



See Schedule of Entertainers Below

NORTH CHANNEL ★ STAR

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

VOLUME 11, NO. 9 (#459)

THURSDAY, MARCH 9, 2023

www.northchannelstar.com

CHANNEL CURRENTS

Spring Break March 13-17

Galena Park, Channelview and Sheldon will observe a Spring Break Holiday.

RESCHEDULED: NCA Chamber 46th GALA Thursday Mar. 23

North Channel Chamber invites you to their 46th Annual Awards and Installation Gala. Thursday, March 23 at 6:30pm, Sylvan Beach Pavilion. Guest Speaker Gus Dwairy, Entrepreneur and Rancher. \$90 per person. RSVP 713-450-3600.

NS Rotary Annual FISH FRY May 20

Catfish Fry and Crawfish Boil, Raffle for a new car, 2 auctions. Saturday, May 20 at the Rotary Pavilion on Wallisville. Tickets \$100.

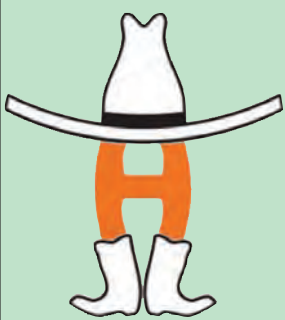
MAR. 25, SATURDAY THEA fundraiser "Clean Mud for Bugs" Crawfish Boil

This is THEA's Annual fundraiser and your chance to support their work on Houston/Harris County toxic chemical contamination.

Crawfish Boil fundraiser, Saturday March 25 from 1:00pm to 4:00pm, Karbach Brewing, 2032 Karbach Street, Houston.

New this year, a KID'S Zone and a special kid's price. AND T-shirts to purchase with THEA/Mud Bug theme. Tickets: txhea.org.

IN THE STARS



At the Rodeo:

WEDNESDAY MAR 8

Jon Pardi

THURSDAY MAR 9

Ashley McBryde

FRIDAY MAR 10

The Chainsmokers

SATURDAY MAR 11

Turnpike Troubadours

SUNDAY MAR 12

La Fiera de Ojinaga

MONDAY MAR 13

Cody Jinks

TUESDAY MAR 14

Machine Gun Kelly

WEDNESDAY MAR 15

Kenny Chesney

KAY LEAVING NS FOOTBALL; GASTON NEW HEAD COACH

NORTH SHORE – After winning four state championships in nine seasons at North Shore, Jon Kay is leaving the Mustangs to join the Rice football staff as an assistant.

North Shore head football coach Jon Kay is stepping down from his position to become the new linebackers coach at Rice University, according to a report from Matt Stepp of Dave Campbell's Texas Football.

Kay's departure leaves one of the most prominent high school programs in the state with a head coaching vacancy. He took over the program in 2014 after serving as the defensive coordinator under former coach David Aymond.

Kay led the Mustangs to a 117-18 overall record and four state championships (2015, 2018, 2019, 2021) nine seasons. He collected 41 playoff victories and is one of 16 Texas high school coaches to have won at least four UIL state titles.



COACH JON KAY TO MOVE TO RICE UNIVERSITY

North Shore has gone 56-2 in district action under Kay and has not lost a league game since 2017.

Kay's first title came during his second year on the job. North Shore claimed a 21-14 overtime victory against fellow state powerhouse Austin Westlake in the Class 6A Division I championship game.

Kay guided his Mustangs to back-to-back titles in 2018 and 2019 with star quarterback Dematrius

Davis leading the charge. The program's 41-36 triumph over Duncanville in 2018 was one of the most iconic finishes in Texas high school football history as Davis connected with A.J. Carter on a Hail Mary to the end zone as time expired.

North Shore faced Duncanville again in 2019, and the Mustangs pulled away in the second half for a 31-17 victory.

Kay captured his fourth



WILLIE GASTON, II NEW HEAD COACH FOR NORTH SHORE MUSTANGS

championship in 2021 when the Mustangs defeated Duncanville 17-10 behind a stout defensive performance and a late touchdown pass from quarterback Kaleb Bailey to David Amador.

North Shore lost to Duncanville 28-21 in the state title game last season. Kay's final campaign included a 15-1 record and a fourth championship game

CONTINUED. SEE KAY LEAVING NS MUSTANGS, PAGE 3

Gaston New Mustang Head Football Coach

NORTH SHORE – On February 28th, Galena Park ISD (GPISD) officially announced Willie Gaston as the new head football coach for the North Shore Senior High School (NSSHS) Mustangs. Gaston is a 15-year employee of GPISD, NSSHS Mustang alumni, and most recently the Offensive Coordinator.

Known as a Texas high school and Houston-area superpower of football, the North Shore Senior High School Mustangs are poised to maintain such accolades with Gaston's prior experiences playing college-level football and in the NFL (Baltimore Ravens). While GPISD's Mustang Football Program

CONTINUED. SEE GASTON NEW HEAD COACH OF NS MUSTANGS, PAGE 3

Hernandez files bill to regulate railroads blocking roadways

Rep. Ana Hernandez' blocked
railroad crossing law

By Allan Jamail

Austin, Tx. February 28, 2023, State Representative Ana Hernandez filed House Bill 2717 to address railroad safety concerns. According to the United States Government Accountability Office, freight train length has increased by 25 percent since 2008.

