



GPHS Yellow Jacket Mascot Cake, Mr. Jack baked by DK's Bakez – phone, 469- 583-0056 (Dawn King, middle school girls physical Ed. Coach & Teacher) (Photo Allan Jamail)

NORTH CHANNEL ★ STAR

Your News, Your Newspaper

Serving all of the North Shore -- Channelview, Cloverleaf, Sheldon, Galena Park, Jacinto City
VOLUME 11, NO. 17 (#467) THURSDAY, MAY 4, 2023 www.northchannelstar.com

CHANNEL CURRENTS

North Channel RELAY FOR LIFE May 5, 6pm

North Channel Relay for Life, a fundraiser that honors cancer survivors, will be held Friday evening, May 5 from 6pm to Midnight at the North Shore Ninth Grade Center Track. Everyone is Welcome. Participants will walk on the track, and light luminaires.

Pilot Club Puzzle Competition May 7

Teams of 4 compete to complete a puzzle and win prizes.

Fundraiser for San Jacinto Pilot Club's Autism support and community projects.

Sunday, May 7 at Hampton Inn, 14120 Karissa Court (Beltway 8 frontage). Starts 2:30pm, Finish and awards at 5:00pm. Tickets \$25, from any club member or call 281-221-1616.

Jacinto City changes Trash Pick-up Days

Starting Monday, May 3 waste collection days will change to MONDAY and THURSDAY. The last Saturday that waste will be collected is April 29. Heavy waste collection will occur on Thursdays.

Contact WM at 800-800-5804 with questions.

GLO Commissioner Buckingham meets with Pastors



Commissioner Dawn Buckingham meeting with faith leaders and community members in Houston.

Commissioner Dawn Buckingham Addresses Houston Pastors Meeting, Brings Homeowners to Set the Record Straight

HOUSTON – Houston pastors and faith leaders congregated to hear Texas General Land Office (GLO) Commissioner Dawn Buckingham, M.D., speak about the success of the GLO's Homeowner Assistance Program (HAP). Commissioner Buckingham was invited by Reverend Perry Wooten, who organized the meeting to discuss housing recovery efforts by the GLO and to clarify misinformation.

During her address, Commissioner Buckingham spoke about the importance of ad

Continued. See GLO Housing, Page 7

Rotary Fish Fry ticket sales brisk; time to get one

NORTH CHANNEL – The North Shore Rotary Club is finalizing their plans for this year's 48th Annual Catfish Fry & Crawfish Boil, complete with a much anticipated Live and Silent Auctions.

Every year hundreds turn out for a delicious meal of fish or crawfish, and to participate in the auctions, which always feature unusual and hard to get items.

In addition, someone will be the winner of the Raffle, and get a new 2023 Toyota Tacoma pickup, or a Toyota Camry sedan. Considering the scarcity of vehicles from the manufac-



turers this year, this might be your best bet on a new model. Raffle tickets are \$100 (which includes two meals), meal tickets are \$15. Tickets are available from all Rotarians. Proceeds from the Fish Fry are returned to the community with scholarships and other projects.

The Fish Fry chairman this year is Rotarian Lee Brown, principal of Cloverleaf Elementary. He is ably helped by the whole North Shore Rotary club, led by president Ken Wimbley.

In addition to the vehicles in the raffle, other prizes will include a whole hog, a custom grill and

firepit from the Sheldon FFA, RodeoHouston entertainment tickets, Sports tickets, fireworks package, Apple iPad mini, Yeti cooler, and restaurant gift packages.

The Fish Fry is held in the Rotary Pavilion behind the Courthouse on Wallisville, and will be on Saturday, May 20th from 11am until 3pm. But come early, enjoy the great food and the great party atmosphere.

The Theme for the Fish Fry this year is "Hometown Throw Down" and celebrates with the "Biggest Party on the East Side."

GP/JC ROTARY HOLDS RECORD BREAKING CAKE AUCTION

By Allan Jamail

Jacinto City, TX. April 20, 2023, at the Jacinto City Town Center the GP/JC Rotary Club had their baked potato sale and annual cake auction to raise funds for GPISD student scholarships and Rotary International projects; APIN Clinic helping children with spina bifida and Asociación Pro-Infancia Neurogénica. Past President and current Assistant Governor Bryan Clements gave the invocation.

After the approximate 200 hundred attendees began eating their stuffed baked potatoes the cake auction began. Cakes were donated by students of the Galena Park High School Culinary Class, Rotary members, school administration staff, teachers and the public.

Rotary President Julien



Guillory said "This was the highest total proceeds raised for GPISD senior scholarships and Rotary International projects since the start of the event." He said they estimated the amount raised is \$19,000.

