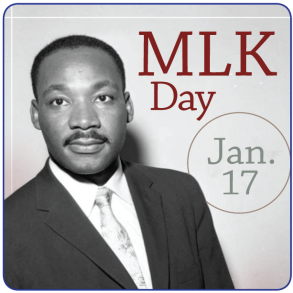


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VOLUME 10, NO. 02 (#402) THURSDAY, JANUARY 13, 2022 www.northchannelstar.com

MONDAY



## CHANNEL CURRENTS

### Galena Park Library Reopens

The Galena Park Branch Library reopened its doors on Monday, January 3. We reopened without our new furniture or shelves and are currently using borrowed furniture. We hope to be replacing those items as they are ordered and delivered.

We will have a small collection of books available for check out and free crafts for all ages. We will also have computers, a scanner, and print services available. We are using our meeting room for storage so it is unavailable for programs or reservations until further notice.

Programs for all ages will resume in person in February. In the meantime, the computer lab will serve as a program room/teen space.

We also have new operating hours.

Monday 11 am - 8 pm  
Tuesday 10 am - 6 pm  
Wednesday 10 am - 8 pm  
Thursday 10 am - 6 pm  
Friday 1 pm - 6 pm  
Saturday 10 am - 5 pm

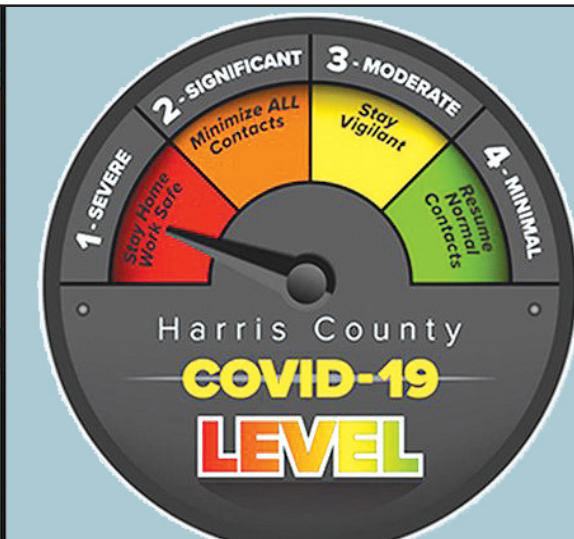
The Library will be able to display Plant public notices for upcoming or current projects again. All past public notices were disposed of due to water damage. Usually, plants in the area drop off public notices along with their work permits to inform the public of the projects in the local plants. You can resume sending the notices to the library.

## County raises COVID threat level

### INCREASE IN COVID-19 HOSPITALIZATIONS TRIGGERS INCREASE IN HARRIS COUNTY COVID-19 THREAT LEVEL

Harris County, Texas - January 10, 2022, Judge Lina Hidalgo today announced that she is raising the county's COVID-19 Threat Level Indicator from Level 2: Orange to Level 1: Red. A surge of the highly contagious Omicron variant has contributed to an increase in COVID transmission across Harris County.

Level 1 signifies a severe and uncontrolled level of COVID-19 transmission in Harris County. Residents experiencing symptoms should get tested and avoid con-



tact with others, assuming they have COVID until they confirm otherwise. Any gatherings should be held outdoors and ideally

with masking. Unvaccinated residents should avoid all gatherings and get vaccinated immediately.

"We're finding ourselves

again at a point in this pandemic where hospital staff are being stretched way too thin," said Judge Hidalgo. "We owe it to our

nurses, doctors, and teachers to take steps to protect ourselves and give them a break. If you have been on the fence about getting vaccinated, now is the time to roll up your sleeve. We are in the midst of a COVID-19 tsunami and our best defense are vaccines and booster shots. We've been here before, but this time we have more tools available and a better understanding of this virus."

The COVID-19 vaccine and vaccine booster continues to be available at no charge for all Harris County residents. To find out more information, locations and hours, click ReadyHarris.org.

*Continued. See COVID Threat Level, Page 2*

## New EHC project to help homeless

HIGHLANDS – The Marcelous Williams Resource Center is a social service agency, headquartered on Main Street in Highlands, providing services to the needy and the homeless. It was started several years ago by Eddie and Ramonia Williams, having seen the need for social services in the East Harris County area.

The agency also has an office in the Sterling Library in Baytown, staffed by Tammy Guidry, the director of community engagement and homeless services.



Tammy Guidry and Ramonia Williams, above, and Eddie Williams provide services to the community.

Director Ramonia Williams told this newspaper, "on November 16, 2021 we celebrated the 1 year Anniversary of our Homeless Services Program. Through this program, we have assisted 190 clients from November 3, 2020 to November 3, 2021. Clients were able to meet with our Director of Community Engagement and Homeless Services, Tammy Guidry, to obtain services such as I.D. cards, SNAP

*Continued. See Resource Center, Page 2.*



This property on E. Wallisville in Highlands is being acquired by the East Harris County Navigation Center for the Homeless, to be a transitional living center to provide services and temporary housing for the homeless, as they receive help from the organization.

## NS Mustang's over C.E. King Panthers 52-48

By Allan Jamail

North Shore High School Basketball Stadium – January 7, 2022 in front of a packed house the Mustangs under Head Coach Sam Benitez hosted the C.E. King Panthers their district rival and in the last two minutes came from behind with a 4 point win.

The game began with the Mustangs exploding on offense and defense. They

lead by double digits midway into the second quarter. By halftime the Panthers had fought back and closed the gap, trailing only by four, 27-23.