The increasing length has adverse impacts as trains travel across the country and through communities. This legislation will help reduce the frequency of blocked thoroughfares and harmful impacts affecting our neighborhoods. The bill will limit the length of trains that run through her district for extended periods of time blocking crossings. Hernandez's district runs from the East side of



STATE REPRESENTATIVE ANA HERNANDEZ

Houston along the I-10 corridor to Baytown.

Hernandez said, "House Bill 2717 will restrict railroad train length to 8,500 feet. Limiting the train length will reduce the periods of time that grade crossings are blocked in our communities,

CONTINUED. SEE RAILROAD BILL, PAGE 3

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH: Celebrating Marjorie Merriweather Post

Women's History Month...
one of a series.

By Allan Jamail

March 7, 2023 – Women's History Month, March 1st thru March 31st in the United States, actually began as Women's History Day.

Marjorie Merriweather Post was born on March 15, 1887, in Springfield, Illinois. She was the only child of businessman C.W. Post and his wife, Ella Merriweather. Theirs was a middle-class family initially. In 1894, C.W. Post came up with 'Postum,' an alternative drink to coffee, made of wheatberries, molasses, and bran.

As a child, Marjorie of-



Marjorie Merriweather Post
(March 15, 1887 – September 12, 1973)

ten helped her father sell 'Postum' to stores, but they were initially not too successful. C.W. Post then launched an advertising

CONTINUED. SEE WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH, PAGE 6

Foundation rules out berth for Battleship Texas in Baytown, Beaumont

BAYTOWN – The City of Beaumont and the City of Baytown are no longer under consideration to become the new home of Battleship Texas, according to an official statement issued by the Battleship Texas Foundation.

In August 2022, the ship was moved from the San Jacinto Battleground State Historic Site in La Porte to Galveston so it could undergo an extensive \$35 million repair.

The city first announced it was looking into the possibility of moving Battleship Texas to Beaumont in July 2021.

On Wednesday, the



Towing the Battleship Texas from LaPorte to a drydock in Galveston in August of last year, for \$35 million in repairs prior to finding a permanent home.

city of Baytown released a statement on social media saying it was just alerted that it had not been selected as the fu-

ture home of the Battleship Texas and that it was "disappointed in the Battleship Texas Foundation's decision."

"The City of Baytown is disappointed with Battleship Texas Foundation's decision that Baytown was not selected as the ship's final resting place. Together with many Baytownians, we believed this great city and Bayland Island would have been an ideal location for showcasing its rich history. In the end, the financial implications and resources required for bringing such a monument to Baytown were simply too extraordinary to overcome," the statement read.

The Battleship of Texas Foundation also released a statement shortly after and said al-

though Baytown and Beaumont are no longer in the running, the foundation is still searching for the best location for the Battleship. The final determination is set to be announced in the coming months.

"The Battleship Texas Foundation has announced that the city of Baytown, Texas, and the city of Beaumont, Texas, are no longer under consideration for the permanent home of Battleship Texas. Meanwhile, the selection process will continue to determine the best location for the Battleship. The final determination will occur in the coming months," the statement read.

SHELDON ISD NEWS

Parent Engagement Survey Available Through March 31



Sheldon ISD is requesting parent feedback in the annual parent engagement survey to support the district's desire for continuous improvement. Please complete only one survey for each campus your student(s) attend. The survey can be found on the school district's website at www.sheldonisd.com.

Career and technical education host luncheon to show appreciation for partners

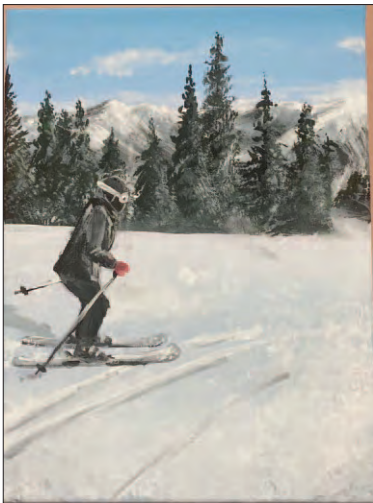
On February 28, the career and technical education program hosted a luncheon to show appreciation for all the community partners and those who support career and technical education in Sheldon ISD. The meal was served by students participating in King Catering and decorations were provided by Sheldon Blooms. The career and technical education programs strive to provide students real-world experiences to prepare them for their futures.



Sheldon ISD to Host Job Fair in April

Come join a team of innovative, award-winning educators in Sheldon ISD. The school district is hosting a job fair from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, April 15 at King High School in the competition gymnasium. Interested applicants should apply online by going to www.sheldonisd.com and clicking the Employment tab.

Drawn to The Winners Circle - VASE Art to State



On February 18, CE King High School Fine Arts students brought their artwork to the Visual Art Scholastic Event. They set a new school record with 20 medals and five state qualifying artwork. Click to read more!

On February 18, CE King High School Fine Arts students brought their artwork to compete in the Visual Art Scholastic Event. They set a new school record with 20 regional medals and four students qualified for state (one double-qualified with two pieces)! Their teachers, Mrs. Little and Mrs. Roades, are justifiably proud. They have been taking students to this contest for years and this is the most medals and state qualifiers Sheldon ISD has ever had!

A huge congratulations to the following medalist:

Monica Arceo, Leitia Arenas, Ashley Banegas, Alani Chavari, Marlen Diaz, Cristian Guzman, Demetrius Hilton, Janette Lopez, Bianca Marin Franco, Phallon McClinton, Samantha Meza, Amanda Moreno, Gailea Nieves, Zoe Quiroga, Rosalinda Reyes, Anthony Reynoso, Carolina Varela, and Ashley Zapata Gutierrez.

