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CHANNEL CURRENTS

EVENTS

JAN. 28, SATURDAY
CHIC Sheldon Road
Clean-up, starting at
7:30 am - 12 noon, meet
in parking lot next to
Wells Fargo.

FEB. 3, FRIDAY
North Channel Chamber
monthly luncheon,
11:30 am, San Jacinto
College Monument
Room, program:
Cardiovascular Health

FEB. 4, SATURDAY
American Legion District
8 Veterans Benefit
Assistance Fair.
Jacinto City Town Center
Starts 9 am.

FEB. 6, MONDAY
TCEQ Hearing, re:
Houston Crushed
Concrete permit.
Meeting 7 pm, Holiday
Inn East Channelview

\$60 million in Maritime grants to benefit Port of Houston and San Jac Center of Excellence

Congresswoman Sylvia Garcia announces grants

Washington, D.C. – Today, Congresswoman Garcia announced \$30 million for small shipyard grant programs and \$30 million in grants for maritime centers of excellence were authorized by the House today. These funds could soon benefit the Houston region's maritime industry and training centers.

"I'm proud to announce \$30 million for small shipyard grant programs and \$30 million in grants for maritime centers of excellence were authorized," said Congresswoman Sylvia Garcia. "The often-overlooked maritime in-



SYLVIA GARCIA
U.S. HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES

dustry is remarkably important for Houston as it is home to the Maritime Center of Excellence Campus and the Port of Houston. When appropriated, these funds will support the next generation of maritime workers by strength-



BRENDA HELLYER
SAN JACINTO COLLEGE
CHANCELLOR

ening maritime education and training programs. This will deliver massive economic improvements for the Houston region, and benefit residents across my district."

"The San Jacinto College Maritime Technology

and Training Center was named a 2021 Center of Excellence for Domestic Maritime Workforce Training and Education (CoE), by the U.S. Maritime Administration. We are grateful to Congresswoman Garcia for her hard and persistent work to include authorization of both \$30 million for the small shipyard grant programs and \$30 million in grants for community college maritime centers of excellence," said Chancellor Dr. Brenda Hellyer, San Jacinto College. "These funds, when appropriated, could benefit our region and the maritime industry! We are very grateful to Congresswoman Garcia who spent many hours working on this legislation."

These maritime amend-

ments were included as part of the FY 2023 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), which passed out of the House of Representatives today in a bipartisan 350-80 vote. This is the annual defense funding bill, but often contains many local provisions such as this one. The \$847 billion measure will now head to the Senate for consideration ahead of the year-end deadline.

Congresswoman Sylvia R. Garcia was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in November 2018, becoming the first Latina ever to represent the Texas 29th Congressional District. She serves on the House Judiciary, Financial Services, and Armed Services Committees.

Investiture Ceremon(ies) for Judge Dolores Lozano

By Allan Jamail

Pasadena, TX. – Saturday, January 21, 2023 at 11 a.m. the Honorable Judge Dolores Lozano's Ceremonial Investiture was conducted. She received the oath from Congressman Al Green with her husband Kory Haywood holding a Bible (see photo).

Judge Lozano, Democrat became the first female to be elected to the Justice of the Peace Precinct 2, Place 2 Court, and the first Hispanic to be elected to it. She won the seat on November 8, 2022 in a landslide, getting over 99 percent of the votes. She assumed office on January 1, 2023 by taking her official oath from State Representa-



Congressman Al Green administers oath of office to Judge Dolores Lozano, husband Kory Haywood holds the Bible. (Photo by Allan Jamail)



Judge Dolores Lozano receives official oath from State Rep. Ana Hernandez-- mom Lillian Lozano holding Bible 1-1- 23



Group photo of elected officials & staff with Judge Lozano (centered behind front group) Photo by Allan Jamail)

tive Ana Hernandez (see photo).

To witness the event, there was a standing room only crowd in her court room. The large group was composed of family members, friends and so many elected officials both former and current to be listed here.

Like so many Mexican-American families, she was born to working-class parents who entered the workforce straight out of high school. She is the daughter of Precinct 6 Chief Deputy Lillian Lozano and 37-Year Local Union 551 Member Jose Lozano.

As the eldest of three girls, Dolores grew up

CONTINUED. SEE JUDGE
LOZANO, PAGE 7

Crawfish Season now open in Crosby!

CROSBY – The much anticipated opening of the Crawfish season has arrived, and Crosby's outstanding Crawfish restaurant, Crawfish Shack on FM2100, will start serving drive-thru customers on Wednesday, January 18th, from 4 to 9 pm, weekends 12 to 9 pm.

According to owner Dan Meaux, he had to delay the season opener slightly, due to the condition of the crawfish crop this year. He said that a hard freeze in this part of the county, including the crawfish farms in Louisiana, kept the crop small and limited in quantity. "We had a hard freeze during Christmas that slowed things down," crawfish specialist with LSU AgCenter Mark



Dan Meaux, owner of Crawfish Shack in Crosby, will open the Drive-thru on Wednesday, Jan. 18 and the Dine-in on Feb. 15th.

Shirley said. "Crawfish ponds in southwest Louisiana still have a lot of crawfish. A lot of the crawfish are kind of small, but they're growing."

Shirley said while the mudbugs may be smaller now, they'll continue to grow. But the cost this year may be higher.

Meaux said he has had to raise his prices, from \$7.95/lb last year to \$8.95 this year.

Are you looking forward to Crawfish? Meaux said "There's probably as much crawfish eaten in Houston as in Lafayette per person. I mean it's huge here."

North Channel's Rising Star Arleth Santos

By Allan Jamail

December 16, 2022 – at Jacinto City's Heritage Hall Elizabeth Flores, Program Director and Maria Espinoza, Program Assistant conducted the annual Christmas Party.

Arleth Santos, a ten year GPISD's fourth grader from Sam Houston Elementary School volunteered to give a special Christmas gift to the seniors by her solo theatrical performance with Christmas songs. Councilwoman Carmela Garcia had heard Santos sing before so she introduced Arleth to Flores who performed at the seniors weekly meetings prior to the Christmas party.