Level Sponsors

CONTINUED. SEE CAKE AUCTION, PAGE 5

ABOVE: The 2023 Galena Park High School Culinary Class Back row, L – R: Students Aubrey J, Jacob J, Josh M, Larry B, Christian L, & Teacher Chef Charles Martinez, Front row, L – R: Teacher Mrs. Martinez, students Julissa D, Mia D, Josh J, Chris I, Jennifer S, Hilda S, Ayleen M) (Photo by Allan Jamail)

RIGHT: Highest bidder cake for \$600. L-R: Cake baker Maria Cortez-Ochoa, Rotary International Official, auction winner Wayne Oquin & GPISD Trustee Norma Hernandez. (Photo by Allan Jamail)



JC Police Lt. Longrigg assaulted, fights for life; suspect in custody

By Allan Jamail

Jacinto City, TX.—Sunday, April 27, 2023 at about 9:30 PM the Jacinto City (JC) police dispatcher received a citizen's call complaining of an unknown man banging on his front door in the 11200 block of Lane Street. The complainant said upon confronting the man the person began throwing

CONTINUED. See JC Police, Page 5



Police Chief Joe Ayala gave officers Commendation Awards for their outstanding performance in the apprehension of a dangerous suspect. L~ R: Lt. M. Longrigg, Ptlm. F. Benavides, Ptlm. R. Barker II, Chief Joe M. Ayala & Ptlm. L. Marin (Photo by Allan Jamail)

Community hears Waste Pits update



Rachel Jordan of THEA presents an update on status of remediation at the two Waste Pits Superfund sites in the San Jacinto River. The meeting was held April 11 at the Community Center in Highlands.

EAST HARRIS COUNTY – Community members interested in the status of remediation work on the San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund Site heard an update last Tuesday night, April 11 from Rachel Jordan of THEA (Texas Health and Environment Alliance). The meeting was held at the Highlands Community Center, and attended by a small group of residents from both sides of the river.

Rachel reviewed activity since the last THEA meeting in October, and

the EPA meeting in December, which had to be held outside the community center due to an unusual odor in the building.

A particular problem has arisen in the northwest corner of the Northern pit, where toxins were discovered deeper than originally tested. The EPA wants this material removed, and the RP (Responsible Party) has said it wants a cap instead of excavation. Due to the depth of the waste, they are concerned about stability of cofferdams in that area.

However, the two parties are at an impasse, and EPA has called for an independent reviewer to make a recommendation.

At the Southern site, work is progressing slowly, step by step. Fencing has been installed, equipment for a water treatment system has been delivered, site roads have been built, a guard shack and security are in place, signage has been installed, and debris removed.

Continued. See Waste Pits, Page 5

TEXAS GENERAL LAND OFFICE

Rebuilding homes and lives in the City of Houston



On average, homes rebuilt through the Homeowner Assistance Program increase the value of the property by **more than \$85,000.**

“My goal is simple, serve the people we are supposed to serve and do it well.”

COMMISSIONER
DAWN BUCKINGHAM, M.D.

Texas General Land Office
Commissioner Dawn Buckingham, M.D.



SHELDON ISD NEWS

King High School Celebrates Top 10% at Annual Dinner



On Thursday, April 27, King High School celebrated the Class of 2023 students graduating in the Top 10% with dinner and an awards presentation at the Humble Civic Center. This year, there are 78 students in the Top 10% of the graduating class. King High School’s graduation is taking place Friday, May 26 at 7 p.m. at Panther Stadium.

Sheldon ISD Hosts Second Annual Abilities Day

On Friday, April 28, 205 special education students participated in the Sheldon ISD’s second annual Abilities Day. Students participated in adaptive activities where they can be successful with support. Students rotated from seven stations and were provided with a participation medal donated by STEM Ambassadors. Students volunteered at the event from the STEM Ambassador program, culinary and National Honor Society.



Sheldon ISD Students Across 10 Grade Levels Compete in C-STEM Challenge Day

Saturday, April 22 was the annual Sheldon ISD C-STEM Challenge Day. Approximately, a172 students from grades 3-12 representing nine Sheldon ISD schools were competing against each other in the areas of Innovation, Mural, Sculpture and Robotics. C-STEM teaches Communications + STEM (C-STEM) skills to students. It was a great day full of winners representing our district after-school STEM program. This event would not be possible without the support of the C-STEM coaches, volunteers and parents for all of their support.



Summer theater Opportunity for kindergarten Through Fifth Graders

King Theatre Company is presenting its first Summer Theater Workshop Monday, June 5 through Thursday, June 15 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. There will be a final performance at the conclusion of the workshop. This program will provide students with an

opportunity to create costumes, work on sets and theater performances to include singing and dancing. Students will be divided into classes based on age and grade level. The program is geared for students who have completed

kindergarten through fifth grade. Details can be found on the district’s website at www.sheldonisd.com. Proceeds for the camp will benefit the C.E. King High School Theatre Company. Registration is limited for Sheldon ISD students.

Carroll Elementary Librarian Named Amazon Future Engineer Teacher Ambassador


future >> engineer

Teacher Ambassador



Amanda Chacon
Inaugural cohort
2023-2025

Carroll Elementary librarian Amanda Chacon is one of 50 educators across the country accepted to the inaugural 2023-25 cohort of Amazon Future Engineer Teacher Ambassadors. The program is a comprehensive professional development program

that offers teachers the opportunity to expand their knowledge and skills in computer science education. It is designed to train educators in computer science pedagogy, equipping them with the tools to teach computer science to students from underserved

and underrepresented communities. Through this program, teachers will gain the skills and knowledge they need to inspire the next generation of tech leaders, creating a brighter future for all.