These students each received a medal by earning the highest rating (4) on their artwork and student interview. Four of the students, Ashley Banegas, Amanda Moreno, Samantha Meza, and Monica Arceo (who double qualified with two pieces of art), will go on to compete at state! We wish them the best of luck and are so proud of them! Let's share that Sheldon Fine Arts SPARK!

GALENA PARK ISD NEWS

Galena Park ISD Names Elementary and Secondary Assistant Principal of the Year

Houston, Texas: Congratulations to Alaide Zavala and Barika Norris for being named Galena Park ISD (GPISD) 2023 Elementary and Secondary Assistant Principal of the Year!

Alaide Zavala has served as the assistant principal of Woodland Acres Elementary School for six years, and Barika Norris has served as the assistant principal of North Shore 9th Grade Center for five years.

GPISD would like to congratulate Alaide Zavala and Barika Norris and thank them for their hard work and dedication.



Dr. Wanna Giacona, Chief Administrative Officer; Alaide Zavala, Woodland Acres Elementary School Assistant Principal, and Terri Moore, Associate Superintendent for Educational Support and School Administration



Dr. David Harris, Assistant Superintendent for School Administration; David Pierson, North Shore 9th Grade Center Principal; Barika Norris, North Shore 9th Grade Center Assistant Principal; and Dr. John Moore, Superintendent of Schools

Galena Park ISD Board of Trustees Recognize the Student Nutrition Department



Houston, Texas: Galena Park ISD recognized its Student Nutrition Department for successfully completing the Texas Department of Agriculture's (TDA) 2022 Fall Farm Fresh Challenge.

During the TDA challenge, locally sourced Texas foods were offered along with garden-based learning activities to strengthen students' appreciation for Texas agriculture. Throughout the challenge, the Student Nutrition Department shared their achievements on social media to further champion and promote local food for students in GPISD schools. The Student Nutrition Department's ongoing agenda is exciting as it focuses on community outreach and nutrition education.

A certificate was presented to the Student Nutrition Department on behalf of the Board of Trustees and Dr. John Moore, Superintendent of Schools.

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

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OPINION

By Stephanie Swanson

League of Women Voters of Texas

The League of Women Voters: Fighting for Voting Rights and Democracy for 103 Years

Austin, TX – For over 100 years, the League of Women Voters (LWV) has been working to protect and expand voting rights and ensure everyone is represented in the American democratic system. On February 14th, 2023, the League of Women Voters of the United States turns 103 years old.

The League was officially founded in Chicago in 1920, just six months before the 19th amendment was ratified and women won the right to vote. Formed by the suffragists of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, the League began as a “mighty political experiment” designed to help 20 million women carry out their new responsibilities as voters.

Over the last century, the League has fought for election protection, democracy reforms, and equal access to the ballot—all while maintaining a commitment to nonpartisanship and fostering an informed electorate.

One of the League’s many notable successes was the national grassroots campaign to reform voter registration that resulted in passage of the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA), also known as the “motor-voter” bill. The goal: increase accessibility to the electoral process. The motor-voter bill enabled citizens to register at motor vehicle agencies automatically, as well as by mail and at agencies that service the public.

When the 2000 election exposed the many problems facing the election system, the League began to work on election reform. Working closely with a civil rights coalition, LWV helped draft and pass the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), which established provisional balloting, requirements for updating voting systems, and the Election Assistance Commission.

The League, well known for their nonpartisan Voters Guide, launched VOTE411.org in 2006, an online version of the Guide and a “one-stop-shop” for election-related information. Today, VOTE411 provides both general and state-specific nonpartisan resources to the voting public, including a nationwide polling place locator, a ballot look-up tool, candidate positions on issues, and more. In 2022, over one million Texans were informed voters because they used the the Voters Guide and VOTE411.org.

In June 2019, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that partisan gerrymandering cannot be solved by the federal courts. In response, the League initiated People Powered Fair Maps™, a coordinated effort across all 50 states and D.C. to create fair and transparent, people-powered redistricting processes to eliminate partisan and racial gerrymandering nationwide. This fight continues today.


February 14th, 2023, marks 103 years that the League of Women Voters has empowered voters and defended democracy. The League of Women Voters has evolved from a political experiment designed to help women vote in 1920, to a nonpartisan organization that is a recognized force in shaping public policy and promoting informed civic participation. Moving forward, the League aims to build power for the next generation of women leaders and voting rights activists.

To celebrate their 103rd birthday, the League of Women Voters of Texas is hosting “Women Power Texas ~ A Making Democracy Work Dinner” on Monday, February 27th, 2023 from 6:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. in Austin, Texas. The keynote speaker is Rochelle Garza, who was recently named President of the Texas Civil Rights Project, and the honorees are Texas Gun Sense, Texas Impact, and The Texas Tribune. For more information about the “Women Power Texas” dinner, visit www.lwvtexas.org/Women-Power-Texas-Dinner-2023.

To join the League of Women Voters of Texas, visit www.lwvtexas.org.

About the League of Women Voters of Texas: The League of Women Voters is one of America’s oldest and most trusted civic nonprofit organizations. Formed in 1919, the Texas League represents more than 13,500 grassroots advocates and 34 local Leagues across the state. The League never supports or opposes candidates for office or political parties. The League encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government. The League also seeks to influence public policy through education and advocacy. Membership is open to people 16 years and older. Learn more about the League of Women Voters of Texas at LWVTexas.org.