At the end of the third quarter the Panthers trailed only by a point, 40-39. In the fourth quarter the game was tied numerous times, both teams swapped the lead back and forth. With under a minute Coach Benitez tighten his



Coach Sam Benitez (center) rallies his Mustangs moments before they secured their victory over rival C. E. King. Photo by Allan Jamail

## Bates, HCDE provide new cars to two Head Start families

Dec. 17, 2021 — Two wishes for wheels came true this week as Bates Collision Centers and Harris County Department of Education's Head Start division presented two special moms with rehabbed vehicles filled with presents as part of their annual Responsible Parenting Award.

In its 23rd year, Bates Collision Centers presented cars No. 41 and 42 to Destini Rhodes, a teaching assistant at Sheffield Head Start, and Alionuska Montalvo Perez, a Pugh Head Start mom. Both were nominated by Head Start staff.

Twenty-eight-year-old Rhodes is a full-time employee and student at San



Destini Rhodes received her newly rehabbed car from Lee and Leila Bates above.

Jacinto College pursuing an associate's degree in early childhood education. She currently relies on a borrowed vehicle to shuttle her kids and herself to and from school and work. After unwrap-

ping her new vehicle, a 2011 Chevy Equinox, she expressed disbelief over the generous gift.

"I feel very grateful,"

*Continued. See New Cars for 2 Families, Page 5*

defense, the Mustangs went ahead by four and held on for the win.

The 2021 – 2022 Mustangs basketball team: Terrence Alford, Daimond Broussard, Marcel Dalcourt, Quest Dargins, Breon Davis, Dillion Eden, Stephen Guzman, Evan Jackson, Jaylon Joseph, Abraham Kirksey, De'Quan Preyear, Joseph Richard, Kerrick Rideau, Tristian Thomas, Synsear Tryon, Xavier Watkins and Kory Williams.

Mustangs basketball coaches and staff: Head Coach: Sam Benitez, Varsity Assistant Coach Anthony Stephens, Junior Varsity Coach Jonathan Dillon, Sophomore Coach, Lamont Atkins, Freshman A Coach Reggie Wallace, Freshman B Coach Stephen LaSalle, Managers Julian Benitez, & Isaack Washington, Stu-

*Continued. See Mustang Basketball, Page 3*



Daimond Broussard Mustang's junior guard goes airborne for a score. Photo by Allan Jamail



# GPISD recognizes Wind Ensemble



Galena Park ISD recognized the Galena Park High School Wind Ensemble, directed by KC Christensen, at the December 13th Board of Trustees meeting. The Wind Ensemble was selected as a Commended Winner in the Mark of Excellence National Wind Band Honors Project by the Foundation for Music Education.

The following Senior members of the ensemble received the recognition on behalf of the Galena Park High School Wind Ensemble: Michael Burchfield, Angel Chavez, Nathalie De La Cruz, Sabrina De Santiago, Fabian Garza, Oscar Giron, Ariel Gonzalez, Mason Harrison, Danielle Hinojosa, Marco Palomino, Jonathan Patino, Luis Perez, Aaron Quintero, Luis Rodriguez, Sarah Sanchez and Noah Sosa.

This competition is entered by recording and the highest-scoring ensembles are selected as National Winners or Commended Winners. This year, 236 of the finest musical ensembles in the nation entered the competition.

A certificate was presented to each student on behalf of the Board of Trustees and Dr. John Moore, Superintendent of Schools.

# Threat Level raised,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Hidalgo said she made the decision because hospitalizations and ICU cases have spiked at area hospitals, along with the positivity rate.

“The 14-day average for COVID-positive ICU cases is now 18.1%; the positivity rate is now 35%,” Hidalgo said. “For the sake of our hospitals and for the sake of our workforce, we have to sound the alarm once again.”

This is the third time Harris County has been at level red, but Hidalgo said it could have been avoided this time if more people would get vaccinated and boosted.

“We owe it to our nurses, doctors, and teachers to take steps to protect ourselves and give them a break. If you have been on the fence about getting vaccinated, now is the time to roll up your sleeve.”

Hidalgo also urged unvaccinated residents to mask up and avoid “all gatherings.” Those who are vaccinated are asked to wear masks while indoors in public places and to avoid unvaccinated people.

**UPDATE ON RAPID ANTIGEN TESTS AND PCR TESTS**

Hidalgo said 120,000 rapid antigen tests will be provided to school districts across the county. She said the tests will help students and staff who are exposed to COVID-19 return to school sooner if they test negative.

She said thousands of PCR tests are still readily available at more than 10 county-wide sites. Another testing site will open Tuesday at Planet Ford Stadium in the Spring area.

**NO LOCKDOWNS EXPECTED**

While Monday’s announcement moves Harris County to the highest threat level for the first time, the lockdowns and closings residents experienced in 2020 aren’t likely to be repeated.

Under statewide orders from Texas Gov. Greg Abbott, local governments cannot enforce their own stay-at-home orders, as Abbott allowed them to do in the early stages of the pandemic.

Abbott’s latest executive order related to the COVID-19 response, issued in July 2021, forbids local government entities from mandating closures and vaccinations.

“Business activities and legal proceedings are free to proceed without COVID-19-related limitations imposed by local governmental entities or officials,” the order states.

# Resource Center,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

food benefits, medical services, social security cards, and birth certificates.