GALENA PARK ISD NEWS

Galena Park ISD Board of Trustees Recognizes Two JROTC Programs

Houston, Texas: Houston, TX: On April 11, 2023, the Galena Park ISD (GPISD) Board of Trustees recognized Galena Park High School’s (GPHS) Army Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (AJROTC) and North Shore Senior High School’s (NSSHS) Air Force Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (AFJROTC). GPHS’s AJROTC earned an “A” after a JROTC Program for Accreditation (JPA) School Visit, and NSSHS’s AFJROTC earned an over-

all “Exceeds Standards” rating after a formal Unit Evaluation. GPHS’s AJROTC earned perfect scores for their Cadet Portfolio and Interview, Unit Report, and Instructor Portfolio and Interview which resulted in 92.75 points out of a possible 100. GPHS’s AJROTC was also recognized for sustaining improvement throughout the academic year. NSSHS’s AFJROTC “Exceeds Standards” rating is the highest attainable! During their evaluation, NSSHS’s AFJROTC was also commended for a

strong relationship between NSSHS’s principal, staff, and instructors; the outstanding mentorship/leadership example demonstrated by the instructors; and the strong teamwork effort demonstrated by the cadet leadership team. A certificate was presented to each ROTC program on behalf of the Board of Trustees and Dr. John Moore, Superintendent of Schools. Story Credits: Dr. Tommie L. Smith Photo Credit: Christopher Gause



Pictured: Dr. John Moore, Superintendent of Schools; Norma Hernandez, GPISD Board Trustee; Captain Antonio Hernandez; Dr. Kimberly Martin, GPHS Principal; and Darrow Adams, Coordinator for Military Science



Pictured: Dr. John Moore, Superintendent of Schools; Norma Hernandez, GPISD Board Trustee; Lt. Col Calvin Dixon; MSgt. Darick Smith; Jillian Howard, NSSHS Deputy Principal; and Darrow Adams, Coordinator for Military Science.

★

TEXAS GLO

By Dawn Buckingham, M.D.

Commissioner, Texas General Land Office

Texas GLO posts amendment to expand housing programs

Second amendment of the plan expands eligibility of participants in the Homeowner Assistance Program and Resilient Home Program

AUSTIN - Today the Texas General Land Office (GLO) posted Amendment 2 of the Mitigation State Action Plan for \$4.3 billion in Community Development Block Grants for Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) for a federally required 30-day public comment period. This amendment allows additional individuals with a remaining need for housing assistance to be served in Cameron, Chambers, Harris, Hidalgo, Jefferson, Jim Wells, Liberty, Montgomery, Orange, San Jacinto, and Willacy counties.

The amendment includes the following changes:

- **Housing Oversubscription Supplemental:** Expanded eligible participants to include wait-listed eligible Homeowner Assistance Program (HAP) applicants from the 2018 South Texas Floods HAP and 2019 Disasters (Lower Rio Grande Flooding and Tropical Storm Imelda) HAP.
- **Resilient Home Program:** Expanded eligible participants to include waitlisted eligible Homeowner Assistance Program (HAP) applicants from the 2018 South Texas Floods HAP and 2019 Disasters (Lower Rio Grande Flooding and Tropical Storm Imelda) HAP.

The GLO's Homeowner Assistance Program has successfully reached the hardest hit, low and moderate income, vulnerable, and historically hard-to-reach families and individuals as defined by the Fair Housing Act and required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Of all approved applicants, nearly 90 percent identify as Black or Hispanic, and 89 percent of homeowners are considered low-to-moderate income with 63 percent of applicants making less than 30 percent of the area median income.

The innovative Resilient Home Program (RHP) reconstructs owner-occupied single-family homes damaged by Hurricane Harvey with additional resiliency and mitigation standards. Eligible participants will be drawn from the GLO's existing waitlisted eligible Homeowner Assistance Program (HAP) applicants. This program also serves as a showcase for more resilient residential construction practices and provide the opportunity to promote these practices throughout the residential construction industry on a scale larger than previously attempted. RHP offers four enhanced construction methods: tilt-wall, steel-frame, structural composite lumber, and enhanced wood-frame construction. For more information, please visit recovery.texas.gov/rhp.

The amendment is available for review at recovery.texas.gov/public-notice. All comments should be submitted to cdr@recovery.texas.gov by 5:00 p.m. on May 30, 2023, to be considered. Per federal requirements, the GLO must respond to public comments before the amendment can be sent to HUD for final approval.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Opinions expressed here are not necessarily that of this newspaper or its staff. YOUR OPINION is welcome. Send a letter for possible publication to Grafikpress Newspapers, 5906 Star Lane, Houston TX 77057 or an email to GRAFIKSTAR@aol.com. Please limit your words to about 200. Letters will be subject to editing. Thank you.*

top ten

Fastest-Growing Brands*

1. Zoom

2. Peacock

3. Instacart

4. TikTok

5. Bud Light Seltzer

6. Tubi

7. Natural Light Seltzer

8. Cash App

9. Venmo

10. Warby Parker

*name recognition, 2020

Source: Morning Consult



★

STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

By Gary Borders

House OKs \$4.5 Billion for Teacher pay Raises

The Texas House last Thursday passed two education-related bills, one that allocates \$4.5 billion for teacher pay raises and another to increase the annual per-student base funding from \$6,160 to \$6,300 – a 2.3% increase.