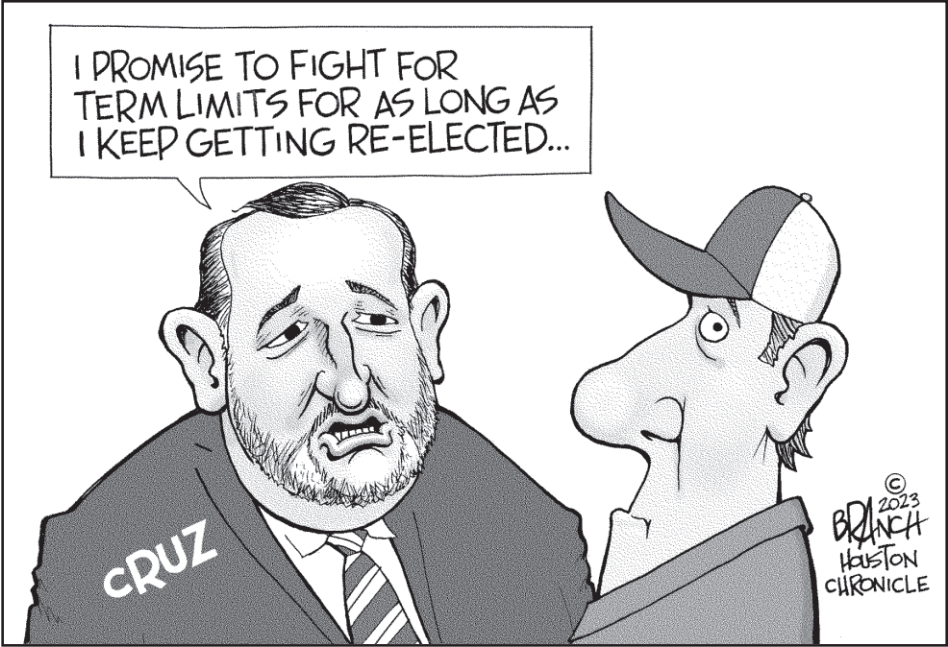
Americanisms



“Mankind must put an end to war, or war will put an end to mankind.”

— John F. Kennedy

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STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

By Gary Borders



Texas again leads Country in New Corporate Projects

Texas once again has topped the list for new and expanded corporate facilities added in a year, according to Site Selection Magazine. With 1,028 new projects in 2022, the state had more than the next two states combined – Illinois and Ohio.

“Texas truly is America’s economic engine, and we stand apart as a model for the nation,” Texas Gov. Greg Abbott said, according to The Dallas Morning News. “When choosing where to relocate or expand their businesses, more and more innovative industry leaders find themselves at home in our state.”

Two projects valued at \$8.5 billion each helped snare the state’s top spot: a chemical plant in Orange and a liquified natural gas plant in Corpus Christi. They were followed by a \$5 billion silicon wafer plant in Sherman.

“The Lone Star State’s economy is larger than that of Canada, South Korea and Australia,” Site Selection said in its March issue.

NEW COURT SYSTEM FOR BUSINESSES PROPOSED

A new court system devoted solely to settling business disputes is being proposed by the state’s top three elected officials, though it has its share of critics as well. The Austin American-Statesman reported Abbott, House Speaker Dade Phelan and Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick in separate announcements proposed the creation of a specialty business court, modeled after the Chancery Court of Delaware. The court has been in existence for more than two centuries and has been emulated by a few dozen states. The specialty business court has been listed as a top priority of legislators during this session.

Abbott said the court would provide consistency in applying state law when businesses end up court disputes. A high-powered lobby group, Texans for Lawsuit Reform, is backing the plan.

“Businesses today know the same case with the same



facts can produce wildly varying outcomes simply based on which part of the state it’s filed in and which judge is hearing it, and we know attorneys are telling their clients not to litigate in Texas because of this unpredictability,” TLR spokeswoman Lucy Nashed Cafrelli said in the Statesman story.

The judges for the business court would be appointed by the governor, according to House bill 19, filed last week. The president of the Texas Trial Lawyers Association called that problematic.

“The bottom line is that Texans value electing their judges,” San Antonio attorney Laura Tamez said.

CHILD FATALITIES DROP IN LAST FISCAL YEAR

The number of children in Texas who died due to accidents, maltreatment and unsafe sleep declined by 27% in the last fiscal year. The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services reported 182 children died due to abuse and neglect in the state during fiscal year 2022. The most common causes of fatalities involving neglect were drowning, unsafe sleep, physical neglect and medical neglect, DFPS reported.

Children 3 years of age and younger comprised almost 80% of all confirmed child abuse and neglect fatalities over the past 10 fiscal years. However, in the past three years, there has been a marked increase in fatalities involving older children. In

all confirmed cases of abuse and neglect, parents were the most common perpetrators.

COLLEGE STUDENTS JOIN FIGHT TO END DUI DEATHS

With spring break approaching, the Texas Department of Transportation is joining with students at Texas A&M in a peer-to-peer program focused on highlighting the dangers of driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

One person in the state dies every 7 hours and 41 minutes in a DUI-related crash, according to TxDOT. During spring break of 2021, Texas had 874 alcohol-related traffic crashes with 31 deaths and 107 serious injuries. TxDOT is partnering with U in the Driver Seat, a peer-to-peer program led by A&M students that is focused on saving lives by preventing DUI-related crashes. Student leaders from around the state are joining the campaign and urging fellow students to always find a sober ride.