Santos kept the party's attendees full attention, their eyes and ears were fixed on her. Her dramatic



Arleth Santos, North Channel's ten year old singer. (Photo by Allan Jamail)

CONTINUED. SEE A NEW STAR
IS RISING, PAGE 3

SHELDON ISD NEWS

Sheldon ISD Recognizes School Resource Officers



Sheldon ISD Board Members and administration recognized Sheldon ISD's law enforcement in honor of Law Enforcement Appreciation Day on January 9. School resource officers were presented a certificate and recognized at the January 17 school board meetings. Sheldon ISD is grateful for the hard work and dedication of our officers.

KHS Students Pass Drone Certification Pilot Test

On December 7, nine King High School senior engineering students passed their FFA Certified Drone Pilot Test. This means this group of students are now certified drone pilots. With this certification, students are able to pursue a career that involves flying drones. This adult certification test is just one of the many industry-based certification tests offered to Sheldon ISD students through the career and technical education program and the STEM Academy at King High School. Congratulations to Logan Gourley, Nataly Flores, Amanda

Moreno, Luis Alvarez, Christian Briagas, Jonathan Molina, Luis Martinez Medina, Rene Villanueva, and Bryan Fu-

entes-Lopez. The students traveled to Hooks Airport in Spring with their teacher Ms. Crystal Simpson for their test.



Sheldon Recognizes Staff Member for Outstanding Customer Service

This week, administrators surprised a Sheldon ISD employee with the CARE award which stands for Caught Acting and Responding with Excellence. The award, in partnership with Woodforest Bank, is presented to employees who are nominated by their peers and community for their dedication to serving the students and staff of Sheldon ISD with exemplary customer service skills. The winner is listed below:

Brooke Luther -



Drill Team Director - King High School Mrs. Luther has been nominated for professionalism, patience, and a

“people-first” attitude & “student-first” attitude first. Regardless of the day she is having or how full her schedule is she always makes sure that her students are taken care of and that parents/ staff/community are informed of events and takes care of others without hesitation.

CARE Award winners receive a \$100 gift card from Woodforest Bank. The award is presented quarterly to Sheldon ISD employees.

GALENA PARK ISD NEWS

A Message From The Superintendent

Dear Galena Park ISD Family and Friends,
Happy New Year, and welcome to what will be a great Spring semester in Galena Park ISD. The new year brings hope, brighter promises, and a refreshed vision to everything we do. It's an opportunity for a new academic start, for those needing one, and a renewed effort for our pursuit of excellence!
January is Board Appreciation Month. Please join us as we share our gratitude for the leadership and dedication of the Galena Park ISD Board of Trustees. The seven Board Trustees sacrifice a lot of time as elected volunteers to lead our district and provide our students and staff with resources and opportunities. We are forever



indebted to them for rising to the challenge and setting a course focused on the success of children in our great community. Their selfless leadership is immensely appreciated.
Together let's show our sincere appreciation to the individuals chosen to lead Galena Park ISD - Adrian Stephens, President; Noe Esparza, Vice-President;

Norma Hernandez, Secretary; Wanda Heath Johnson, Trustee; Ramon Garza, Trustee; Herbert Alexander Sanchez, Trustee; and Linda Clark Sherard, Trustee.
Finally, January's character traits are perseverance and courage. Perseverance is when we continually work hard in the face of challenges. Courage includes being bold and brave and trying your best to learn unfamiliar things. So, let's courageously work, persevere, and grow together as a district and community.
I thank everyone for making Galena Park ISD...A Great Place to Be as we make every day our best day in 2023!
John Moore, Ed.D Superintendent of Schools

Galena Park Libraries Win for Literacy



Winning campus representatives, Dr. John Moore, Superintendent of Schools and Wanda Heath Johnson, GPISD Board Trustee

Houston, TX: Galena Park ISD recognized North Shore Senior High School, North Shore 9th Grade Center, and Purple Sage Elementary School for receiving school and classroom awards from the Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation through the iWrite Literacy Program. North Shore

Senior High School was awarded \$5,000 for their campus library, and North Shore 9th Grade Center and Purple Sage Elementary School were awarded \$250 for their respective campuses. The funds will be used to continue the mission of the Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation by improving

lives through the power of literacy.
A certificate was presented to representatives from each campus on behalf of the Galena Park ISD Board of Trustees and Dr. John Moore, Superintendent of Schools.
Story Credit: Dr. Tommie L. Smith
Photo Credit: Christopher Gause

Social Studies Bee Winners Recognized at GPISD Board

Houston, TX: On November 17th, Galena Park ISD hosted its annual Social Studies Bee. The Social Studies Bee is a competition that focuses on history across the United States and what students are learning in the classroom. Points are awarded for correct answers to a variety of social studies questions, and Students enjoy extending their application of knowl-

edge while challenging each other. Bryan Ibarra, from Galena Park High School was recently recognized for his top individual score in the Social Studies Bee. Ibarra was also awarded a \$500 Ruby Gresham Scholarship and will go on to compete in the Texas Citizen Bee Competition in March. Also recognized were Social Studies Bee team winners Iyana Gonzales, Mia Pena,

Gabriel Tagle, and Alexis Umana from Early College High School. A medal and certificate was presented to each Social Studies Bee winner on behalf of the Galena Park ISD Board of Trustees and Dr. John Moore, Superintendent of Schools.
Story Credits: Dr. Tommie L. Smith
Photo Credit: Christopher Gause



Photographed: (top photo) Dr. John Moore, Superintendent of Schools; Wanda Heath Johnson, GPISD Board Trustee; Bryan Ibarra, Social Studies Bee Individual Top Scorer; Dr. Kimberly Martin, Galena Park High School principal; and Krystle Argieard, Program Director for Secondary Schools; (bottom photo) Dr. John Moore, Superintendent of Schools; Gabriel Tagle; Alexis Umana; Mia Pena; Iyana Gonzales; Dr. Jeff Hutchinson, Early College High School principal; Krystle Argieard, Program Director for Secondary Schools; and Wanda Heath Johnson, GPISD Board Trustee

CHARLOTTE'S WEB

By Charlotte Jackson



Living Life

Look over your calendar for the past two weeks. Did you find yourself spending more time with those who resemble you? On the other hand, did you find yourself spending more time with people of diverse backgrounds? Look through your call records, what do you notice?