The Austin American-Statesman reported the bill would create minimum salaries for teachers ranging from \$35,000 to \$63,000 depending on experience and level of education. It would also increase funding for special education and fine arts.

Some education advocates worry the per-student funding is insufficient to keep up with inflation, which has grown by 17% in the last four years, the Statesman reported.

The bill also creates a method to adjust the per-student funding for inflation every other year, starting in 2025.



fourth of whatever it receives from the federal government.

\$200 ANNUAL FEE FOR EV OWNERS GOES TO ABBOTT

A bill requiring electrical vehicle owners to pay a \$200 annual fee to the state has passed both chambers and sent to Gov. Greg Abbott, The Dallas Morning News reported. Backers of the bill say the higher vehicle registration fees are needed because EV owners don't pay fuel taxes built into the price of fuel and used to fund the state's highway system. The state fuel tax on both gasoline and diesel is 20 cents per gallon.

Opponents of the bill say it would slow the expansion of EVs in the state, which pollute less than vehicles using carbon-based fuels. They also note the fuel tax funds just 29% of what is spent on Texas highways.

"The primary cause of the road funding shortfall in Texas has nothing to do with EVs, but rather with the fact that Texas has not increased their gas tax since 1991," Dylan Jaff, sustainability policy analyst with Consumer Reports, said in a memo.

FENTANYL TEST STRIP BILL STALLS IN SENATE

A bipartisan effort to decriminalize the use of fentanyl test strips has stalled in a Texas Senate committee after passing the Texas House with near unanimous report, The Morning News reported. The bill also has the backing of Abbott.

State Sen. John Whitmire, D-Houston, chairs the criminal justice committee. He said

some members fear making the test strips legal would lead to more people feeling confident about using dangerous drugs.

Fentanyl is often mixed with more expensive drugs such as heroin, leading to thousands of fatal overdoses, including more than 5,000 in Texas from July 2021 to July 2022.

"It's just illogical, but there's a belief by some members that it might safeguard the use," Whitmire said.

The testing strips are currently treated as drug paraphernalia. The strips are used to test for the presence of fentanyl in other drugs.

BILL CALLS FOR ARMED OFFICERS AT ALL SCHOOLS

A bill that would require school districts to place at least one armed officer on each campus has passed the Texas House, the Statesman reported. The measure comes almost a year after a gunman killed 19 children and two teachers in a mass shooting in Uvalde last May.

Any officer or school employee would have to complete handgun safety training. The measure also requires at least one audit for intruder detection each year in all districts. The state would provide at least \$100 per student and \$15,000 per campus to maintain and improve school safety.

State Sen. Roland Gutierrez, D-San Antonio, has filed several gun control measures in that chamber that have yet to receive a hearing. Gutierrez represents Uvalde and says more needs to be done besides the House measure.

"Let me be very clear: I'm for anything that's going to make our schools safer," Gutierrez said in the Statesman story. "But the three things that is going to really make our schools safer is extreme risk protective orders, you take guns out of the hands of the mentally ill, Florida did it, it worked; raising the age limit, take guns, AR-15's out of (the hands of) 18-, 19- and 20-year-olds, Florida did it, it worked; closing the gun show loophole and universal background checks."

DISASTER DECLARATION PARTIALLY APPROVED

President Joe Biden has partially approved the state's request for a major disaster declaration for counties affected by an ice storm in late January.

The original request included 23 counties, but 13 were given access to funds from the Federal Emergency Management Agency — Bastrop, Blanco, Burleson, Burnet, Hays, Henderson, Kendall, Lee, Leon, Milam, Robertson, Travis and Williamson.

The ice storm damaged millions of trees, particularly in the Austin area, and caused widespread power outages throughout Central Texas. A total of 350,000 people in Texas were without power at some point, according to Spectrum News 1.

★

THE POSTSCRIPT

By Carrie Classon

"Bunny Food "

The TSA agent looked stern—as they usually do.

"I'd like to look inside this bag, ma'am," he said.

"No problem!"

I always sound a little too eager when being questioned by an authority figure. I'm trying so hard to prove I have nothing to hide that I sound like I must have something to hide.

The agent proceeded to open my carry-on bag.

"It's a bowl!" I told him, with a little too much enthusiasm.

My husband, Peter, was supposed to have put the bowl in his checked luggage, but at the last minute he became concerned it might break. It was a large ceramic bowl we were bringing back from Mexico, and we've had ceramic stuff break in the past.

"Why don't you put it in your carry-on?" Peter asked, after I was already more or less packed.

"That big bowl in my carry-on?" I was dubious.

"I think it will be safer. I can take whatever you had planned to put in your carry-on."

So I took the bowl, already wrapped up in bubble wrap, and put it in my carry-on, and now the TSA agent wanted to take a look at it. Of course, it wasn't empty.