“Our message to students is this: Help keep yourself and others safe by finding a sober ride, taking a cab, using a rideshare, or simply staying put,” said Marc Williams, TxDOT executive director.

TPWD CELEBRATES PARK CENTENNIAL WITH GRANTS

As Texas state parks mark their 100th anniversary, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department is awarding the largest sum of grants in the program’s history. The agency is distributing more than \$2.8 million to create 55 new grant-funded partnerships across the state to promote conservation and recreation.

The Community Outdoor Outreach Program (CO-OP) was established in 1996 to introduce under-represented audiences to outdoor recreation, conservation and environmental education. Among the projects approved are students monitoring water quality along the Rio Grande, communities of color learning about the cultural history of the Buffalo Soldiers while hiking at Fort Davis State Park, and breast cancer survivors learning to fly fish in the state’s rivers.

The grants are funded through a portion of Texas’ sporting goods sales tax.

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME STARTS SUNDAY

Spring is approaching, and so is daylight saving time, which starts at 2 a.m. Sunday, March 12. Clocks jump ahead an hour, so if you forget to adjust the time you are liable to show up for church an hour late and miss the service.

The first two countries to use daylight saving time were Germany and Austria in 1916. They did so to save fuel used for artificial lights during World War I. The United States followed suit in 1918.

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THE POSTSCRIPT

By Carrie Classon

“Mr. Muscle”

My husband, Peter, is learning Spanish his own way.

I do Duolingo online. It is free. It is easy to do. The whole thing is designed like a game, and dancing animated creatures hop up and down and celebrate every time I get five answers in a row correct. This shouldn’t matter to me—yet I find it deeply satisfying. Peter doesn’t do any of this.

Peter learns Spanish by talking with the sandwich shop staff.

Since we started staying in our little apartment in Mexico, Jorge, the resourceful owner, has converted what used to be a storage room into a sandwich shop. The sandwich shop is not large. There is a grill and a counter with a few stools, and that is it. But they make everything from scratch, and it is very good. Peter takes his long morning hike and stops by the sandwich shop, just inside the hotel, on his way back. He orders lunch.

Ten minutes later, either Eduardo or Miriam, the employees of the sandwich shop, knock on the door. Sometimes Miriam is accompanied by her small son, Santiago. Peter’s lunch arrives on a plate, and he pays for it, along with a generous tip. There is usually enough for two lunches, so he puts the leftovers in the refrigerator, and he’s all set for the next day.

I recently pointed out the obvious to Peter. “You are getting very spoiled.”

He does not argue. But in addition to getting a delicious lunch, Peter is working to improve his Spanish, and Miriam and Eduardo are eager to assist. The problem is that Peter has decided to forgo the usual “How are you? I am fine” first steps in language acquisition and jump right into real conversations. This has not always been successful.

“They were laughing like crazy at me!” Peter announced, not for the first time.

“What did you say?” I asked, a little afraid.

“I was trying to ask if Miriam and Eduardo were siblings. I asked them if they were hermosos.”

“They were laughing because you asked them if they were beautiful.”

“Oh! I meant *hermanos*!” “Yes, that would be different.”

Miriam and Eduardo (and the rest of the staff) were still laughing about this when I left later in the day. I assured them that we thought they were all beautiful. A couple of days later, Peter came up from ordering lunch and reported that he’d done it again.

“Oh, boy! They are really laughing at me today.”

“What did you say this time?” I asked.

“I tried to say ‘Mr. Muscles’ and they just stared at me. I said Eduardo was Mr. Muscles because he was squeezing fresh orange juice by hand. But I said it again, and they started laughing. So I wrote it out on a paper—and they started laughing even harder!”

Peter showed me the paper as evidence.

“So, why are they laughing?” I asked.

“They said it was slang—that I said, ‘Show me your butt!’”

“Oh, dear.”

“They are still laughing!”

Miriam and Eduardo are laughing almost every day at Peter, and I think Santiago, who is only four, may have joined in.

But, amazingly, while providing daily entertainment, Peter is picking up quite a lot of Spanish. The first rule in learning a second language is to let go of the fear of making mistakes. Mistakes are a necessary part of the process.

Peter is very fortunate. He has found teachers who will not only forgive his mistakes—they are eagerly looking forward to the next time he makes one.

Till next time,

Carrie

Carrie’s memoir is “Blue Yarn.” Learn more about her writing at CarrieClasson.com.

HIGHLANDS CROSBY

Star ☆ Courier

USPS 244-500

Barbers Hill ☆ Dayton PRESS

NORTH CHANNEL ☆ STAR

Editor & Publisher.....Gilbert Hoffman

Associate Publisher.....Mei-Ing Liu Hoffman

Assignment Editor.....Julietta Paita

Website Editor.....Kristan Hoffman

Marketing Executive.....Willie Glasgow

Production Manager.....Gerardo Hernandez

Entered as Periodicals Clats 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.

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES: In-county, \$28.00 per year. Out of county, \$35.00 per year. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Star-Courier, P. O. Box 405, Highlands, TX 77562

News and Ad Phones....713-266-3444

FAX Line....713-977-1188

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Crosby FD 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb & Walk March 25

SATURDAY, MARCH 25, 2023 AT 8 AM the public is invited to participate in a 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb fundraiser at Crosby Stadium.

The Event is sponsored by the Crosby Volunteer Fire Department and the public is encouraged to join the fun and fund.

