement agencies. The clearance rates across the state continue to be abysmal, but Houston and Harris County are particularly pathetic.

Overall

Harris County tied with Dallas County for last place among major Texas counties in solving the crimes reported to their law enforcement agencies at just 11%, compared to the statewide average of 15%. The Harris County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) and the Houston Police Department (HPD) dragged down the countywide average, coming in at 8% and 10%, respectively. These rates are among the lowest clearance rates for larger law enforcement agencies in the State.

Murder

The Houston Police Department (HPD) only solved 40% of the murder in 2019. This was one of the worst murder clearance rates in the state. Its rate was well below the statewide average and other metropolitan areas.

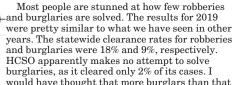
This was just the latest leg down for HPD's murder clearance rate. The 2019 rate was the lowest since I started tracking it in 2000.

Rape

For many years I have been writing about the embarrassingly low rates at which rapes are solved across the board. 2019 was no different Statewide, only 23% of rape cases were solved. It is very difficult for sexual assault victims to come forward and report these crimes. For less than one in four of them to receive justice from our legal system is shameful. Every agency is pretty much equally awful on this one.

HPD is now solving rape cases at about half the rate it was a decade ago (28% vs 53%).

Robbery & Burglary



would have thought that more burglars than that would have shown up and turned themselves in. HPD was only slightly better at 5%. I am just guessing that having a 95-98% chance of getting away with a burglary does not provide much of a deterrent to criminals.

Conclusion

To put these percentages is some numerical context, in Harris County there were over 200 unsolved murders in 2019, nearly 2,000 unsolved rapes, over 10,000 unsolved robberies and nearly 25,000 unsolved burglaries. In all, Harris County citizens reported almost 175,000 crimes that were not solved. Lord only knows how many they did not even bother to report.

Law enforcement agency managers and their surrogates, such as the police unions, always have a litany of reasons for how shockingly few crimes are actually solved. They complain about staffing levels, that they are discouraged by prosecutors and judges not prosecuting the criminals they do catch, lack of public cooperation, etc. And there is some merit to their points

But the fact remains that, as a society, we are failing miserably to provide justice to the victims of crimes and we have been failing to do so for a And as time goes by it worse.

There are many negative ramifications from our inability to solve a reasonable percentage of crimes beyond the obvious. For one, when the public does not have any confidence that law enforcement can do their job, they begin to take matters into their own hands - as I suspect is evidenced by the meteoric rise in gun sales.

Instead of everyone trotting out the same tired arguments about why we are not doing better, we need a deep dive into why we are doing such a terrible job. We need the governing bodies which supervise law enforcement agencies to start doing their job. Have you ever heard any member of the Houston City Council ask why HPD only solved 40% of murders or 23% of rapes last year? My guess is that not a single one of them even knows what the rates were.

A good start would be to require every law enforcement agency in the state to publish its clearance rates monthly. One of the basic rules I learned in my business career was that "if you cannot/do not measure it, you cannot manage it." The clearance rate should be a regular agenda item for every governing body that supervises a law enforcement agency, and the media should cover how well crimes are being solved on a regular basis.

Of course, none of that is happening now, which is probably why the numbers are so abysmal. Where there is no accountability, poor performance almost always follows



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS **By Gary Borders**

A Special session of the Legislature coming this fall

Texas lawmakers will adjourn the regular session on Monday — Memorial Day — but Gov. Greg Abbott has already indicated he will call a special session in the fall to grapple with redistricting after detailed census results are

finally released.

Last week, Abbott told lawmakers he would put them in charge of deciding how to spend nearly \$16 billion in federal money the state received for COV-ID-19 recovery efforts. During the first two rounds of stimulus fund-ing, Abbott decided how the money would be spent, which angered some legis-

lators.

The special session comes just months before the 2022 primaries, with Abbott, Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick, Attorney General Ken Paxton and Comptroller Glenn Hegar all planning to seek re-election.

That raises the possibil-ity of other topics being added the special session that could appeal to the governor's base, according to the San Antonio Express-News. Abbott has drawn one primary opponent, former state Sen. Don Huffines.