Twelve of our clients qualified for a new emergency housing voucher program from HUD through the Baytown Housing Authority and are now in their new apartments.

We would like to say THANK YOU to everyone who came out to celebrate with us. A special THANK YOU goes out to Sterling Municipal Library for offering us office space and for showing us so much love.

THANK YOU to our partners United Way of Greater Baytown and Chambers County, The Harris County Sheriffs Department Homeless Outreach Team, Love Network, Hearts and Hands of Baytown, and Legacy Community Health for all of the support given to assist our clients.”

Williams notes that her agency has helped housing, food, medical, rent, home repair after a disaster, ID cards, utility bills, and employment opportunities.

The newest effort to help with the homelessness problem by the agency is a partnership with Tom Kelchner in a project



Eddie Williams is one of the founders and directors of the Marcelous Williams Resource Center, a division of the Talent Yield Coalition. They provide social services to the East Harris County population in need.

known as the East Harris County Navigation Center for the Homeless, Inc.

Following the example of other Navigation Centers around Houston, the EHCNC plans on “supporting homeless clients on their journey from hopelessness to hopefulness.”

The goal of the organization will be to serve and support individuals, families, and veterans, according to Kelchner.

They say that services and support programs will be administered by experienced case workers and program specialists.

In a promotional brochure issued by EHCNC, an extensive list of “project partners” is listed, including churches, Baytown social organizations, Harris County Precinct 2, Harris County Sheriff’s Department Homeless Outreach Team, and many others.

The Navigation Center is just in the early stages of fund raising, and establishing working relationships with its partners. Acquisition of the residential property on Wallisville is still in the due-diligence stage. It does not expect to be operational until sometime near the end of 2022, according to Ramonia Williams.

Marcelous-Williams Resource Center receives funding from the United Way, who are also sponsoring a series of meetings termed “Passport to Change” dealing with the homeless problem. The next meeting is January 25th.



The new East Harris County Navigation Center for the Homeless is proposing to purchase and use this extensive residential property at the corner of E. Wallisville Road and Thompson Road in Highlands as a transitional center for the homeless.

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Internal Medicine



John Ruelas, M.D.  
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CHARLOTTE'S WEB

By Charlotte Jackson



Benevolent

When you hear the word “benevolent” what definition comes to mind? Typically, I think of a church or organization that provides support for someone in need. Yet as I reflect on the word and took the time to look up the definition, it is more of a characteristic. I then took the time to think about community members who could be described by this word.

I immediately thought about David Proctor. David is a 1979 graduate of North Shore Senior High. He has lived in our community for decades and not only did he and his wife Cindy raise their sons to have strong family ties but they taught them at an early age to care for others. David has been involved in Boy Scouts of America (BSA) not just as someone who earned the rank of an Eagle Scout, but for years has volunteered with troops and helped to recruit and train adult leaders. It comes as no surprise that he is now a part of the Rotary Club of North Shore. For those unfamiliar, the Rotary Club has a long history of giving to others in ways that make the community a better place.

Benevolent is characterized by a kind smile and a desire to help others. When I think of those in the community with contagious smiles and always make others feel welcome, I think of John and Yvonne Brady. If you have lived in the community any length of time, these names are not new to you. They first arrived in Homeowned Estates in the early 1960’s and for over 40 year, Brother John pastored Woodforest Baptist Church. “In the heart of North Shore with North Shore on our hearts!” was the familiar phrase to describe the church which was located on Woodforest Boulevard. Any time you saw him or his wife, you would feel a sense of peace. There are no telling how many lives have been impacted by the two of them over the years. Even in their golden years, when both have dealt with health issues, you would never tell it in their voices. It is almost as if when you call them, you get a burst of kindness mixed with sunshine coming through the phone line.

I thought some more and I thought about how years ago, when I was in the midst of some difficult days raising three children and ready to cry, I met Fran Urbanovsky. At the time, she was a Counselor at North Shore Middle School and from the moment our eyes met, I could feel her kindness. She invited me to her office, listened to me as I cried. She told me that it was alright to feel the way I did. She reminded me that being a parent could be exhausting, especially for a single mom. She offered some resources and she offered a hug. I knew that day that everything would be alright. Even though Ms. Fran has since retired and moved away from our area, I feel her presence often in talking to struggling parents as well as to others who benefitted from her love and benevolent spirit.

We will all admit the past two years have not been easy, but I encourage you to show a benevolent spirit today, especially if it is the first time you have met that person.

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Mustang Basketball,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

dent Trainers Mariana Guillen & Skyler Mukes, Licensed Athletic Trainers: Tim Chavanne, Christopher Ramirez, Dericka Stewart.

The Mustangs junior varsity won 54 -47 over the Panthers junior varsity. Linda Jamail statistician. Allanj211@aol.com



Mustang's Joseph Richard junior forward lays up a basket. Photo by Allan Jamail

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Diamond Jim: “Is Custom Diamond Jewelry More Expensive or Valuable”



In the mind of many consumers, custom is synonymous with expensive. After all, the media feeds us stories of one-of-a-kind celebrity pieces from Kim Kardashian’s \$2 million 15-carat flawless cushion cut and Beyonce’s \$5 million 18-carat stunner to Mariah Carrey’s 35-carat emerald cut, which weighs in at an estimated \$10 million. It makes the jaw drop, the head spin, and the dream of custom diamonds seem like just that... out of reach dreams! But is this the reality? Are custom diamond pieces really more expensive or valuable?