Join us, as we remember the 343 firefighters who ran into peril and ultimately sacrificed their lives to save others on September 11, 2001. Participants will climb 110 stories worth of steps to memorialize the last climb those firefighters made to the top of the World Trade Center. This



event is open to firefighters, first responders and the community to participate. We assure you, this is an event you don't want to miss. Bring the family, bring the squad! If you love cross-fit, this is an excellent challenge.

All registration money will go to the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation to provide support services for firefighter families who have lost a loved one in the line of duty.

Click the link to register, donate, or sponsor a climber.

<https://nfff.akaraisin.com/ui/crosbyvfd>

No More Late Fees at Harris County Libraries!

HARRIS COUNTY – Commissioners Court unanimously approved a proposal by Harris County Public Library (HCPL) to end library fines on books and DVDs that are returned late. With the Commissioners' backing, HCPL joins a growing number of public library systems across the country that have eliminated late fees over the last several years.

Harris County Public Library has waived late fees since March 2020 when the Covid-19 pandemic forced the closure of all its branch locations. Harris County Commissioners on Tuesday made the policy permanent. Under the new policy, patrons will still be charged for lost or damaged items, but effective at once, patrons will not be charged for returning items past their due dates, and overdue fines that are already on library users' accounts will be forgiven, though it may take some time for these changes to appear on library accounts.

For HCPL, like many other libraries, the decision boils down to matters of economics—both for the library and the communities it serves. Chief among them is the fact that late fees hit low-income households harder than others. Late fees—even relatively small amounts—can and do effectively block economically disadvantaged people from using the library.

“The elimination of late fees makes HCPL the



Harris County Public Library eliminates fines to ensure equal access to materials for those who may need it most.

open, free public resource it was always meant to be,” said Edward Melton, HCPL's Executive Director. “We want to remove barriers and ensure that our collections and services are available equitably,” Melton continues, “A late fee should not keep someone from the information and resources that can literally change their lives for the better.”

Other factors in the decision to do away with late fines include the fact late fees generate less revenue than it takes to collect and process them, that fines have proven to be an ineffective deterrent to late returns, and most importantly, that libraries that have stopped assessing late fees have seen significant growth in library use, circulation, library card applications and returned the materials.

“We hope, and the experience of libraries that have gone fine-free bears this out, that this will bring people back to our li-

braries,” said Linda Stevens, HCPL's Division Director for Programs, Partnerships and Outreach, “not only to check out books and DVDs, but for things like our early literacy story times, Family Place Learning Centers and all the other interactive, educational programs we offer.”

About Harris County Public Library:

The Harris County Public Library (HCPL) mission is to provide information and resources to enrich lives and strengthen communities through innovative services within and beyond our walls. The library has an annual circulation of over 10 million items and is a network of 26 community-focused branch libraries and is committed to providing excellent customer service, strong collections, and cutting-edge information technology for the 21st Century. Visit www.hcpl.net for more information



Opening Day
It was a blessing to be joined by my family, friends, and supporters for the opening day of the 88th Legislative Session. If you were unable to attend opening day, please remember my office is always open for constituents!

Meet Team Hernandez

Team Hernandez (left to right):
Legislative Director Josue Rodriguez, Chief of Staff Adriana Aguirre Hernandez, Representative Ana Hernandez (center), Legislative Aide Kryss Schofield and Legislative Aide Mona Ramirez Campos.



Not pictured: Constituent Liaison Linda Jamail

This legislative session I have the pleasure of expanding #TeamHernandez! Joining my staff are two legislative aides from outstanding fellowship programs. Mona Ramirez Campos joins my team as a fellow from the Moreno/Rangel Legislative Leadership Foundation. Mona obtained an undergraduate degree in Anthropology and Latin American Studies from the University of Texas at Austin, and is currently pursuing a Masters degree in Social Work from the University of Denver. Kryss Schofield also joins my team as a legislative aide from the University of Houston Hobby Fellows. Kryss is a current political science undergraduate student at my alma mater, the University of Houston.

My Capitol staff also includes Adriana Aguirre Hernandez and Josue Rodriguez. Adriana is my Chief of Staff and previously served as my District Director and Legislative Director. Josue joined my team last fall and currently serves as Legislative Director.

Linda Jamail has been part of my team for the last 14 years! She continues to serve the District as my Constituent Liaison while the Capitol team is in Austin for the legislative session.

Team Hernandez is ready to get to work for all Texans!

Joseph House Ribbon Cutting

On January 21st, #TeamHernandez presented a certificate of recognition at the ribbon cutting of the Joseph House Community Outreach Center in Jacinto City. Joseph House is a nonprofit organization serving families in the Houston area who are experiencing food insecurity. To learn more, visit: <https://josephhousecoc.org/>.





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Women’s History Month: Marjorie Merriweather Post,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

campaign to popularize ‘Postum,’ and by the time Marjorie stepped into her teenage years, her family became wealthy. Marjorie’s father often trained her in business and also made her attend company meetings and visit factories. Marjorie attended finishing school at ‘Mount Vernon Seminary’ in Washington, D.C. because her father wished her to be groomed for society.

Marjorie got married soon. Her father later left her mother and married his secretary, Leilah Young. He left half his stock to Leilah. In 1914, her father committed suicide. Following this, Marjorie took over the family business and also proved that her father had promised all his stock to her. She paid Leilah \$6 million.