Over the past decade, our city has become home for people of over one hundred nationalities. There are over seventy-five consulate offices and over sixty different languages spoken in our city. I am the first to admit that I am often at a loss, as I only speak one language.

In the city that was once limited to Christians and Jews, there are now many different religions practiced. In some parts of Houston, you will find a variety of churches, mosques, temples and synagogues.

There are families in our community that represent three or four generations living in the same neighborhood. In some parts of Harris County, there are multigenerational homes, particularly in communities that started in the past thirty years. In some of the communities in the southwest part of the city, one family may actually own multiple homes on the same street.

Depending on what type of profession that you work in, you can easily have coworkers from multiple backgrounds. Some of them have been in the workforce for less than five years, whereas some may have been in the workplace for five decades. Some of these individuals may have gone from high school to work and some have multiple college degrees. If you are involved in your civic club, homeowners association or a non-profit, you will have an opportunity to meet many individuals who have diverse backgrounds. Gone are the days where each person has similar backgrounds. Yet, there are a few common areas in all of our lives. People all want to be respected, valued and accepted. Most people you talk to have a desire to love and to have others love them. I believe that most of our neighbors have a desire to work hard and have something to show for it. Even while the crime rate rises, I believe most people have a good heart. I have never met someone who wanted to harm others. There are times that I have met people who felt as though they had no options except to make a poor choice. I feel that if we want to have a better life, we must share our opinions with others and if we know of a resource, we should share that as well.

Recently, I had someone ask why Americans are so quick to rent a storage building to store extra items, sometimes for years, instead of giving them to someone less fortunate. In thinking about that and would like to challenge you to look through your excess items and find someone to share them with, especially instead of paying a storage fee. Perhaps the money you had been paying for storage could be set aside for your next vacation. Take the time to listen to others and ask yourself what you can do differently this year.

A Couple Dead in Apparent Murder-Suicide in Channelview



Teen finds couple dead from apparent murder-suicide at apartment in Channelview area, deputies say

“It’s tragic that a teenager had to witness this,” Harris County Sheriff Ed Gonzalez said.

Police are investigating an apparent murder-suicide after a woman and man were found dead inside an apartment Wednesday morning in the Channelview area, according to the Harris County Sheriff’s Office.

HOUSTON – Police are investigating an apparent murder-suicide after a woman and man were found dead inside an apartment Wednesday morning in the Channelview area, according to the Harris County Sheriff’s Office.

Deputies responded to an apartment complex, located at 973 Ashland Blvd., in regards to a domestic violence incident.

They found the 28-year-old man and 25-year-old woman suffering from fatal gunshot wounds. Investigators believe the couple were dating possibly 10 years and living together for five years.

According to investigators, the man was drunk the night before and arguing with the woman throughout the night. The teen, who is the man’s 15-year-old brother, was at the home at the time and heard gunshots around 5:30 a.m.

The teen reportedly walked into the bedroom and found them shot to death, according to Sheriff Ed Gonzalez.

He said the couple had a history of domestic violence and abuse.

Family members who live in the area are coordinating with Child Protective Services to make sure the teen goes to a safe home.

A NEW STAR IS RISING,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

hand gesture techniques with her dancing motions were amazing for someone her age. Using the full power of her beautiful voice along with her physical acts was an astonishment to witness.

Arleth has been singing for about two years, she’s taking singing lessons and wants to have a singing career. She became inspired to sign from watching famous singers on TV. Her preferred music is, Tejano, Rancheras & Tex-Mex music.

She’s performed at the Harris County Sheriff’s Office Community Engagement event, birthday parties and community centers.

Silverio Santos, her dad coordinated the music of her song selections to come over the public address system.

Vience Ramos from Houston’s Symphony Orchestra volunteered his time and played digitally recorded music that seniors danced to.

Upon entering the hall everyone was given a raffle ticket for gifts to be given away. Gifts were donated by JC Officials, State Representative Ana Hernandez represented by Linda Jamail, Community Liaison, Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee represented by Yuroba Harris, Chief District Director and JC Capital Bank, represented by Al Gutierrez, Vice President/Branch Manager. Jacinto City’s Branch.

Arleth Santos can be reached by email at: arlethcs12@icloud.com, Instagram: santos.arleth12, Facebook: Arleth Carol Santos and YouTube: Arleth Santos.

ASK DIAMOND JIM

Diamond Jim: “Finding the Perfect Diamond for an Engagement Ring”

Despite more choices and variety than ever before, diamonds remain the most popular main stone in engagement rings. Timeless and classic, a diamond is the center gem that is most durable and full of romance and tradition. With so many custom ring designs, many people are looking for tips for finding the perfect diamond for an engagement ring. It can be overwhelming for first-time shoppers—which most people are—so read on to find out more.



An engagement ring is one of the greatest purchases you will ever make, and hopefully only once in your life, so you would like to make sure that you are doing it right. Expense-wise, an engagement ring is often the third most expensive purchase that you will make, after a home and car, but more importantly, you want the ring to reflect your love for your partner.

Before making your decision, here are some tips you need to consider to ensure you purchase the perfect ring for your partner—one that they will treasure forever.