The Price of Custom Diamond Jewelry

First, we'll answer your burning question: is custom diamond jewelry more expensive than in-store pieces? It depends. It's the most frustrating answer, but it's true nonetheless! It depends on a variety of factors, but custom jewelry can be more expensive, in the same price range, or even less expensive than in-store counterparts.

One of the factors at play here is the level of customization you want. For example, you may desire a full custom experience. Every detail - Every. Single. Detail. - to be decided upon by you. Perhaps you've scoured stores and websites but you cannot find exactly what you want. And you want exactly what you want! In this case, the piece is typically a bit more expensive (how much also depends on a variety of factors) than an in-store piece.

Cost will be influenced by the materials you select, the value of the diamond, and the complexity and intricacy of the design. But you may want to make some personalizations to an existing design. For example, you may have a diamond engagement ring, but the stone is smaller than you'd like or features less clarity. Whatever the case, you want to keep the setting and exchange the stone. Or you love the stone but want to exchange the setting. These are both “semi-custom” situations if you will. They will typically cost less than full custom and may well be less (or even much less) than an in-store piece.

And, of course, there are circumstances when custom diamond jewelry is a cost-conscious option. For example, you may have your heart set on a ring from a renowned designer. Your budget, however, is not so in love. You can create a design that is evocative of the piece that caught your eye (without copying it or infringing on the artist's work) and commission it with a jeweler you trust, like Pineforest Jewelry.

By cost-engineering when it comes to materials (e.g. opting for white gold instead of platinum or sacrificing a bit of carat weight), you can walk away with the piece of your dreams at a price your budget will be happy with.

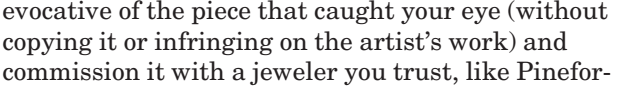
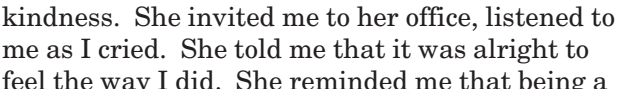
The Bottom Line

Custom diamonds and diamond jewelry are not out of reach. While the majority of us won't sport multi-million dollar rings on our fingers (or even want to!), we can achieve the results we want and have always envisioned. It may mean a few tweaks to an existing design or piece. It may mean designing from the “ground up,” so to speak. Regardless, working with the right jeweler is the key to creating a stunning piece that meets your budgetary guidelines.

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.

Thank you for reading the “Ask Diamond Jim” column and for supporting the North Channel Star Newspaper!

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.





# Tribute to Betty White



BETTY WHITE 1922-2021

“Betty White Goes Wild!” (PG) — Everyone’s favorite nonagenarian comedic actress would have reached 100 years old this month, and Disney+ had already planned to re-release her 2013 NatGeo documentary in celebration of the milestone. Now it’s being shown in tribute to a life well lived. In the special, Betty visits two California wild animal parks and spends time learning about all the varieties of big cats. One particularly unexpected and beautiful scene captures her remarkable ability to establish a calm rapport with a roaring lion that had the rest of her crew ducking out for safety. The lifelong animal lover and advocate was truly in her element in this show, and the joy the animals brought her is what makes watching it so pleasurable. (Disney+)



National treasure Betty White’s work to be re-released as a tribute on Disney+



## Earning An Honorary Degree...

It wasn’t like this idea just popped into his head all at once. Great notions often take time to fester, you know. It was like that with Windy Wilson a couple of weeks back.

Our semi-legendary cowboy, camp cook, and storyteller might have seen this coming on, but we missed the signs. There was that piece in the Valley Weekly Miracle about our pal, Doc, receiving that honorary associates’ degree from Jerry Hat Trick Junior College, the one financed and named for that hockey player. Now we knew Doc had more degrees than a thermometer already and it puzzled us why he needed another one.

“Doc?” said Windy over coffee, “that new diploma thingie you got is shore ‘nuf nice. Does it help you operate on folks?”

Doc laughed, and so did the rest of us. “Nope. Not really. All I did was make a contribution to their new gym. This was their way of thanking me, I guess.”

“Well you know,” said Steve, “this changes everything. Now, instead of calling our pal Doctor, we’ll have to update it and call him Associate, I guess.”

“That’s kinda long to say, isn’t it? Now if we were to shorten it to just the first three letters....”

“That’s not funny, Herb!”