MASK MANDATES LARGELY A THING OF THE PAST IN **TEXAS**

Abbott last week issued an executive order banning all government and public entities from mandating the wearing of masks. The order went into effect May 21, except for public schools, which can require masks until June 4.

Local governments or

officials can be fined up to \$1,000 for requiring the wearing of masks, al-though businesses can still require them. Most large retailers, such as Walmart, Costco and Target, announced they were ending mask requirements.

However, state-support-ed living centers, governhospitals, state prison juvenile justice facilities and county and municipal jails

HIGHLANDS

Star & Courier

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and the

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order and can still require masks be worn.

A DAY IN TEXAS WITH NO COVID-19 DEATHS

For the first time since March 21, 2020, the state's Department of State Health Services on Sunday, May 16, said no deaths related to COVID-19 were reported.

The milestone was noted by Abbott and others, though celebrations were tempered at least among some, the Houston Chronicle reported. The hiatus was short-lived, however, as DSHS reported 23 new deaths the following day.

The number of Texans hospitalized who are COV-ID-19 patients is at its low-est level since last June, according to DSHS, with 2,070 cases that were lab confirmed as of Sunday.

The number of new cases in the past week in Texas, as reported by the Coronavirus Resource Center at Johns Hopkins University, stood at 12,290, down 17.5 percent from the previous week and continuing the steady decline statewide. A total of 269 deaths were recorded statewide for the same time frame.

Meanwhile, the number of Texans who are fully vaccinated reached nearly 9.8 million.

DROUGHT CONDITIONS **EASING UNDER**

Much of the state has

WIDESPREAD STORMS

CROSBY

thus far, with widespread precipitation blanketing much of the eastern and central regions. As a result, drought conditions have eased except in the Pan-handle and West Texas and the counties around Laredo on the border. The Texas Water Development Board reports a to-

experienced a soggy May

tal of 44% of the state's area is now under moderate or worse drought con-ditions. By comparison, we reported on April 4 that drought conditions existed in more than two-thirds of

TEXAS OPTS OUT OF FEDERAL JOBLESS **ASSISTANCE PLAN**

Abbott last week announced the state will no longer accept federal jobless assistance funds after June 26, including the extra \$300-per-week ap-proved earlier this year by Congress.

The state is also leaving a federal assistance program that provides aid to self-employed and gig workers not normally covered by unemployment insurance. The move is intended to encourage people to return to work, as estaurants and other businesses say it is difficult to attract workers.
"The Texas economy is

booming, and employers are hiring in communities throughout the state," Abbott said. "According to the Texas Workforce Commission, the number of job openings in Texas is almost identical to the number of Texans who are receiving unemployment benefits. That assessment does not include the voluminous jobs that typically are not listed like construction and restaurant jobs.

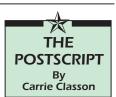
The state's jobless rate was 6.7% in April, according to the Texas Workforce Commission. down from the record high of 12.9% in April 2020.

SECRETARY OF STATE **HUGHS TO STEP DOWN**

Texas Secretary of State Ruth Ruggero Hughs will step down at the end of May, she announced last week. Hughs was appointed by Abbott in August 2019. However, the Texas Senate never formally confirmed her nomination. Abbott will now be free to appoint a new secretary of state who could be confirmed during the upcoming special session.

LEARN MORE ABOUT **COLLEGE SAVINGS PLANS** OFFERED BY STATE

The state of Texas offers three tax-advantaged plans for higher education —the Texas College Sav-ings Plan, the Lone Star 529 plan and the Texas Tuition Promise Fund. Parents can learn more about the plans by watching a webinar at 1 p.m. on May 26 and four additional dates in June and July Register for the webinar https://www. texastuitionpromisefund.com/ events/.



A Change of Scenery

The old wooden folding table belonged to my grandma. I don't remember her ever using it.

After she moved out of her house and into a retirement home, my sister inherited the table, but she didn't use it much either. The table has four wooden folding chairs that tuck beneath it and the whole thing rolls on casters. My husband, Peter, and I are moving to be clos er to family and we don't have a serviceable table for our new place.