We had a lot of little things to bring back from Mexico after three months, and Peter had stuffed who-knows-what into the bowl before wrapping it in bubble wrap. So when the agent asked me what was in the bowl, I looked bewildered—which was not the look I was going for when being inspected by this serious agent.

"Peter!" I hissed. "What's in the bowl?"

"Food!" Peter replied.

"Food?" the agent asked.

Oh, great, I thought. Now this agent is going to be thinking we're bringing in a ham or something. We know the rules of what can and cannot come into the country. But some things are a little vague. Meat is out. Cheese is OK. Some fruits and vegetables are out. It's confusing, and I was worried that whatever Peter had put in the bowl might cause issues.

"Yup!" Peter said, apparently unworried. Well, it was my luggage after all, I thought.

The TSA agent proceeded to unwrap the bowl, tearing off the packing tape and taking a lot of time with the whole procedure. We had a connecting flight, and I was getting nervous, so I smiled even more broadly. At this point I was as curious as the agent to discover what was inside the bowl I had been blithely smuggling into the country.

Inside the bowl were several suspicious-looking bags. Inside the bags were lentils, chickpeas, chia seeds and shelled pumpkin seeds. The TSA agent looked up at Peter.

"Bunny food," he said. I couldn't tell if he was mocking Peter or simply making an official identification.

He wrapped the whole thing back up in the bubble wrap, and we went on our way.

"Bunny food!" I said to Peter, as we finally headed away from security.

We got home late. It was cold and rainy and so different from the sunny Mexico we had just left behind. In the morning, we learned we had both gained almost 10 pounds. Everything seemed a little dreary.

I unwrapped the brightly colored bowl. It looked wonderful in our apartment. I put Peter's bags of seeds on the counter for his morning breakfast.

I was glad we brought these things back from Mexico. As we get used to gray skies and cool temperatures up north, we need the comfort of a little extra color. And we certainly need a little extra bunny food.

Till next time,
Carrie
Check out [CarrieClasson](https://www.facebook.com/CarrieClasson)-Author on Facebook or visit [CarrieClasson.com](https://www.CarrieClasson.com).

CHARLOTTE'S
WEB

By Charlotte Jackson



Resources for Mental Health

Last week I mentioned that May has been designated as Mental Health Awareness Month. Each week, I want to share some thoughts on living with or loving someone who has been diagnosed with any form of mental illness. My first suggestion is to learn as much as you can about mental health. You do not need to know every detail of every diagnosis, but I would suggest making a list of the ones that you have heard about. Then one by one, get to know the various symptoms. As you research, you will come across some that you may not have thought about. Add those to your list.

It might also be helpful to list of people you know who have been diagnosed and with which disorder. As you do this, think about how they behave. Some individuals show signs when under stress. Others seem to shut down or withdrawal from activities. Sometimes the disorder is obvious and at other times it is not.

Realize that if something has not been diagnosed, life is hard on that person. Often when they have been diagnosed, it takes time to adjust to medication. Rarely is someone given one medication that they will take the rest of their life. Many times, the side effects seem harder than living with an untreated illness. It takes time for the body to adjust to medicine. There will be changes in moods, appearances, and actions.

Perhaps the hardest adjustment to a diagnosis is the stigma that comes with the illness. If someone has been told they have cancer, glaucoma or diabetes, others seem to want to encourage them. Yet when someone is diagnosed as living with bipolar disorder or being diagnosed with schizophrenia, they are often ostracized, many people will tell them that mental illness is not real. For too many years, television shows and movies have talked about the “crazy” people or made fun of people who talked to themselves. Television shows which focused on some mental health disorders such as hoarding have caused much heartache for those who suffer illnesses when hoarding is a symptom. Family and friends will tease hoarders, sometimes to a point that triggers other issues such as depression. Some victims of sexual abuse felt guilt and shame and have not reached out for help for fear of other people’s reactions. Many people who are hurting from undiagnosed conditions turn to various substances such as drugs, alcohol, food, or activities such as overworking or risky sexual behavior to numb the pain of condition.

Erasing the stigma of mental illness is something that each of us must work on. It may not be you or a loved one with a diagnosis today, but you never know when you will meet someone who lives daily battling an illness. If you joke about mental illness today, how will you feel in 20 years when your parent forgets who they are, or your child marries someone who lives a life of counseling, medication, and frustration?

Start today. Educate yourself on mental illness. Begin to help erase the stigma.

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Waste Pits update,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

According to some observers, excavation has started and some material has been sent to the landfills. This was not confirmed by EPA or THEA however. The landfills have been identified, as Republic in the Beaumont area, and Seabreeze in Aungleton. These landfills can accept Class II non-hazardous waste.

Rachel said that there had been a release, or spill, of toxic material in March, but it was a small amount and contained. However, it caused the operator to re-evaluate procedures and take steps to cap open valves properly.

Daily inspections of the site are being undertaken by GHD, the consulting engineers for the RP, and EPA is reviewing the Emergency Response Plan. EPA is also conducting sampling, but has not announced any results.