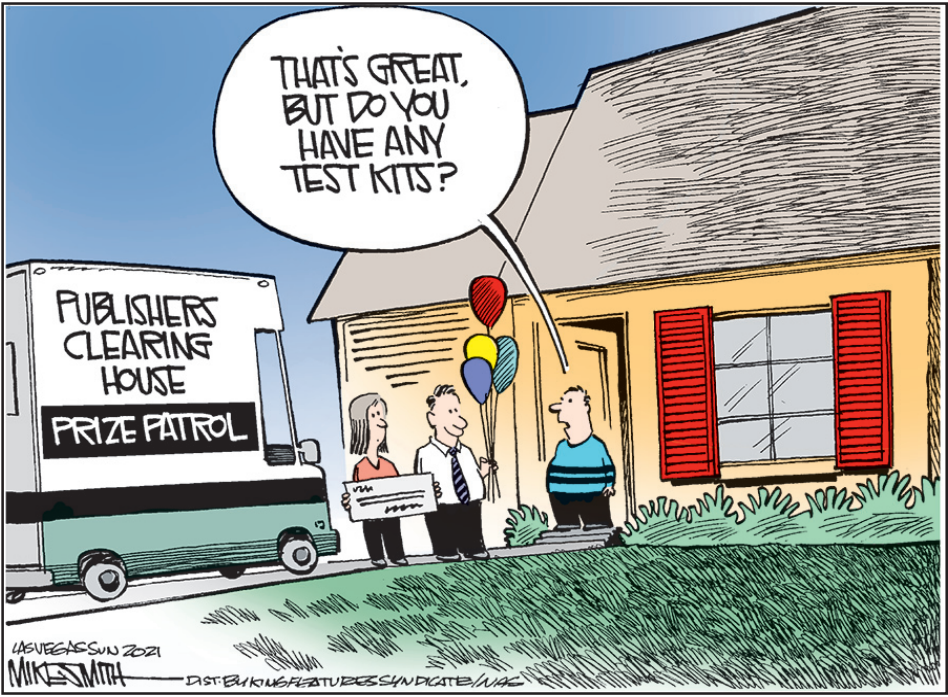
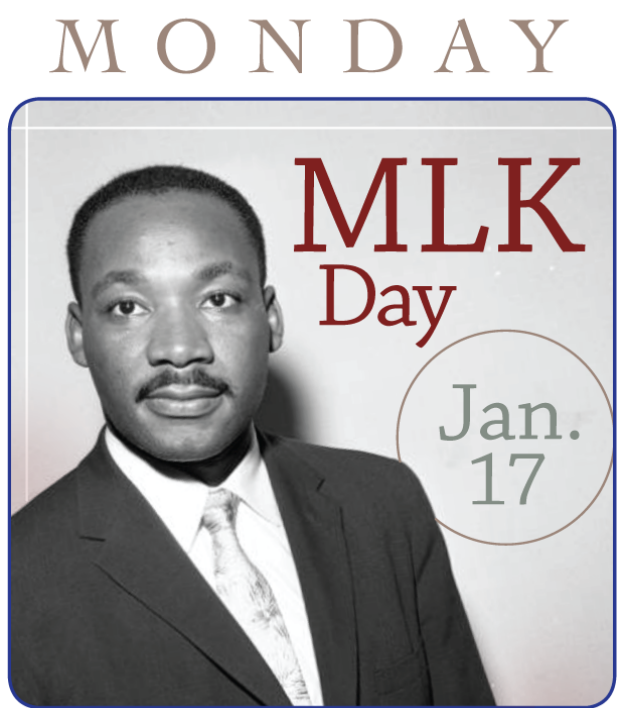
“Then why are you laughing, Doc?”

I guess we all were. Truth was, they couldn’t trot out too many honors for Doc. Prince of a guy.

“You know,” Windy whispered to Steve, “I’d like to get one of them things my ownself. How do you do it?”

“Windy, that’s one of the goofy things about an honorary degree. If you think you deserve one, you don’t get one.”

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STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

By Gary Borders

## State’s Workforce surpasses Pre-Pandemic high

The Texas labor market exceeded the previous pre-pandemic high in February 2020 by hitting just under 13 million nonagricultural jobs in November, the [Texas Workforce Commission](#) reported last Friday. The adjusted jobless rate was 5.2% last month, down slightly from the previous month.

“Reaching this milestone for job creation in Texas shows the strength of our economy,” TWC Chairman Bryan Daniel said.

The Amarillo area had the lowest unemployment rate among Texas Metropolitan Statistical Areas at 3.1%, followed by the Austin-Round Rock MSA at 3.2% and College Station-Bryan at 3.5%.

“Texas continues to reach unprecedented milestones thanks to our unwavering commitment to economic freedom and our young, skilled, growing, and diverse workforce,” Gov. Greg Abbott said.

### PUC APPROVES ELECTRIC GRID RELIABILITY MEASURES

The state [Public Utility Commission](#) last week voted unanimously to enhance both short-term and long-term reliability of the state’s electric grid through what it termed “major reforms” to the state’s wholesale electricity market.

“In prior years, any single one of these changes would have been considered significant. Taken together, they are a generational shift in the Texas electricity market,” said Peter Lake, PUC chairman. “This (is) a move away from the crisis-based business model we have operated under for the past two decades. This new model centers on reliability.”

Some of the major changes:

- Changes in the mathematical formula used to price electricity when reserves become scarce. The change will provide earlier price signals to add additional generation of power and for large consumers to reduce demand.
- Increasing incentives for large consumers to cut usage when the grid needs additional power.
- New or revamped ancillary services that increase the capacity for generators to react to sudden swings in electricity supply and demand.

Phase two of the process will provide “long-term incentives for investment in reliable power generation infrastructure to ensure Texas will have the power the state’s needs for decades,” according to the news release.

### COUNT OF FATAL JOB INJURIES FOR 2020



### RELEASED

A total of 469 people working in Texas died in work-related incidents in 2020, according to the [Texas Department of Insurance](#). That is a 23% decrease from 2019. The state’s incident rate for fatalities was 3.9 per 100,000 full-time employees in 2020, while the national incident rate stood at 3.4.

The construction industry accounted for 27% of the fatalities, with 127 incidents, according to TDI. Fatalities in the transportation and warehousing industries had the second highest, accounting for 20.4% with 96 people killed. Natural resources and mining recorded the third-highest number with 54 fatalities, or 11.5%.