"Bring the folding table when you come," I told my sister. "We'll use it until we

find a new table!"
Peter and I were ready to move our furniture when we learned the moving truck had broken down on the way to our house, delaying the move. So Peter stayed behind to help load the truck when it finally arrived, and I flew ahead to meet the movers. I spent four nights in a sleeping bag on the floor, but when my parents and my sister came to visit, they brought the table.

Peter and I did not spend Christmas of 2019 with my family, but rushed home to see his sister, Lori, who was very ill. We thought it might be her last Christmas. We were wrong. We celebrated the next Christmas with her before she died. And I did not see my family again until this past week, 17 months later, when they ar rived with my grandma's old

"It's been so long!" everyone kept saying.

I got lost leading them out of the parking garage and we ended up taking the heavy wooden folding table on a tour of the neighborhood. The table rattled along on its 75-year-old casters and made a heck of a racket as we rolled by the Church of Scientology.

My dad was laughing.

"Do we even know where we're going?!

"Do you think someone is catching this on a security

camera?" my sister asked. I felt as if I had not been away for 17 months—or even a day.

On Saturday, our furniture finally arrived, and on Sunday morning, still surrounded by boxes, I discovered we were within earshot of three churches with bell towers. I sat out on our little balcony in the sunshine and called Peter.

"All the bells are ringing!" I told him.

My parents and sister came to visit one more time before I left, and this time they brought along my brother-in-law, niece, and nephew. My niece is now completely grown up and my nephew went from being a child to a teenager while I

I had tied brightly colored seat cushions onto the old wooden folding chairs and my mother didn't reognize them.

"Those aren't the same chairs!" she said, amazed. "They are!" I told her.

"They just perked up when they got a change of scen-

Peter still hasn't seen this new place we bought during the pandemic, and I know he still has some trepidation. But I am feeling so much better. It is good to be closer to family. We will be able to see more of our old friends and both Peter's relatives and mine. We're looking forward to trying new staurants and riding our bikes and doing a lot of things we haven't done in a long time.

Of course, there will be things we will miss. But right now, I'm feeling like one of my grandma's old wooden folding chairs, all decked out in a fancy new seat cushion.

I'm thinking a change of scenery will do us both a world of good.

Till next time, Carrie

Carrie Classon's memoir is called "Blue Yarn." Learn more at CarrieClasson.com



MILESTONES PAGE *

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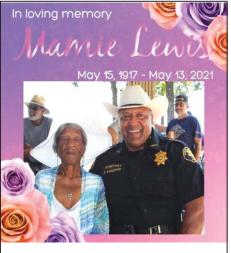
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MAMIE LEWIS May 15, 1917 - May 13, 2021

With Harris County Constable Pct. 3 Constable Sherman Eagleton

Barrett Station's matriarch, Mamie Lewis, was laid to rest on May 22. Mrs. Lewis was nearing her 104th birthday just days before her passing. She will be missed by all who had the privilege of knowing her. We keep her family and friends in our thoughts and prayers.

-- Constable Sherman Eagleton

JC/GP flood funds,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Alvarado. "These flood control resources are desperately needed by smaller cities who often lack funding for infrastructure projects. Past severe storms have shown how southeast Texas is vulnerable when watersheds converge in the Houston Ship Channel – which serves one of the busiest ports in the world and is a vital link in the regional economy. The \$90 million in project awards from the Texas General Land Office will support several projects that will benefit residents throughout Harris County."

Applications closed for the first round of funding October 28, 2020, and the GLO evaluated all 290 submitted applications in accordance with the HUD approved scoring criteria. Eligible applications with the highest scores were awarded funds. The second round of the competition will award the remaining \$1,144,776,720 in mitigation funding to Hurricane Harvey eligible

HUD defines mitigation as activities that increase resilience to disasters and reduce or eliminate the long-term risk of loss of life, injury, damage to and loss of property, and suffering and hardship, by lessening the impact of future disasters. HUD requires that at least 50% of total funds must be used for activities benefiting low- to moderate-income (LMI) persons.