- Diamond Shape
- When selecting an engagement ring, the shape is where you should start. All else aside, this is where you should try to gauge your partner’s preferences. Carat, color, and clarity are less obvious, but the wrong shape can wreck a piece in someone’s eyes. Round diamonds are still the most popular due to their maximum sparkle, but other shapes that follow in popularity are princess, cushion, oval, pear, and emerald. Again, since it’s such a matter of preference, try your best to find out the shape your partner loves.
- Size
- After shape, size is one of the most visually apparent aspects of a diamond. Be fair with yourself and set a budget. If size is the most important thing to you, then maybe you compromise a little bit on clarity and color in order to get a higher-carat diamond. While most buyers approximate the weight of the diamond based on the carat, you can inquire for more indications of the actual dimensions to get a certain look, depending on the shape.
- Color and Clarity
- Color and clarity are the often-understated characteristics that you need to consider before making a purchase. Although individuals have varying levels of ability when it comes to being able to distinguish color differences with the naked eye, the most common color grades for engagement rings are F-H color. Generally, they are broken down into ranges: D-F is colorless, G-J is near colorless, K-M is faint, N-R is very light, and S-Z is light (‘colorless’ being the highest quality and most expensive and ‘light’ being the lesser quality, least expensive).
- Ask a Professional
- We hope these tips for finding the perfect diamond for an engagement ring have helped, but if you are starting to feel overwhelmed about finding the perfect ring that will truly represent your love and commitment to your partner—don’t worry. Pineforest Jewelry has you covered! We have a variety of high-quality diamonds that are ethically sourced, and we can meet various customer requests. We carefully select diamonds based on your desired shape, size, color, and clarity to ensure you get the greatest value for your hard earned money. Contact us today if you are looking for more advice!

Credit to K. Rosengart for this article

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

Diamond Jim is a master jeweler, diamond dealer and precious metals broker. Pineforest Jewelry has been a proud member of the Independent Jewelers Organization (IJO) and the Retail Jewelers Organization (RJO) for many years. See more at: www.pineforestjewelry.com.

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

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OPINION

By BILL KING



A Hundred-Year-Old Christmas Gift from Ukraine

As many of us rushed to buy those last minute gifts and prepare for holiday gatherings with friends and family, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky delivered a stark reminder that half a world away his country is fighting the latest chapter in the war of freedom and democracy versus autocracy and repression this holiday season. In doing so, the Ukrainian people have demonstrated remarkable courage and resilience

I suspect that one of reasons they have been able to prevail is their great faith traditions. While the country is overwhelmingly East Orthodox, other faith traditions thrive there as well, as demonstrated by the country electing a Jewish president.

Ukraine also has a rich cultural history, particularly in its music. But what I did not know until recently, was that Ukraine's faith and cultural traditions combined to give the world one of its iconic Christmas carols, The Carol of the Bells. The carol was written by Ukrainian composer Mykola Leontovych in 1914 and is based on Ukrainian folk music. Peter J. Wilhousky, also Ukrainian, wrote the lyrics.

The Carol of the Bells was first performed in the United States at Carnegie Hall in 1922 and immediately became a Christmas classic. It has been performed and recorded by numerous artists. However, it was recently performed once again at Carnegie by a youth choir from Ukraine. It is an inspiring rendition and particularly poignant given the horrors of the war being waged against their country.

I want to wish Merry Christmas to my fellow Christians and happy holidays to those of you who follow a different path. May 2023 bring you and your families health and happiness and, hopefully, peace for the Ukrainian people.



Home Country



with Slim Randles

Starting at the top...

Down at the sale barn Saturday, the think tank had coagulated there with coffees to go. Doc and Dud had their dogs with them, while Bert and Dewey and Steve went stag.

Dud tried to start a conversation, but the loud-speaker soon drove them outside, where they arrayed themselves on dropped tailgates and waited to hear what Dud had in mind.

"I thought about it a lot," Dud said, "and I wondered what the favorite part of my job was, and wondered if you fellas ever gave that any thought, too."

They nodded. Yes, by mutual consent a worthy subject.

"With me," Dud continued, "it wasn't so much my job as it was my hobby. You know, writing that book. I'm claiming it as the best part of my job, anyway."

The assembled were still waiting to read "Murder in the Soggy Bottoms," as it had yet to see print, and was really a work in progress.

Then Bert picked up the conversation thread. "Of course I'm retired now," he said, "but when I was running the pawn shop, my favorite part of the job happened when a customer found something in there he really needed and ended up paying much less for it than he thought he'd have to."

Doc laughed "And you made more on it than you thought you would, too,"

Bert grinned and nodded.

"Yep. That was good too. And you, Dewey?"

Our accident-prone pharaoh of fertilizer got a serious look on his face. He finally said, "The best part of the fertilizer business is seeing the difference it makes in the flower gardens around town. Now maybe it's just my imagination, but I kinda like to take a little credit for a prettier town."

"You deserve it, Dewey," Doc said kindly. "Well now ... with me it's a little different. I have doctoring skills, of course, and it's good when I can help someone, but these days the most satisfying part of my job is to check someone out thoroughly and find there's absolutely nothing wrong with them. Now that's special."

They all looked over at the tall cowboy, Steve. "Digging postholes," he said. "What?" they said. "You know," he said, "the favorite part of my job." "Digging postholes?" "Sure," he said, grinning. "That's the only job a cowboy has where he can start at the top and work down."

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Youth Choir from Ukraine performing last month at Carnegie Hall in New York.

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STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

By Gary Borders



Budget eyes \$288.7 billion; Priorities: Border Security, Tax Relief, Raises

For the Texas House and Senate, there is not much daylight between each chamber's priorities in this year's legislative session. Leaders say the focus will be on property tax relief, border security and employee raises. Preliminary budgets from both chambers were released last week, the Austin American-Statesman reported, with a record \$288.7 billion budget for the next two years. The money in the budget is made up of \$93.7 billion in federal funds, \$130.1 billion in state general revenue funds, and \$64.9 billion in other funds.

The tussle likely comes when lawmakers start spending a whopping \$32.7 billion budget surplus sitting in the state's coffers from the previous biennium.

Gov. Greg Abbott and Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick want to provide property tax relief to homeowners, with Patrick proposing raising the homestead exemption to \$70,000 from \$40,000. Both draft budget bills set aside \$15 billion – almost half the surplus – for property tax relief.

Increased funding for border security, public education and for raises for state employees are also in the draft budgets, which are likely to change several times before session's end.

The Texas Tribune reported the preliminary budgets still leave more than \$50 billion in state funds up for grabs. One of the biggest challenges is that state law and the Texas Constitution set limits on how much tax spending can increase between sessions.