### RAISING THE BAR FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

The Commissioner of Higher Education said last week the state is raising the bar for higher education. In an address before nearly 200 higher education leaders, Harrison Keller released “an ambitious vision for higher education,” according to a news release from the [Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board](#).

The updated strategic plan for the state’s higher education system includes:

- Adding a new goal for 35- to 64-year-olds who need new skills to compete in today’s economy.
- A broader range of postsecondary credentials of value to fit workforce needs.
- The goal of students having no college debt or at least a low, manageable debt.
- A greater focus on research and development to drive innovation.
- Renewing the state’s commitment to advancing equity for all Texans to complete post secondary degrees and certificates.

Keller called the present time “the greatest opportunity since the end of World War II to make an impact in higher education.”

“As we emerge from the global pandemic, we arrive at another defining moment in history,” he said. “In Texas, the window of opportunity is open for us

to work together to advance and enhance this vision for higher education and enrich the lives of generations to come.”

### VACCINE BATTLE MANDATE LIKELY HEADED TO SUPREME COURT

The fight over a federal COVID-19 mandate for companies with more than 100 employees is likely headed to the U.S. Supreme Court after the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals overruled a lower-court decision that had paused the mandate nationwide. The mandate from the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration is now scheduled to take effect Jan. 4.

Republican state attorneys general in 27 states, including Texas, are suing OSHA over the mandate, joined by conservative groups, business associations and individual businesses, [The Dallas Morning News](#) reported.

The Biden administration issued a statement after the appeals court ruling: “Especially as the U.S. faces the highly transmissible Omicron variant, it’s critical we move forward with vaccination requirements and protections for workers with the urgency needed in this moment.”

Meanwhile, Abbott announced last week that he had sent a letter to U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin reaffirming the state would not enforce the mandate on members of the Texas National Guard.

“The state of Texas will not enforce this latest COVID-19 vaccine mandate against its guardsmen,” Abbott said. “If the federal government keeps threatening to defund the Texas National Guard, I will deploy every legal tool available to me as governor in defense of these American heroes.”

The number of new cases of COVID-19 reported last week stood at 36,508, according to the [Coronavirus Resource Center](#) at Johns Hopkins University, down slightly from the previous week, while deaths rose to 478.

The number of law-confirmed COVID-19 hospitalizations totaled 3,117 on Sunday, virtually unchanged from the previous week, according to the [Texas State Department of Health Services](#).

Gary Borders is a veteran award-winning Texas journalist. He published a number of community newspapers in Texas during a 30-year span, including in Longview, Fort Stockton, Nacogdoches and Cedar Park. Email: [gborders@texaspress.com](mailto:gborders@texaspress.com).

☆

THE POSTSCRIPT

By Carrie Classon

## Stringing Lights

I walk around my neighborhood later in the evening these days, mostly so I can see the lights.

There are some impressive houses just a mile or so away, and I walk down the sidewalks and see what has appeared on the lawns and in the windows now, right before Christmas.

Some of the houses clearly had outside assistance. There are lights hung in places that only a cherry picker could reach. One house had four such enormous trees in a row, all in uniform white lights, until the top half of one of them went out (which completely spoiled the look) and all four trees have been dark ever since.

I see florist vans parked outside some houses as elaborate arrangements of pine and birch and colored berries are delivered. The result is splendid, if a little predictable. Some houses have an electric candle in every window—and there are a lot of windows. Some have put a lit Christmas tree in the attic window. One house has matching trees shining out of two windows on the second floor, decorated in brilliant red lights. It’s a stunning sight.

But the thing that stopped me in my tracks the other night was a single small tree and a woman stringing lights just before Christmas.

It was dark, and I was across the street. The house was large and old and on the porch was a skinny tree—a live Christmas tree—and there was a woman stringing lights around it. The woman was also old. Her movements were slow, and I could see she was a little bent over. But she was determined to decorate this little tree, standing to the side of her front door, and I watched as the lit bulbs were wound with infinite care around the narrow tree frame.

Progress was slow. But it was a warm night and the action, for some reason, transfixed me. The woman had large golden bulbs wound around the center of the tree from the bottom to the top, and now she was winding smaller golden lights around the exterior of the branches. The lights were nested densely together, and it looked as if the tree was ablaze with warm yellow light. It was the only decoration in the front of her big house, and I could tell she was determined to get it exactly right. And, by the end, it was. Her little tree, covered in golden lights of different sizes, was this small, perfect thing, blazing from her porch, visible up and down the street.

Something about that tree made my heart hurt.

I wanted to tell that woman how much at least one passer-by appreciated her small, bright tree, and how I knew how long and hard she’d worked to get it right. I wanted to tell her that, while the season is short, I will enjoy her tree every time I walk by it, and I will remember it long after it is taken down.

But it was more than that.

I wanted to be like that woman who did this one beautiful thing so well. I wanted to be like her tree that shone so brightly from the porch, creating a sort of magic that stopped me on the sidewalk. I wanted to lift someone’s spirits in the way that tree lifted mine and be a reminder of the small, bright things that fill our lives if we only stop long enough to enjoy them.

But the best I can do is to tell you about it. And so I have.

Till next time, Carrie  
Carrie Classon’s memoir is called “Blue Yarn.” Learn more at [CarrieClasson.com](http://CarrieClasson.com).



☆

THOUGHTS FROM  
HILLSIDE CHURCH

By Dr. Mark Trice



## Watch for the Poison

Why do there have to be so many weeds in the world? I mean, really. When you're a rancher, you don't just randomly send your cattle out into a pasture. Depending on where you live, you may have to ride it first, looking carefully to make sure there are no poisonous plants growing out there. The most innocent looking weed, under the wrong conditions, can wreak havoc with a herd.