Members of the audience has questions after this presentation, with some suggestions also.

A question was asked why there is no provision for a third party full-time inspector, instead of the RP contractor’s person.

It was asked whether air monitoring is taking place as work progresses

and material is disturbed. The answer seemed to be No.

It was asked whether workers at the Southern site are wearing protective gear, and the answer was No.

Rachel said that her organization will be sending people to the area to advise fishermen about the dangers of toxicity in fish and crabs they may catch. She said this would be the fifth time they have attempted this information outreach, but it doesn’t seem very effective.

Plans for future activity were discussed. Rachel said ther will be a Third Party Review of the Northern Waste Pit, the 100% Remedial Design Plan will be completed and presented for review by EPA, and the RP contractor wil continue removal of toxic waste material from the Southern site.

Rachel thanked everyone that had attended the THEA fundraiser “Clean Mud for Bugs” fundraiser held at Karbach Brewery last Saturday, March 25. At that event, Harris County Attorney Christian Menefee was honored as the “Crawdaddy” of THEA for his work to protect the environment of the county.

JC Policeman Assaulted,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

punches at him. The dispatcher broadcast the information to Lt. M. Longrigg and patrol officers R. Barker II, F. Benavides and L. Marin and said the disorderly suspect was last seen going west on Lane towards Holland Ave.

The complainant provided the police with a detailed description of the suspect that he obtained from his home’s security camera.

Longrigg spotted the alleged suspect on Holland Avenue and upon his attempting to investigate the complaint the suspect who later was identified to be Marvin Vasquez a 24 year old Hispanic male immediately became physically aggressive on Longrigg and a deadly encounter ensued.

According to Longrigg, Vasquez without provocation started throwing punches at him, several punches with his closed fist struck Longrigg causing severe pain. Vasquez then jumped into the patrol car and was trying to put it in gear, but Longrigg moved in quickly preventing Vasquez from stealing the patrol car. While attempting to get Vasquez out of the car, Vasquez grabbed onto Longrigg’s grabarm handle trying to pull it out of the holster. Longrigg and Vasquez were in a vigorous life

threatening struggle over control of the pistol.

Within moments after Vasquez attacked Longrigg, backup patrolmen Barker, Benavides and Marin arrived. They saw the struggle over the gun; they quickly jumped in rescuing Longrigg. This could have ended in several officers deaths had Longrigg not prevented Vasquez from un-holstering his gun and using it on him and his fellow officers.

Vasquez was handcuffed and taken to jail and charged with two felonies. Later he was booked into the Harris County Jail for, 2nd degree felony charge of assault on a peace officer and the state jail felony of attempting to take a peace officer’s weapon. Vasquez spent his 24th birthday in jail, coincidently this happened on his birthday.

On April 27, 2023 at the Jacinto City council meeting Chief Ayala gave officers Barker, Benavides and Marin Commendation Awards for their outstanding performance in the apprehension of a dangerous suspect.

Lt. M. Longrigg, a 17 year veteran of the JC police department made a short emotional statement at the council meeting, “Had it not been for these officers I might not be here tonight.”

In North Shore, nearly everyone
reads the NORTH CHANNEL STAR.
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ASK DIAMOND JIM

Diamond Jim: “Does Pineforest Jewelry Replace Watch Batteries!”

Full-Service Repair Shop
People come into our store every week asking, “Do you replace watch batteries?”, or “Do y’all remove links from watch bands?”, and even “Do you repair jewelry?”. Some of these people live right here in our community and yet they spend gas, effort, and time driving around looking for a “one-stop” jewelry repair shop.

Well, look no more! As our existing customers already know, Pineforest Jewelry is THE PLACE to go for all of your jewelry repair needs. From replacing batteries in watches, vehicle entry fobs, and garage door openers, to precision laser welding of broken chains, to resizing rings, to replacing missing stones in your jewelry... we do it all! Our website, www.PineforestJewelry.com, lists all of our services and the amazing repair work we do for our customers. Go to the tab entitled “Services” and “Jewelry Repair”.

If you are looking to purchase that amazing gift for yourself or someone else, or you need to sell some old jewelry, coins, or diamonds to pay the bills, look no further than [Pineforest Jewelry](http://PineforestJewelry.com). [Contact us](mailto:contact@pineforestjewelry.com) or simply stop by our store and discover how we can be of service to you.

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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Commissioner Dawn Buckingham Addresses Houston Pastors Meeting, Brings Homeowners to Set the Record Straight

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Addressing the housing needs of Houstonians who need help rebuilding as well as the GLO's success of having more than 1,000 homes rebuilt in Houston and Harris County with another 1,000 homes approved and under construction. She also emphasized the success of the GLO's program, which has helped homeowners who were not served by the City of Houston, which was initially administering the funds for home rebuilding.

"When I was running, I promised, you would see me, you would know me, and I'd be here serving your communities," said Commissioner Buckingham. "What I care about is meeting unmet needs and being sure we are bringing prosperity to your communities, your churches, and helping your folks who need help."