The State of Texas CDBG Mitigation Action Plan: Building Stronger for a Resilient Future outlines the use of funds, programs, eligible applicants, and eligibility criteria as required by HUD. The plan was sent to HUD on February 3, 2020, after an extraordinary public outreach effort including a 50-day public comment period and eight regional public hearings, far-surpassing HUD requirements. HUD approved the plan March 31, 2020. For more information, please visit recovery.texas.gov/mitigation.

information, please visit recovery.texas.gov/mitigation. City of Pasadena: Flood Mitigation Project - \$47,278,951.21

City of Baytown: East District Wastewater Treatment Plant Phase II - \$32,394,113.86

City of Galena Park: Water Plant Improvements Project - \$5,482,123 LMI Percentage: 60.22%

The City of Galena Park has two water plants that operate in tandem to provide safe drinking water and adequate water capacity for fire protection throughout the city. During Hurricane Harvey, excessive flooding prevented city staff and operators from access to the plants due to flood waters blocking ingress and egress of major arterial streets that leads to the city's water plants. To mitigate, the city will fortify and harden both water plants from excess leakage, and capacity, while adding Supervisor Control & Data Acquisition (SCADA) remote monitoring equipment. This project mitigates against stormwater impacts for existing water plants to provide safe drinking water and adequate water capacity for fire protection throughout

SCADA to allow control from a remote location preventing the inability of the operators during flooding events.

Fortify and harden two water plants located: Plant (1) 301 Stewart Street and Plant (2) 1902 Keene Street, to reduce excess leakage and capacity improving effects of stormwater impacts.

Jacinto City: Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements Project - \$5,319,717 LMI Percentage: 78.45%

Jacinto City's wastewater treatment plant site, located next to Hunting Bayou, flooded during Hurricane Harvey. During the storm, the bayou overtopped its high banks which impacted the city's ability to effectively treat wastewater. Hardening the plant by building a stormwater holding tank will help the city reduce the probability of the Wastewater Treatment Plant overflowing during storm events. The project will further increase the lifespan of the Wastewater Treatment Plant and improve the city's ability to treat wastewater effectively during high flow events leading to Inflow and Infiltration and high water on the site. These improvements will contribute to the health and safety of the citizens by reducing the risk of exposure to raw sewage.

Through the project the city will:

— Build a stormwater holding tank to the wastewater treatment plant

— Replace/rehabilitate structures within

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NOTICE TO CREDITORS Notice is hereby given that Original Letters Testamentary for Docket No. 492758 Estate of ROBERT TAYLOR DODGE Deceased; In Probate Court No. 2 of Harris County, Texas, were issued on MAY 13,

CANDACE CONN DODGE

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

> c/o Weston Cotten 1500 E. Wallisville Road Highlands, TX 77562

All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them within the time and in the manner prescribed by law. Dated this MAY 20, 2021.

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ATTENTION PRIVATE NON-PROFIT SCHOOLS. HOME SCHOOLERS, PARENTS, AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS IN THE SHELDON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Private, non-profit schools, who legally qualify as a non-profit (currently hold a 501-C3 certificate). home schoolers, parents, and community members are invited to participate in a virtual meeting with representatives from the Sheldon Independent School District to learn more about federally funded programs and services available for the 2021-2022 school year. The meeting will be held virtually via Zoom, Tuesday, May 25, 2021, from 1:00 - 2:00 p.m. If you are interested in participating or have questions, please contact Sheldon ISD at (281) 727-2096. Details on how to access the Zoom meeting are posted at https:// www.sheldonisd.com/apps/events/2021/5/25/ 9133861/?REC_ID=9133861&id=0

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Educadores en el hogar, Padres y Miembros de la comunidad en el