Which is funny, in a way. You see these massive animals and they look like nothing should be able to hurt them. As they stand there, staring at you, they appear invincible. But they're not. Nibbling on the right (wrong) poisonous plant can drop them in short order. The same holds true in your home. If you have pets and love plants, you learn quickly that there are certain plants, weeds or not, that you must keep away from your four-footed friends. You have to watch out for those things and guard your animals' health.

Bitterness is much like a weed; it takes root quickly, spreads with abandon, and is always poisonous! When we let bitterness get firmly rooted in our lives, when we're not on the lookout for evidence of its presence and miss its appearing, it sours our stomachs and poisons us just as surely as some plants poison our cattle or pets. It may not kill us physically, but it definitely affects us physically, and it can destroy a

man spiritually along with his relationships and a lot more.

I've said for years that "bitter never gets better." Bitterness tends to be invasive and as fast growing as the worst plant out there. It holds on with fierce determination – especially when you choose to hold onto it. Like the weeds in the pasture, it must be completely destroyed if one is to truly flourish as a Christian. It must be pulled up by the roots and burned up by the Holy Spirit.

This is one of the advantages we have when the Holy Spirit is our helper. The Spirit alerts us to the problems, and then helps us deal with them. When we truly submit to the work the Holy Spirit wants to do in us, we are empowered to get in there and dig that bitterness out by the root, planting good seed in its place so that the pasture of our spirit becomes fertile again, green and a blessing to us in spirit, soul, and body.

So I urge you, stay sensitive to the Holy Spirit, leaning on and submitting to that special gift that we have the honor and privilege of receiving every day. Watch for poisonous plants like bitterness, envy, strife...and yank those suckers up before they can do you any more harm.

Watch for the poison!

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OBITUARIES

## DAVID L. KING

David L. King went home to be with the Lord on Thursday January 6, 2022.

David was born March 10, 1963 to Dale and Virginia King in Stafford, KS. His family moved to the east side of Houston Texas in 1972. He was a Channelview HS graduate in 1981, then entered into the Army 5 days later. After the army he returned home and became a volunteer fire fighter, then went to work at the refineries as a sandblaster and painter. David married the love of his life Rachel Marcantel on May 1, 1987. They made their life in Galena Park, TX.

As a dad, he was never a sideline viewer in his children's lives, he wouldn't just sit and watch an event his children was in he had to become involved himself. When they played T-ball, he was a coach then an umpire. When the Boy Scouts went camping he was there, from archery, hiking, and cooking to snipe hunts. When his daughters had dance



recital's, he was there all day from dress rehearsal to entire performance, recording the day. He didn't want to miss out on any memories with his family.

He became a nurse in 1993; in 2003 his job relocated the family to the Waco area. He devoted his career to the care of Geriatrics and loved it when he could get someone to smile or play. He had the gift to bring out the inner child in an elderly person.

He enjoyed being outdoors and loved, hunting, fishing, and camping. Some of his hobbies included playing softball, working in the garden, woodworking in his shop, or doing anything on the farm. David was

a devoted husband, father, and grandfather his family was always his first priority, after God.

Preceding him in death was both his parents and his younger brother Loren Douglass King. He leaves behind, Rachel, his wife of 34 years, his son Joshua and grandsons Dorian and Cameron, his oldest daughter Jessica and grandkids Alexis and Jaden, and his youngest daughter Janetha and grandson Levi. He also leaves holes in the hearts of many cousins, friends, and extended family.

Funeral arrangements through Cornerstone Funeral Home

In Hillsboro, TX. Or see [cornerstonehillsboro.com](http://cornerstonehillsboro.com)

## New cars for 2 Families,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

said Rhodes, a single mother of 3 children. "I've never been given anything in my life before. I've always had to work for everything. I can't even believe that I'm being recognized for being a good parent. It's something that you just do because you're a parent."

Throughout the year, the Bateses search for salvaged or donated vehicles that can be fixed up and given to deserving parents during the holiday season. Bates employees donate their time and skills to work on the cars and help fill them with gifts. Other community members and businesses donate gas, insurance, and materials needed to rehab the cars.

Shop owners Lee and Leila Bates have made this annual giveaway a priority because they recognize the sacrifices parents often make to provide for their children.

"Destini is an example of the kind of family that we are really searching to help with this project," said Bates Collision Centers co-owner Leila Bates. "She's not just sitting



back waiting for good things to happen. She's making good things happen for her family."

Montalvo Perez, a Cuban immigrant who arrived in Texas five years ago in search of a better life for her family, also received a vehicle this week—a 2013 Mazda 3. Her 4-year-old son, Jen-

carlos Millan, is enrolled at the HCDE Pugh Head Start center.

"I am so grateful and relieved," she said. "Now I can go out with my son and go to the grocery store whenever I want. When I take the bus, it becomes a whole-day ordeal. This car is truly a blessing."

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Notice is hereby given that Original Letters Testamentary for Docket No. 499791; Estate of CHARLES GLENN EDWARDS Deceased; In Probate Court No. 1 of Harris County, Texas, were issued on DECEMBER 29, 2021.

KAREN MICHELLE EDWARDS

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

c/o Weston Cotten  
1500 E. Wallisville Rd  
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 JANUARY 6, 2022.