At 16, Marjorie met Edward Bennet Close, a lawyer based in Connecticut. Two years later, in 1905, they got married. They had two daughters, Adelaide and Eleanor. However, in 1919, they divorced.

When the U.S. joined World War I, Marjorie sent her husband, Edward Bennett Close, off to war and made huge donations to the biggest U.S. field hospital in France. She sent supplies worth \$75,000 to Europe. Unfortunately, the ship carrying the sup-

plies sank, but Marjorie sent the same amount of supplies again.

While Edward Close, her husband was away at war, Marjorie devoted herself to the New York art scene and joined art history classes. She became a well-known socialite soon and later, she divorced Close, they had two daughters, Adelaide and Eleanor.

The following year, she got married to stock broking tycoon E.F. Hutton. The couple owned lavish properties, which included a 54-room apartment in New York, the ‘Topridge Camp’ in New York, and the ‘Hillwood Estate’ on Long Island.

By the early 1920s, Marjorie had made up her mind to build a seaside retreat in Palm Beach. She had a mansion named ‘Hogarcito’ in the same area but wished to create another place for parties and other entertainment. She selected 17 acres between Lake Worth and the Atlantic Ocean. The location inspired the name of the property, ‘Mar-a-Lago,’ which means “sea to lake” in Spanish.

Her husband Hutton gave her around \$1 million to build their new home. Architect Marion Sims Wyeth was initially asked to look into the plans. How-

ever, Architect Joseph Urban was finally chosen by them to design the retreat. Joseph was famous for creating theater and opera sets, such as that of the ‘Metropolitan Opera.’ ‘Mar-A-Lago’ took 2 years to be built and involved 600 laborers. It was completed in January 1927. The resulting estate had a total of 115 rooms, including 58 bedrooms and 33 bathrooms, and cost Marjorie around \$2.5 million.

Marjorie later hosted the Duke and Duchess of Windsor there. Several weddings, mainly those of the children of her staff, were also held there. The estate was built with Spanish tiles from Genoa, Italy. It had a 75-foot tower with astounding views. The bathrooms had gold fixtures. It also had a dining room that was modeled on Rome’s ‘Palazzo Chigi.’ The living room had a gold ceiling similar to the one at the ‘Accademia’s’ ‘Thousand Wing Ceiling’ in Venice.

In 1923, Hutton became the chairman of the board of ‘Postum Cereal Company.’ Marjorie and Hutton expanded ‘Postum Cereals’ significantly. Hutton acquired many American food companies, such as ‘Hellman’s Mayonnaise,’ ‘Baker’s Chocolate,’ and ‘Jell-O.’ By 1926, ‘Postum Cereal Company’ became ‘General Foods.’ The com-

pany’s value tripled. However, with the company’s growth, Marjorie’s relationship with Hutton soured.

Marjorie became the owner of ‘Postum Cereal Company’ at 27. Later she became the second-richest woman in the U.S., after she regained full ownership of her companies.

During the Great Depression of 1929 Marjorie started a soup kitchen in an indoor dining room in New York, exclusively for women and children. She thus served countless people through her mobile kitchens.

In 1929, Marjorie acquired ‘Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus’ and added it to ‘Mar-a-Lago,’ to arrange a show featuring trapeze artists, clowns, and the world’s smallest mule.

She entertained some of her high-society friends and also raised funds for charity through the circus. She also invited underprivileged children to enjoy the circus. She later added a place to host square dances and movie screenings.

Once, while tasting a goose while holidaying on her yacht, Marjorie was amazed at how well the goose had been frozen. She came to know it had been bought from Clarence Birdseye, who had invented a new way of food preservation. Hutton agreed to buy Birdseye’s company. However, there was some disagreement with Hutton over this acquisition, and that created issues in Mar-

jorie’s second marriage.

In 1932, she attended her first ‘Democratic National Convention’ in Chicago. She supported President Roosevelt’s campaign. Conservative Hutton did not like this. The rifts between them widened. She divorced Hutton in 1935, after a 15-year marriage citing infidelity; they had a daughter, Nedenia, who later became known as famous actor Dina Merrill.

She then married lawyer Joseph E. Davies and supported President Roosevelt’s re-election campaign. After Roosevelt’s re-election in 1936, he made Joseph the U.S. Ambassador to Russia. Marjorie and Joseph went to St. Petersburg.

In Russia, Marjorie invested in Russian art, especially those acquired from Russian aristocrats and found in Stalin’s storehouses. After the World War II began, they went back to the U.S. Her Russian art collection is still the largest outside Russia.

In April 1944, she opened ‘Mar-a-Lago’s’ grounds to provide occupational therapy to recovering soldiers of World War II. Soldiers were trained in carpentry, printing, and sculpting. Returning veterans were provided counseling.

In 1958, she married Herbert A. May, a Pittsburgh-based businessman. However, in 1964, she found out he was gay and divorced him.

Marjorie initially offered ‘Mar-a-Lago’ to the state of Florida, which rejected her offer due to the costs involved. She then offered it to the federal government to be used as a “Winter White House.” The U.S. government accepted the offer in 1972. Marjorie died after a prolonged illness, on September 12, 1973, at her Hillwood home. She left most her estate and property to her three daughters.

After Marjorie’s death the maintenance costs soared. In 1981, the government returned the estate to the ‘Post Foundation.’ In 1985, then-businessman Donald Trump bought ‘Mar-a-Lago’ for \$8 million. He later turned part of it into a golf club and as the president of the United States, visited the site often and still does.