Distrito Escolar Independiente de Sheldon Las escuelas privadas, escuelas sin fines de lucro. que califican legalmente como una organización sin fines de lucro (actualmente tienen un certificado 501-C3), los educadores en el hogar, los padres y los miembros de la comunidad están invitados a participar en una reunión virtual con representantes del Distrito Escolar Independiente de Sheldon. Para obtener más información sobre los programas y servicios financiados con fondos federales disponibles para el año escolar 2021-2022. La reunión se llevará a cabo de manera virtual a través de Zoom, el Martes 25 de Mayo de 2021, de 1:00 p.m. a 2:00 p.m. Si está interesado en participar o tiene preguntas, comuníquese con Sheldon ISD al (281) 727-2096. Los detalles sobre cómo acceder a la reunión de zoom se publican en https://www.sheldonisd.com/apps/events/2021/5/ 25/9133861/?REC_ID=9133861&id=0

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AT&T Services, Inc. is proposing to modify an existing wireless telecommunications facility on an existing water tank located at 1900 Keene Street, Galena Park, Harris County, TX 77547. The modifications will consist of the collocation of antennas at a tip height of 127- feet above ground level on the 140- foot tall water tank. Any interested party wishing to submit comments regarding the potential effects the proposed facility may have on any historic property may do so by sending such comments to: Project 6121003325 - CTJ EBI Consulting, 6876 Susquehanna Trail South, York, PA 17403, or via telephone at (219) 313-5458.

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Bids will be received until 2:00 p.m., Thursday, June 17, 2021, through the Electronic Bidding Website at https://cvisd.ionwave.net. All necessary information may be obtained by calling the Business Office at (281) 452-8003, or the district website www.cvisd.org, under Departments Business Office Purchasing. The Board of Trustees reserves the right to reject any or all bids.

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CHARLOTTE'S WEB



Consequences

Recently while talking with several people who I will not quit ringing in my head. Those words "I wish there were a way to teach that every decision we make will result in consequences that affect more than just ourselves.'

I have reflected over those words as I have listened to individuals this week who are facing situations that are keeping them from having peace in their lives. One father reflected on how when he was young he would always tell women he had no desire to ever get married or have children. Can you guess what happened? As he was sexually involved with multiple women as well as heavily into cocaine, he found out one of the women was pregnant with his child. Before the mother and child left for another state, he had to continually choose between buying diapers and formula or cocaine. After they left the state, it took years for him to find them and pay child support. Not only his choices, but the choices of that mother have forever touched the now 40-something year old son. The son has grown up bitter not that the parents both abused alcohol and drugs but that they were so careless not to use protection during sex. He has often wondered why his mother did not choose an abortion or adoption.

Another person I spoke with shared about when she was younger she had a relationship with a married man. He divorced while she was in high school and while they continued to be sexually active, she missed out on her teenage years while he continued to be involved with other women and sadly even younger girls. Eventually he shared with her that he was going to propose the next day to an old friend from high school. The reality that the next day was this young girl's 18th birthday never occurred to him. Only after decades of a self-destructive lifestyle and counseling, did she realize it was never love, but instead he was a child predator. He had groomed her for his pleasure which he also did with others.

Another woman married while young just to get out of her family home. She knew little about the young man she had known for less than a year but married as a way to leave home. Not surprising, neither of them had any clue about marriage or starting a family. As the years passed, they did what they saw others do yet their hearts were never there for each other or their children. As she saw others enjoying life, she made choices that hurt many and has lived to regret many of her choices. She is now living with Dementia and cries frequently as she cannot remember what choices she made

Another mother is living with the pain of losing her son. She has reflected on how their lives have been since Hurricane Harvey. Yet, somewhere long before 2017 there were choices she made which paved the way for destruction. Unfortunately she and several other family members have dealt with enough pain to last multiple lifetimes

My prayer daily is that people will learn to first forgive themselves and then to make amends that those that they can so that they do not carry the



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Armed Robbery at Clinton Drive Burger King



HOUSTON - The Houston Police Department's Robbery Division is asking for the public's help in identifying the suspects who robbed a customer at a Burger King drive-thru on Wednesday, May 5 at 4:55AM.

Police just released surveillance video from the incident that occurred last month in the 9000 block of Clin-

The victim told police that two suspects suddenly approached his vehicle while at the drive-thru. One of the suspects pointed a handgun at the man while demanding that he get out of his vehicle.