POSSIBLE END TO CONFEDERATE HEROES DAY?

A 50-year-old state holiday honoring soldiers who fought for the Confederacy in the Civil War is again the target of a lawmaker who wants to end the holiday. State Rep. Jarvis Johnson filed the bill, telling the American-Statesman, "This is not the look we want for our state anymore."

Johnson has filed this measure before without success. Confederate monuments on public grounds have drawn complaints across the state, including the Texas Capitol.



The day is observed on Jan. 19, the birthday of Gen. Robert E. Lee. On occasion, the holiday celebrating slain civil rights leader Martin Luther King, which is held on the third Monday in January, and Confederate Heroes Day fall on the same day.

"While (the King holiday) is a reminder that we are all created equal, how do we simultaneously celebrate an ideology that has been linked with oppression and supremacy?" Johnson asked.

NATURAL GAS SUPPLIES HELD UP DURING WINTER STORM

The bout of sub-freezing temperatures blanketing much of the state a few days before Christmas sparked concern for the state's electric grid, which reached its highest peak for the entire year. But the grid held, and natural gas supplies to power plants were ample, state officials said.

The Texas Railroad Commission issued a press release saying, "There was ample natural gas supply to help the state's electricity supply chain and keep Texans safe."

The agency said it would continue to inspect natural gas facilities throughout the winter to ensure "infrastructure is hardened against extreme weather conditions."

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in October said the grid is still at risk of failure during extreme winter conditions, such as what happened in February 2021 with Winter Storm Uri.

Overhaul plan for power market gets initial approval

The Public Utility Commission last week approved a potential overhaul of the Texas

electricity market in hopes of attracting private investment in new power plants, the Statesman reported. However, the Texas Legislature has ultimate approval. Critics say the plan is untested and could increase electric bills for consumers.

Abbott has already backed the plan, which is an effort to make the power grid, managed by the Electric Reliability Council of Texas, more reliable. It is intended to encourage more private investment in "plants that can turn on and off quickly depending on need."

If approved by legislators, the plan could take up to four years to implement.

LAWMAKERS HIGHLIGHT STATE'S FRAGILE WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

A bipartisan group of 38 state legislators have banded together to educate fellow lawmakers about water security issues, the Texas Tribune reported. Aging infrastructure and lack of funding have created water-supply problems across the state, particularly in rural areas.

Last year there were more than 3,000 boil-water notices issued across the state because water quality was in doubt. Seven of the 10 water systems that issued the most notices were in rural parts of East Texas, the Tribune reported after analyzing data from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. There have already been 79 boil-water notices in January.

The group is not advocating for any specific bills.

"Water security is critically important to all Texans and our economy," state Rep. Tracy King, who heads the caucus, said in a statement. "We must continue to innovate, invest and strategize long-term to manage our water resources efficiently."

STATE'S NEWEST HISTORIC SITE

The Texas Historical Commission's latest historic site is 274 years old. Presidio la Bahía was the site of the Goliad Massacre in March 1836. More than 300 Texans were held inside the church before being executed by Mexican forces.

The presidio was established on that site in 1749 during the Spanish colonial period. The fort became the nucleus of the modern-day city of Goliad.

The Presidio underwent restoration in the 1960s under the oversight of renowned restoration architect Raiford Stripling of San Augustine. More than 33,000 people visit the Presidio each year, according to its website.

COVID-19 CASES, HOSPITALIZATIONS DROP

The number of new COVID-19 cases in Texas during the past week reported to the Coronavirus Resource Center at Johns Hopkins University was 26,996, down about a third from the previous week, with 270 new deaths, up from 148. The number of lab-confirmed COVID-19 hospitalizations in the state, according to the Texas Department of State Health Service, totaled 2,837, which was down 17% from the previous week.

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THE POSTSCRIPT

By Carrie Classon

Complimenting Strangers

"I have to say, that is a very nice hat!" I told the man as he passed me on the sidewalk.

The man in the snazzy blue fedora had a serious look on his face, as if he was thinking deeply about something far more important than the indigo-blue hat with the red feather sitting on his head.

But whatever less-than-cheerful thought had been preoccupying him (the gathering clouds? The declining stock market? His expanding waistline?), it was whisked away when I complimented his dapper blue hat, and his face broke into a genuine smile.

I know people who say you shouldn't compliment strangers.

"It is intrusive," they say. "It's fake." "Nobody wants a stranger commenting on their appearance!"

I think this is a load of nonsense.

Everyone likes a compliment. I think it means even more coming from a stranger. I don't interrupt conversations to compliment someone. I don't make things up or compliment something I don't genuinely admire. I don't think anyone has ever looked offended when I told them they looked good or something they were wearing was attractive.

I find myself complimenting strangers several times every day. I try to pay attention when I'm on my walks. I try to savor whatever is interesting or beautiful and, much of the time, this is either dogs (because dogs are always interesting and beautiful), or people. I have also complimented gardens, but the people responsible are rarely around to get these compliments. The nice thing about complimenting clothing is that the person associated with it is right there, ready to receive the positive feedback.

"Thank you!" the man in the blue hat said.

I'm sure he knew it was a good-looking hat. It was probably an expensive hat; I haven't bought enough hats to know. But it doesn't really matter. Even if someone has paid a lot for something—or perhaps especially if they have—they like to know that it was money well spent, that they look good and that someone has noticed. So, I try to notice.

I've complimented older women on their coats and scarves, young women on the color of their hair (especially if it is blue or green), and tough-looking men on their clever T-shirts. It is always surprising how the people who look the most withdrawn are usually the ones who seem the most pleased. The young man may have forgotten what T-shirt he put on that day, but he's pleased to know it met with an appreciative audience—even if that audience was the slightly odd, cheerful older woman.

"Thanks!" he'll say, looking both a little embarrassed and absurdly pleased.

It doesn't matter if it's odd, I've learned. It doesn't matter where the comment comes from. It really does not matter at all.