*Weston Cotten*  
by WESTON COTTEN  
Attorney for the Estate

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<http://wbauctioncrosby.hibid.com/auction/current> to sell for cash only the contents of Stall F-20, Austin Bernelle; Unit B-11, Lyza Camp; Unit I-31, Jacquelyn Brown and Unit J-6, Malik Duparl in order to satisfy a Landlord's Lien. The property to be sold is Medical Supplies, Furniture, Folding Tables, Household items and etc.....

02-2T

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LEGAL NOTICE

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Entered as Periodicals Class at Highlands Post Office, Highlands, TX 77562. Under the Act of Congress of March 3, 1879. Published 50 weeks per year, on Thursday, by Grafikpress Corp., 5906 Star Lane, Houston, TX 77057. Opinions in this paper are those of the authors, and not necessarily this newspaper's. Any erroneous statement which may appear will be corrected when brought to the attention of the publisher. Liability for errors is limited to the reprinting of the corrected version. Submissions are encouraged, in person, by mail, by Fax, or by email, to [grafikstar@aol.com](mailto:grafikstar@aol.com).

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by Dave T. Phipps



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YOU REALLY THINK THAT IS BETTER THAN WEARING MY NEW WINTER JACKET?

I WAS JUST HOPING IT WAS CONVINCING ENOUGH TO GIVE UP THAT JACKET?

### R.F.D.

by Mike Marland



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### The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



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WHAT A "WAIST" OF TIME.

### Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

6			2			9		
	1			4				6
		5			8			1
		4	3					2
	3			9		8		
2				4				6
8			9					5
	6				5			3
		2		1		7		

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.


**DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK:** ♦♦♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging  
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!


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### HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Fence is shorter; 2. Scarf is shorter; 3. Cap is different; 4. Collar is different; 5. Arm is moved; 6. Window is smaller.

### January 10, 2022 Posting Date

## King Crossword

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12					13					14		
15										16		
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				35					36			
37	38	39						40				
41						42	43			44	45	46
47						48						
49						50				51		

**ACROSS**

1 Even  
5 Apply cream  
8 "The Good Earth" heroine  
12 "Please go ahead"  
14 Fork prong  
15 The National Pastime  
16 Circus structure  
17 Cacophony  
18 Scalawags  
20 Basilica areas  
23 Diving duck  
24 Soccer legend  
25 Brewing gizmo  
28 Greek letter  
29 Not — out of place  
30 Scull need  
32 Kook  
34 Ordered  
35 Skin breakout  
36 Notorious  
37 Port city of Poland  
40 Former Mideast org.  
41 Pealed  
42 Pitcher's tactic  
47 "American —" little  
48 Consume too  
49 Lion's pride?  
50 Meadow  
51 Sciences'

**DOWN**

1 Bar bill  
2 "— tree falls ..."  
3 UFO crew  
4 One of the Ramones  
5 Cannon of film  
6 MSN rival  
7 Reduced-rate postal delivery  
8 Canada's capital  
9 Actor Schreiber

10 Green Gables girl  
11 Tennis barriers  
13 Baseball stats  
19 Cornhusker's st.  
20 iPhone download  
21 Mexican money  
22 Lost traction  
23 Black Panthers leader Bobby  
25 Appreciative  
26 Rich soil  
27 Stow cargo  
29 Grade-school

basics  
31 Flushed  
33 Hang loose?  
34 Diva  
36 Streisand  
37 Kismet  
38 Baby's father  
39 Unsigned (Abbr.)  
40 Fed. food inspector  
43 Chemical suffix  
44 — Lingus  
45 Back muscle, briefly  
46 USN officers

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8	6	7	9	1	4	2	5	3
3	1	2	5	8	7	6	9	4
4	5	9	3	2	6	1	7	8
9	3	1	4	5	8	7	6	2
2	7	8	2	6	1	9	3	5
6	2	5	7	9	3	4	8	1
1	7	4	8	3	9	5	2	6
2	9	3	6	4	1	8	7	5
5	8	6	1	2	7	4	3	9

Answer

Weekly SUDOKU

S	T	I	D	E	A	S	N	A	M
L	I	D	E	N	E	S	N	A	M
T	L	E	N	E	S	N	A	M	
L	E	N	E	S	N	A	M		
O	D	E	N	E	S	N	A	M	
O	D	E	N	E	S	N	A	M	
O	D	E	N	E	S	N	A	M	
O	D	E	N	E	S	N	A	M	
O	D	E	N	E	S	N	A	M	
O	D	E	N	E	S	N	A	M	

Solution time: 22 mins.

Answers

King Crossword

### Trivia test

by Fifi Rodriguez

1. LITERATURE: What was the title of Stephen King's first published novel?  
2. ADVERTISING SLOGANS: Which restaurant chain has the advertising slogan, "Have it your way"?  
3. U.S. PRESIDENTS: Who was the first president whose likeness appeared on a U.S. coin?  
4. TELEVISION: What is the family's last name in the "Family Ties" sitcom?  
5. LANGUAGE: What does the Latin phrase "lupus in fabula" mean?  
6. GEOGRAPHY: What did the city of Mumbai, India, used to be called?  
7. MOVIES: Which movie features a character called Rooster Cogburn?  
8. LITERATURE: Which 20th-century novel features a type of language called "newspeak"?  
9. SCIENCE: What temperature is the same on the Celsius and Fahrenheit scales?  
10. FOOD & DRINK: Where was Coca-Cola first sold?

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