Video shows the victim complying and the suspects then speeding off in his vehicle.

Moments later, police found the car speeding in the 11000 block of the Eastex Freeway and tried to perform a traffic stop. The suspects refused to stop, exited the vehicle and ran off on foot.

Police said they were unable to locate the suspects after that.

One suspect was described as a Black male between the ages of 14 and 17. He was wearing a blue pullover and blue jeans. The other suspect was described as a Black male wearing a black pullover and black pants.

Information leading to the charging and/or arrest of the suspects could result in a \$5,000 reward. If you know any information regarding this crime, you are urged to contact Crime Stoppers at 713-222-TIPS.

Police seek Waffle House Restaurant Robber



Violent Crime investigators need the public's help in identifying an aggravated robbery suspect in the North

On Saturday May 15, 2021, at around 02:45 a.m, a male suspect entered the Waffle House Restaurant located at 15747 Wallisville Rd in east Harris County.

The male brandished a handgun and forced the employees to open the cash register. The still photos from the store surveillance video show

a young black male between the ages of 15-20 years of age. He is wearing a brown colored brown t-shirt and faded black jeans.

After removing money from the register, the suspect

was possibly seen fleeing in a red colored SUV.

Anyone with information on this suspect is urged to

call the Violent Crime unit at 713-274-9100. Crime Stoppers may pay up to \$5,000 for information leading to the location and arrest of the suspects featured. Information may be reported by calling 713-222-TIPS (8477), submitted online at www.crimestoppers.org or through the Crime Stoppers mobile app. All tipsters remain anonymous. Only tips and calls DI-RECTLY TO Crime Stoppers are anonymous and eligi-



Luis F. Garcia, CPA Attorney at Law 13364 Woodforest Blvd Houston, TX 77015 713-999-8006

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ASK DIAMOND JIM

Diamond Jim:□"What' the History of Father's Day?"

The nation's first Father's Day was celebrated on June 19, 1910, in the state of Washington. However, it was not until 1972-58 years after President Woodrow Wilson made Mother's Day official-that the day honoring fathers became a nationwide holiday in the United States. Father's Day 2019 occurs on Sunday, June 16.

Origins of Father's Day

The campaign to celebrate the nation's fathers did not meet with the same enthusiasm as Mother's Day-perhaps because, as one florist explained, "fathers haven't the same sentimental appeal that mothers have." On July 5, 1908, a West Virginia church sponsored the nation's first event explicitly in honor of fathers, a Sunday sermon in memory of the 362men who had died in the previous December's explosions at the Fairmont Coal Company mines in Monongah, but it was a one-time commemoration and not an annual holiday

The next year, a Spokane, Washington, woman named Sonora Smart Dodd, one of six children raised by a widower, tried to establish an official equivalent to Mother's Day for male parents. She went to local churches, the YMCA, shopkeepers and government officials to drum up support for her idea, and she was successful: Washington State celebrated the nation's first statewide Father's Day on June 19, 1910.

Slowly, the holiday spread. In 1916, President Wilson honored the day by using telegraph signals to unfurl a flag in Spokane when he pressed a button in Washington, D.C. In 1924, President Calvin Coolidge urged state governments to observe Father's Day. When World War II began, advertisers began to argue that celebrating Father's Day was a way to honor American troops and support the war effort. By the end of the war, Father's Day may not have been a federal holiday, but it was a national institution. In 1972, in the middle of a hard-fought presidential re-election campaign, Richard Nixon signed a proclamation making Father's Day a federal holiday at last.

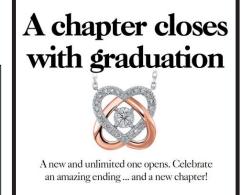


Today, the day honoring of fathers is celebrated in the United States on the third Sunday of June. Father's Day 2021 falls on June

 $Diamond\ Jim\ is\ a\ master\ jeweler,\ diamond\ dealer$ and precious metals broker of NTR Metals. Pineforest Jewelry has been a proud member of the IJO for many years. See more at: www.pineforestjewelry.com

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