Several Houston-area Harvey victims shared their emotional stories with the audience, including June Battist, who expressed her

gratitude to the GLO for intervening when the City of Houston failed to help. Greg Luna shared his story of how the City of Houston mishandled his case and how the GLO was able to provide him with a new home in just 77 days.

Lloyd Helms, who had been approved by the City of Houston for assistance five years before the GLO's intervention, spoke about the frustration as he waited in vain for aid. Timothy LeBlanc also shared his experience, expressing how the GLO was able to build his new home in just 110 days.

Speaking on the importance of community members meeting with Commissioner Buckingham, Reverend Perry Wooten stated, "[Commissioner Buckingham] has been here every step of the way. God put us here to lead our people and shepherd His flock. We need for her to be in here and touch base with the faith based community." He continued, "She's kept her word. She's



Houston resident Retta Miles had a particularly gut-wrenching journey after the 2017 storm devastated the area, "I am just happy to be in a place where I don't have to suffer, cry or worry anymore. GLO made that happen for me."

doing what she's told me she's going to do. That's who she is. As long as I'm involved, we're going to bring it back to the community. We're going to make sure you're at the table."

Commissioner Buckingham also took the opportunity to correct some of the false narratives that have been repeated by those opposing the GLO's recovery efforts. She noted that some

have falsely claimed the home rebuilding program, regulated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, diminishes home values when in fact, on average, homes rebuilt through the GLO's Homeowner Assistance Program increase the value of the property by more than \$85,000.

Commissioner Buckingham also noted that 85% of

funds are benefiting low- to moderate-income families, significantly outperforming HUD's requirements. Nearly 60% of the households served by the GLO are considered extremely low income, which means the household income would be less than \$27,750 for a family of four.

Commissioner Buckingham concluded the meeting by thanking Reverend

Wooten for organizing the event and highlighting the need for organizations to work together more effectively in the future. With the upcoming hurricane season only weeks away, she emphasized the importance of being prepared and working efficiently to provide aid to those who need it.

"We know there is another storm coming. We know we haven't recovered from the last one. We have got to get that recovery complete. Then we have to figure out how to come together so next time something happens - because we know it's going to happen - that we come together more efficiently and more effectively," said Commissioner Buckingham.

The meeting was an opportunity to set the record straight and provide homeowners with the required assistance. The Commissioner's remarks highlight the importance of collaboration and the need to work together to prepare for future disasters. (Contributed)

Rotary Cake Auction,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

were, Jeff Miller, Air Alliance, East Harris County Alliance Council, Galena Park ISD Education Foundation, Capital Bank, Eileen Brightwell, Dr. John Moore, Phil Hampton, Lisa Hamble and Hiway 90 Logistics.

Donors were Maria D. Cortez-Ochoa, Zachary W. Fade, Don Chile Mexican Café, VICO Manufacturing, Officer Ruben Loreto, El Puerto Mexican Café, Jose Jimenez, State Farm, Supreme Sounds, Trustees Norma Hernandez, Noe

Esparza & Ramon Garza.

The Rotary recognized outstanding students, they were, Olivia Salazar, Rehal Salazar, Jesus Gonzalez, Abigail Hernandez, Sabrina Marsh, Luis Guzman, Lexi Elrod, Joel Delgado, Esmeralda Trigueros, Victoria Tovar, Anahi Arrendondo, Madeline Rojas.

Rotarian Don Nichols got the Community Service Award for his work helping students and the under privileged.

ECOM officials attend Safety Conference

East Harris County Emergency Communications Center (ECOM) Deputy Director Tiffani Edge, ESD 12 Commissioner & Greater Harris County 9-1-1 Bd. Secretary Bill Anders, Shift Supervisor Brianna Carter and ECOM Director Josh Sparks were privileged to attend the Texas Public Safety Conference at the Galveston County Convention Center. This conference is a collaboration of Texas Chapters of NENA (National Emergency Number Association) and Association of Public-Safety Officials (APCO) that provide nationally recog-



nized trainers on topics essential to the emergency service telecommunicators who receive and dispatch emergency services. Attendees are exposed to the latest equipment, hardware and software neces-

sary to keep the communication center efficient and effective to meet public needs. An Awards Luncheon is held on the last day to recognize individuals and teams for their dedication and heroic ef-

forts in life saving and property conservation. This high quality of training is vital, so when you have an emergency and call 9-1-1 the telecommunicator will send you the help you need.

HM Baytown Hospital Celebrates 75 years of Serving the Community

BAYTOWN – This month Houston Methodist Baytown Hospital is celebrating 75 years of service to Baytown and the surrounding communities. San Jacinto Memorial Hospital opened on April 18th, 1948, on Decker Drive with fewer than 100 patient rooms, dedicated hospital staff, and 35 physicians. Today, Houston Methodist Baytown Hospital has more than 300 hospital inpatient rooms, state-of-the-art operating rooms, multiple outpatient service locations, medical office buildings, over 2,000 employees, and nearly 1,000 physicians

Through the years, the hospital has grown with the community, changed names, and moved to its current location on Garth Road, but never lost the vision of its founders to create a modern hospital that provides the very best in innovation and health care for those living in the community – well into the future.