We all want to be seen. We want to know that we do not walk invisible in this world. No one wants to feel alone in a crowd. Compliments may seem trivial or superficial, but sometimes they are the easiest way to throw a line to someone and say, "I see you! Seeing you makes me happy." It costs nothing. And I think it can be more important than we will ever know.

The man in the blue hat had a little more bounce in his step as he walked past me. I have no illusions that I changed his day significantly. But that's not my job. My job is to be more like that little bird who sings the same song, day after day, and makes the world just the smallest bit sweeter.

Till next time,
Carrie
Photos and other news can be found at CarrieClasson.com.

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North Shore Senior High School Student Pens Award-Winning Poem



Pictured: NSSHS Administrative Team Members; (front row) Dr. John Moore, Superintendent of Schools; Miya's mother; Miya Willis, author; Dr. Joe Coleman, NSSHS principal; and Wanda Heath Johnson GPISD Board Trustee

Houston, TX: Galena Park ISD recognized Miya Willis, North Shore Senior High School (NSSHS) student, for receiving the iWRITE and Bryan Museum Editor's Choice Poem Award for her submission entitled "I Am From Texas." Miya was also awarded a \$2,000 scholarship and made history by having her poem included in I Am Texas, the largest published book in the world by kids. iWRITE offers students the opportunity to submit short stories, poems, and artwork in an annual publishing contest. A medal and certificate were presented to Miya Willis on behalf of the Galena Park ISD Board of Trustees and Dr. John Moore, Superintendent of Schools.

Story Credit: Dr. Tommie L. Smith
Photo Credit: Christopher Gause

RSV, flu and COVID-19: How can you tell the difference? A Doctor Explains via WABQ logo

How to tell the difference between RSV, flu and COVID-19

The "tripledeemic" of flu, COVID-19, and RSV cases are on the rise this holiday season, leaving many wondering which virus they've caught. Here's how to tell the difference:

The "tripledeemic" of flu, COVID-19, and RSV cases are on the rise this holiday season, leaving many wondering which virus they've caught. Here's how to tell the difference:

SAN FRANCISCO — Doctors are seeing multiple different viruses circulate the community at increased rates.

The triple threat - or "tripledeemic" - of influenza (flu), COVID-19 and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) have many of the same symptoms in common, and it is hard to tell which one you've caught.

We talked to Dr. David Hoffman, pediatric hospitalist at MarinHealth Medical Center, to share his insights on how to tell them apart and when you should and shouldn't worry.

"While it's impossible to know for sure which one of these viruses you have without testing, there are some distinctive symptoms for each virus," Dr. Hoffman said.

Here are some symptoms of each and a guide on what to do if you or a family member is falling sick.

INFLUENZA

Overview

The flu typically comes on very suddenly with an incubation period of one to four days, unlike COVID-19, which tends to have a gradual onset of symptoms. Typically, people feel more miserable with the flu than with other types of viruses, and it often comes with a sore throat, nausea, body aches, vomiting, or even diarrhea. A distinctive sign of the flu can be a very high fever — as high as 103 or 104 Fahrenheit. Fever is just the body's way of fighting the infection and is not dangerous in and of itself.

Dr. Rochelle Walensky, the CDC director, said, "Hospitalizations for flu continue to be the highest we've seen for this time of year in a decade. If you do get sick, present yourself to your provider for early care. There are good antivirals to treat both flu and COVID-19."

The CDC is again suggesting people voluntarily wear masks indoors to reduce their chances of getting sick in the next few weeks.

It's not too late to get both vaccines - experts say you start getting protection within a week with a booster.

Distinctive characteristic

The most distinctive sign of the flu can be a very high fever in the 103 to 104 range.

Flu symptoms include:
Fever
Chills
Headache
Runny nose
Nausea
Fatigue
Loss of appetite
Sore throat

COVID-19

Overview

"The coronavirus has become familiar to most of us, and the signs are similar to flu and RSV. To complicate it further, some people become very ill, while others have very mild symptoms, and others show no symptoms at all. While most people develop symptoms within the first week after exposure, symptoms can occur from two up to 14 days after exposure to the virus."

Distinctive characteristic

"Unlike other viruses, COVID-19 can affect other areas of the body outside of the lungs and, in some in-



stances, cause long-term effects," Dr Hoffman says.

COVID-19 symptoms include:

- Cough
- Brief fever
- Shortness of breath
- Abdominal pain
- Loss of taste or smell
- Congestion
- Fatigue
- Sore Throat
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache

RSV

Overview

RSV is a virus that many adults would have already caught and it generally just causes cold symptoms for adults. "If you think back to that cold that you got that just wouldn't go away, you kept having congestion and perhaps a cough that lasted longer than usual, there's a decent chance that that was RSV. And again, symptoms of flu can include fever, chills, headache, runny nose, or congestion, nausea, fatigue, loss of appetite and sore throat," Dr. Hoffman said.

RSV causes a runny nose, congestion, and cough for most people. According to Dr. Hoffman, RSV has a greater likelihood of causing severe illness in very young children, especially those born premature or who have lung disease or heart disease. The most distinctive symptom that some children infected with RSV will exhibit is wheezing. Wheezing is a high-pitched sound with each exhalation.

"For most people, and even most kids, RSV doesn't cause a dangerous illness. But it does in a subset of kids. Even kids with significant illness that require hospitalization are usually going to do just fine. Maybe they'll need a little bit of oxygen, maybe they just need to be watched closely. RSV is most likely to cause significant or, you know, more concerning illness in very young children and very old adults," Dr. Hoffman said.

Distinctive symptom

The most distinctive symptom that some children infected with RSV will exhibit is wheezing, a high-pitched sound, with each exhalation.

RSV symptoms include:

- Runny nose
- Decreased appetite
- Coughing
- Sneezing
- Fever
- Wheezing

When to see a doctor

Dr Hoffman says to seek medical care right away if these symptoms appear:

- Trouble breathing
- Pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake up or stay awake
- Bluish lips or face
- Severe abdominal pain
- Refusing to eat and drink

When should I keep my child home?