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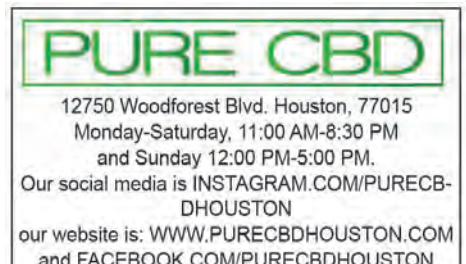


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celebrity
extra

by Dana Jackson

Q:My son is reading the play “12 Angry Men” in his English class. I recall seeing the movie, starring Henry Fonda, years ago. Did it win any Oscars? — J.K.

A: “12 Angry Men” was originally written as a one-hour live play to be broadcasted for television by Reginald Rose, the son of a lawyer who grew up in New York City. Henry Fonda saw the legal drama and offered to co-produce it as a motion picture in 1957.



Henry Fonda in “12 Angry Men” (1957)

just because it’s in 4K doesn’t mean they’re colorizing the original. According to Collider.com, “This legal drama, which already has some really rich shadow work and black levels, has a lot of potential to look stunning in 4K. ‘12 Angry Men’ now joins the ever-growing list of classic black-and-white films in the format that includes ‘To Kill a Mockingbird’ and ‘Psycho.’”

Q:Is Sally Field going to be starring in anymore movies soon? I saw that she was in “80 for Brady,” so I hope that means she’s back. — U.J.

A:The two-time Academy-Award-winning actress Sally Field was recently honored by the

Screen Actors Guild with a Lifetime Achievement Award. She’s had a long, storied career in Hollywood since she was a teen and has maintained a reputation as one of the nicest people in the business.

Her early TV roles in “Gidget” and “The Flying Nun” showcased her charm, but once she graduated to film with more meaty, dramatic roles, she was honored by her peers and critics alike. She’s swung back and forth between comedy and drama during her six-decade-long career, including “Smokey and the Bandit,” “Steel Magnolias” and “Forrest Gump.”

She’s even tried her hand at superhero movies, having played Peter Parker’s Aunt May in the two “Amazing Spider-Man” films. The 76-year-old actress signed with a new agency in 2021, so it doesn’t look like she plans to retire anytime soon.

Q: I was thrilled to see that “The Blacklist” is back on TV. Is it true that this is the final season, though? — P.J.

A:Yes, the 10th and final season of NBC’s “The Blacklist” premiered on Feb. 26, but it’ll have plenty of content to be enjoyed for months to come. Even though it didn’t start up last fall, the network granted it a full-season order of 22 episodes. James Spader and the rest of the cast will bid us farewell after this season.

Send me your questions at NewCelebrityExtra@gmail.com, or write me at KFWS, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803. (c) 2023 King Features Synd., Inc.

HOLLYWOOD

by Tony Rizzo

HOLLYWOOD — Two-time Oscar winner Mahershala Ali has been cast to take over the “Blade” franchise from Wesley Snipes, who starred in three “Blade” films. But, before that, Ali will star opposite Julia Roberts, Ethan Hawke and Kevin Bacon in the psychological thriller “Leave the World Behind.”

*** In other “Marvel World” news, Tom Holland, whose “Spider-Man: No Way Home” hit over a billion dollars worldwide, will be spinning webs for a fourth time, in a film currently being written. Before that, he’ll play Fred Astaire in a biopic centering on Astaire’s relationship with his sister, Adele. They successfully moved from vaudeville to Broadway as a top dancing team, until she got married in 1932 and decided to settle down. Astaire then moved to Hollywood as a solo act and starred in movie musicals.

Holland will also play Milan native Pino Lella, who, at 17, infiltrated the Nazi party during World War II by enlisting in the German army. The film is based on the book “Beneath the Scarlet Sky.” Lella is now 92 and living on Lake Maggiore in Italy.

*** When I was 19, I was a huge fan of Kim Novak. I took so many pictures of her that we sort of became friends. When she arrived at the post-party for the premiere of “The Amorous Adventures of Moll Flanders” (1965), she invited me to join her entourage. During the party, she dropped her favorite lighter, and I dove under the table to find it. Somehow, I wound up under the many petticoats of her costume — but that’s another story.

Some of her greatest films were “Picnic” (1955) with William Holden; “The Man With the Golden Arm” (1955) and “Pal Joey” (1957), both with Frank Sinatra; “Vertigo” (1958) and “Bell, Book and Candle” (1958), both with James



Mahershala Ali (“Green Book” and “Moonlight”)

Stewart, to name some. Kim eventually moved from Big Sur, California, to a 43-acre ranch in Sams Valley, Oregon, with her veterinarian husband, Robert Malloy. In July of 2000, their home was destroyed by a fire, and she lost all the art she painted and the draft of her autobiography, which had taken her 10 years to write. In February, Kim turned 90 and spent her birthday painting and riding her favorite horse, Poet. Sadly, her husband passed away in 2020.

The Butler Institute of American Art in Youngstown, Ohio, hosted a retrospective of her work in 2019, and in 2021, they published a book of her paintings titled, “Kim Novak: Her Art and Life.” On her philosophy about being a celebrity, Kim said, “When you’re inside of the person someone is looking at, you’re not looking from their perspective. They may see you as a sex symbol, but that’s not how you see yourself!” Oh, to be rich, famous and beautiful ... what a curse! (c) 2023 King Features Synd., Inc.

ENTERTAINMENT

Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



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