"Houston Methodist Baytown Hospital has been an icon in the Baytown community since it was first built on Decker Drive and to this day serves as an integral part of our community — improving quality of life and promoting health and safety to all living in our area. Our hospital has also played a pivotal role in the history of Houston Methodist as it was the first community hospital and set the stage for our eventual growth into oth-



TOP ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT – Board Member Gary Schmidt, Chief Medical Officer Dr. Shawn Tittle, Board Chairman Gilbert Santana, Chief Executive Officer David Bernard, Medical Technologist Specialist Rita Rull, Nursing Director Dorothy Terry, Board Member Wayne Baldwin.

FRONT ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT: Chief Operating Officer Adrienne Joseph, Asst. Chief Nursing Officer Jennifer Vera, Board Member Pete Alfaro, Monitor Technician Ester Andrew, Lab Director Gail Lumus, Board Member Tommy Clements, Director of Spiritual Care George Colon, Administrative Director Laurie Terry



1946 GROUNDBREAKING FOR ORIGINAL HOSPITAL SITE ON DECKER DRIVE HOSPITAL OPENING DAY - APRIL 18, 1948

er communities," said Chief Executive Officer David Bernard.

In November of 2022, the hospital opened Unity Tower, a new five-story building providing 75 new private rooms and vital infrastructure to continue leading medicine in Baytown. This new space increased capacity allowing the hospital to continue its mission and enhancing our ability to serve the growing demands of Baytown, east Harris, Liberty and Chambers counties.

Unity Tower serves as a focal point for Houston Methodist Baytown, unifying the campus and staff with the community to promote a spiritual healing environment. The tower's design helps solidify Houston Methodist Baytown as part of the Houston Methodist system.

"Leading-edge technology and facilities may define our history, but without a doubt, Houston Methodist Baytown is distinguished by the amazing staff and physicians who provide personalized care and service to the members of our community each day," said Bernard. "They are truly the heart and soul of our great institution."

Houston Methodist Baytown Hospital is recognized by Vizient as a top performer in the Bernard A. Birnbaum, MD Quality Leadership annual ranking, coming in No. 2 out of 148 Complex Care Medical Centers in

2022. In 2016, Houston Methodist Baytown received official designation as a Magnet® hospital from the American Nurses Credentialing Center the highest and most respected national recognition for nursing excellence. Only 7 percent of hospitals nationwide are Magnet® certified.

"The 75-year history and success of Houston Methodist Baytown are inspired by those living in our community with a desire to serve others and provide only the very best for their friends and family. We are grateful for their commitment to serving and fortitude throughout the years. As we emerge from a global pandemic, we continue to honor the vision of our founders and strengthen our commitment to the mission of Houston Methodist to provide excellent health care in a spiritual environment of caring. We are proud of our history, excited for our future, and look forward to leading medicine in Baytown for decades to come," said Bernard.

The anniversary was marked with a celebration for employees today featuring speeches from long-time employees. Please see attached photos.

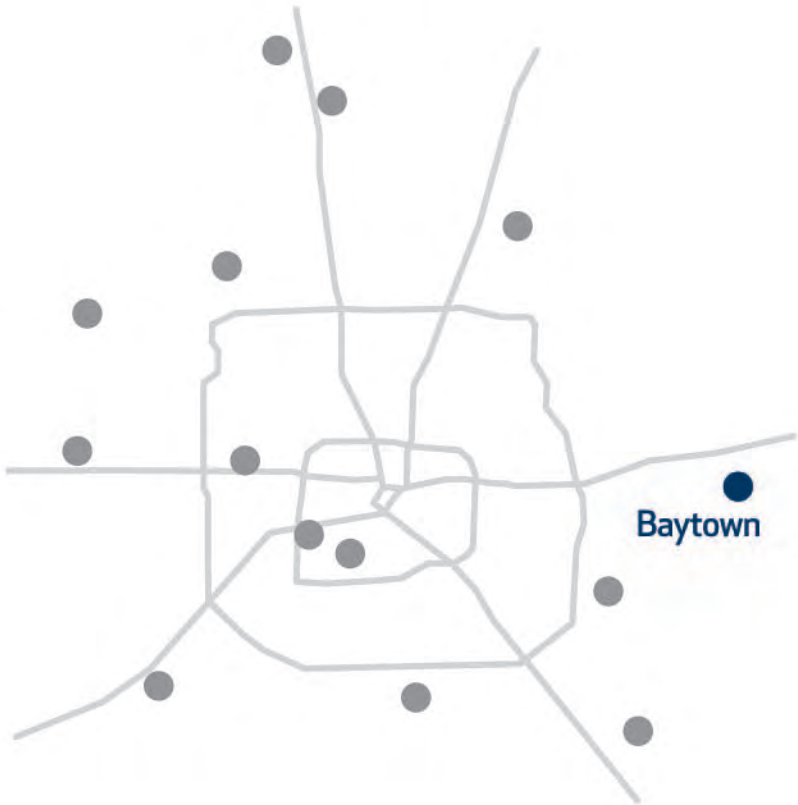
For more information about Houston Methodist Baytown Hospital, visit houstonmethodist.org/baytown or call 281.420.8600.



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