If your child is exhibiting any symptoms of RSV, flu, or COVID-19, health experts advise you to keep your child home from school to avoid spreading the virus to other people. It doesn't matter which of the viruses is the culprit. Caution should be taken to prevent the spread.

Prevention: How to keep your child from getting sick

Prevention is the best medicine, particularly with these viruses. These sug-

gestions are good ideas to avoid seasonal viruses:

- Get your child vaccinated for flu, COVID-19, pneumococcus, and pertussis.
- Wash your hands regularly or use hand sanitizer.
- Sanitize high-contact surfaces, such as desks, tables, and doorknobs, if someone in your household is sick.
- If your child is sick, have them stay home to avoid spreading the illness.

"Everyone's talking about RSV but we do see other viruses in the community as well, like metapneumovirus, which can cause bronchitis or significant respiratory infection, or viral pneumonia. There are thousands of viruses that we don't have tests for so we don't know exactly which virus it is, but we're definitely seeing more of many different respiratory infections," Dr Hoffman said.

He says the most important message he wants to impart to parents is you can do a lot more harm to yourself by being overly concerned.

"By being anxious and increasing stress, you therefore are making yourself more susceptible to all types of illness, chronic disease, and infection," Dr. Hoffman says.

"That said, I do think that everyone should do whatever they can do to protect themselves from all of the respiratory illnesses and other vaccine preventable illnesses out there. He encouraged all pregnant mothers to get their pertussis vaccines during their pregnancy to 'cocoon' their unborn child, and preventing by preventing themselves from getting pertussis," he says.

Similarly, he urged kids to get the pneumococcal vaccine (whooping cough).

"Get the COVID-19 and flu vaccine for kids and adults. The flu vaccine will make you perhaps feel like you have a very mild cold but that's a lot better than getting seriously ill, or even dying from influenza. So a lot of people choose not to get the flu vaccine because they don't like that. But really the benefits are much greater than the very small risks of getting the flu vaccine or the inconvenience of getting the flu vaccine," Dr. Hoffman said.

"I don't think that it's a great idea to rush to your pediatrician's office or your primary care provider's office just to get tested, to try and figure out which one of these you have, aside from perhaps doing COVID-19 testing because most people who get RSV and flu and COVID-19 are going to do just fine. And so it's really only about dictating whether or not you need to isolate strictly and for how long," he said.

The fact is that these respiratory viruses tend to crop up with similar symptoms, such as cough, runny nose, and fever. Fortunately for most children, it doesn't matter which of these, or the thousands of other viruses causing respiratory illnesses or colds, your child has. Most children will recover from all of these viruses on their own, without receiving medical treatment and without serious complications. If your child is sick, consider testing for COVID-19 first to inform if and how long you need to isolate your child at home.

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Investiture for Judge Lozano,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

watching her parents exhaust whatever resources they had to make ends meet. And from an early age, Dolores' parents taught her the value of hard work and emphasized the importance of education.

In the early 90s, the condition and state of Houston's public schools sent her parents on a search for more opportunities.

Dolores earned a scholarship to Baylor University in Waco, where she became the first-generation college graduate with a degree in Communication Sciences and Disorders. She worked several jobs to pay for her tuition expenses, overcame institutional barriers, and survived an abusive relationship.

Candidate Lozano's campaigned with several goals. Three key goals were, no student should feel silenced within the education system, because truancy intervention programs should be more intentional and focused. No family should feel like eviction is inevitable, because the judge "just wouldn't listen." No one should feel the burden of entering the court room without a translator, because everyone should be able to self-advocate in the language that feels most comfortable for them.

The Investiture began with Congressman

Green, he said he began his elected office career as a Justice of the Peace. "I'm honored to give the oath to such well qualified person. I know she'll administer fair justice. The torch has been passed from one generation to another here today."

State Rep. Ana Hernandez on January 1, 2023 gave Lozano her official oath. She said this, "I was truly honored to administer the oath of office for newly elected, Judge Lozano. Congratulations! I'm proud of you and know that you will continue to serve our community with passion and integrity."

County Commissioner Adrian Garcia said, "I'm confident this court will serve the people well regardless of their circumstances."

State Rep. Jolanda Jones said, "We need young people in elected offices, Dolores is the future of America. She'll be fair regardless of who may bring an expensive lawyer representing them."

Olivia Julianna said, "The court is to represent the people, Dolores will do that with honor and dignity. She's been my support person for many years, I trust her completely, and I won't call her my friend, I'll call her my family."

The invocation was given by Dallas

Jones, Fountain of Praise, a performance by Tarion and welcome remarks were made by Lozano's husband, Kory Haywood.

The Donning of the Robe was done by Lozano's parents Lillian and Jose Lozano and Paula Haywood.

Judge Lozano's made several closing remarks. She thanked everyone in attendance, and thanked her parents and family for all their sacrifices that made this event possible. She wanted to stress that, "Education is Power." She said, "My goal is to have a more compassionate court and one that's truly the people's court."

She's said, she wants her court to be the people's court, one that's convenient, compassionate and community-centered.

The Benediction was given by Paula Gonzalez Fusilier. She prayed for Judge Lozano and for her to have the wisdom to give us an example to be able to follow her with honor as she's done, and she prayed for the community and the court's staff.

Justice of the Peace Court, Precinct 2 Place 2 is located at 101 S Rich-ey, Ste B, Pasadena, TX 77506. Phone: 713-274-6105 (<https://www.countycourthouse.com/tx/pasadena/precinct-2-place-2>)

Jacinto City PD and TxDOT promote S.T.E.P. (Don't Text and Drive)



Jacinto City Police Department & Txdot S.T.E.P. program, (Strategic-Traffic-Enforcement-Program. It allows officers to work overtime to tackle problem traffic areas of the city to prevent accidents etc. and promoting don't text and drive.

L-R: Back row: Jocelyn Trejo holding child, Alonso Villarreal, Hanna Collums, JCPD Lt. M. Longrigg & Det. R. Barker. Front row: left Justin Godoy, Anderson Gomez (red shirt) & Sofia Gomez (right). Photo by Allan Jamail

Senator Alvarado honors Houston Astros on Opening Day of Legislature



On Opening Day of the State Legislature, State Senator Carol Alvarado poses with the World Series Championship Trophy and Houston Astros, Pitcher Ryan Pressly, Catcher Jason Castro, and Astros Owner Jim Crane. GO STROS !

ENTERTAINMENT

Amber Waves



R.F.D.



The Spats



Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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. Mustache is missing. 2. Buttons are missing. 3. Towel is missing. 4. Red Danson. 5. Rome, Italy. 6. 108 minutes. 7. Subway Restaurants. 8. Light. 9. Chimpanzee. 10. 'The Sixth Sense' (1999).

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January 23, 2023 Posting Date

King Crossword

ACROSS

1 Choir voice

5 Right angle

8 Dallas team, to fans

12 Check

13 Sheep call

14 Out of the storm

15 Rub with an emery board, perhaps

17 Speck

18 Author Fleming

19 T-shirt fabric

21 Primitive

24 Spartan queen

25 Hamilton-Burr showdown

26 Criticize again and again

30 Nabokov product

31 Two-tone cookies

32 Ms. Thurman

33 Road marker

35 Help a crook

36 Temporary calm

37 Steinway

38 "With any luck"

41 Fragrant tree

42 2004 on a cornerstone

43 Color akin to turquoise

48 French river

49 Wildebeest

50 Cold War initials

51 Getz of jazz

52 Kenny G's instrument

53 Litigates

7 Guinevere's lover

8 Rum cocktail

9 Oodles

10 Presidential power

11 Penn or Astin

16 Calendar box

20 Praiseful pieces

21 Dutch cheese

22 Island garland

3 Up to

4 "Anna Christie" playwright

5 Black, in verse

6 Murphy's —

28 Portent

29 Peacekeeping org.

31 Piece of work

34 Football team

35 Boeing rival

37 Chart format

38 Med. plan options

39 Skip

40 Tower city

41 Change

44 — pickle

45 Baton Rouge sch.

46 Exploit

47 Hosp. parts

DOWN

1 "Bow-wow!"

2 Island garland

3 Up to

4 "Anna Christie" playwright

5 Black, in verse

6 Murphy's —

21 Dutch cheese

22 Island garland

3 Up to

4 "Anna Christie" playwright

5 Black, in verse

6 Murphy's —

26 Drags out

27 Hefty horn

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Answers

King Crossword

Solution time: 23 mins.

Answers

1. The Rembrandts ("I'll Be There for You"); 2. The Hyndes; 3. Prince Edward Island; 4. Red Danson; 5. Rome, Italy; 6. 108 minutes; 7. Subway Restaurants; 8. Light; 9. Chimpanzee; 10. "The Sixth Sense" (1999).

Trivia test

by Fifi Rodriguez

1. MUSIC: Which band sang the theme song to TV's "Friends"?

2. ANATOMY: What is the only bone in the human body that isn't attached to another bone nearby?

3. LITERATURE: What is the setting for the "Anne of Green Gables" novel series?

4. TELEVISION: Who plays the lead role in the sitcom "Mr. Mayor"?

5. GEOGRAPHY: Where are the Spanish Steps located?

6. HISTORY: How long did the first man in space, Yuri Gagarin, orbit the planet?

7. AD SLOGANS: Which restaurant chain advises customers to "eat fresh"?

8. SCIENCE: What is the only form of energy that can be seen with the human eye?

9. ANIMAL KINGDOM: With which animal do humans share 98.8% of their DNA?

10. MOVIES: Which movie features the famous line, "I see dead people"?

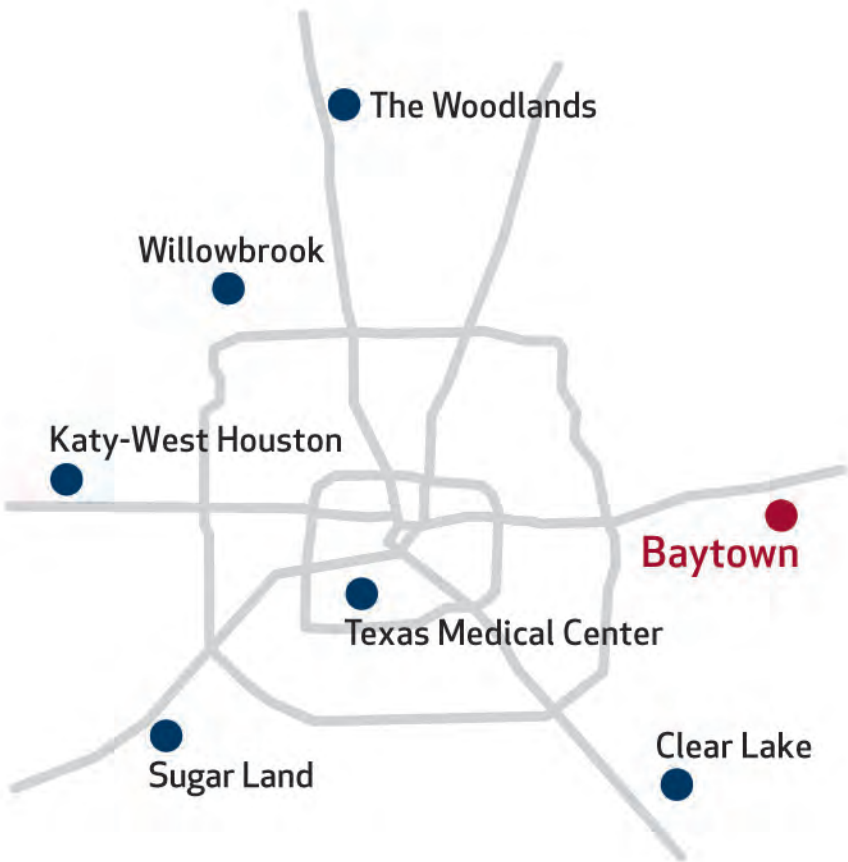
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