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Adrian Stephens Board President Presented Gavel for Service

By Allan Jamail

September 11, 2023 -Houston, TX. - At the Galena Park ISD Administration Building Mrs. Adrian Stephens, was presented a gavel award plaque in recognition of her service as Board President for her term in 2022

Superintendent Dr. John Moore presented Stephens the award in behalf of the Board of Trustees. As he made the presentation he said, "We are so appreciative of your support and all you do for



GPISD Trustee Adrian Stephens receives Presidential Award from Superintendent Dr. John Moore. (Photo by LINDA Jamail)

the school district and serving as president of the board."

Stephens was elected to the GPISD Board of Trustees in 2018 where she recently served as the Board's President. Recently she said, "My genuine interest is protecting students and providing for them the best quality of education possible so they can have a productive and successful life. I want to ensure the teachers and the administration have all the resources necessary to accomplish this."

North Shore Rotary Members Win Washer **Tournament Trophy**



Congratulations to North Shore Mini and Ruben Izzaguirre with team Izzie for winning the Highlands Rotary Washer Tournament Trophy for best Rotarian score.

Celia Cruz, Hispanic Heritage Month Honoree

One of a Series... By Allan Jamail

September 18, 2023 ~ Hispanic Heritage Month begins annually from September 15 thru October 15. For the past several years I've had the honor of bringing back the memories of a famous person of Hispanic heritage. This week my honoree is Cuban born Celia

ber 21, 1925 ~ died July

16, 2003 at the age of 77 with a brain turmor. She was a Cuban singer and one of the most popular Latin artists of the 20th century. Cruz rose to fame in Cuba during the 1950s as a singer of guarachas, earning the nickname "La Guarachera de Cuba". In the following decades, she became known internationally as the "Queen of Salsa" due to her contri-Celia Cruz, born Octo- butions to Latin music. She had sold over 10 mil-



Cuban singer Celia Cruz (Oct. 21, 1925 – July 16, 2003)

lion copies, making her one of the best-selling Latin music artists.

She left Cuba after the 1959 revolution and often said she would love to return — when Castro no longer was in power. In the end, Castro outlived

According to Billboard magazine, Celia Cruz was "indisputably the best known and most influential figure in the his-

"The Queen of Salsa" was a dynamic performer in every sense. With her powerful voice and flamboyant stage shows, Cruz helped bring salsa music to a broad audience. In the 1950s, Cruz became famous with the legendary Afro-Cuban group La Sonora Matancera. Her musical partnership with fellow salsa star and "Mambo King" Tito Puente, gartory of Cuban and Latin nered some the biggest Continued. See A SYMBOL OF successes in her career.

Cruz recorded more than 70 albums over six decades and had more than a dozen Grammy nominations. She won best salsa album for "La Negra Tiene Tumbao" at the Latin Grammy Awards, and won the same award more than once. Among her bestknown recordings are "Yerberito Moreno" and "Que le Den Candela." In 1987 she was hon

Jacinto City's Officer Mario Quiroga (Former Marine)

By Allan Jamail

Jacinto City, TX. September 15, 2023 ~ Jacinto City Police Chief Joe Ayala introduced Officer Mario Quiroga as one of his new officers to NC Star writer Allan Jamail.

Jamail a former chief of police and mayor said, "When I interviewed Officer Quiroga

I was very impressed with his dedication of being a law enforcement officer and his service to our country as a US Marine. His goal is to make law enforcement a career and eventually become an Undercover Officer.

Officer Quiroga a Galena Park High School graduate of 2014 and later the



Joe Ayala, Jacinto City's Police Chief (left) and Officer Mario Quiroga. (Photo by Allan Jamail

University of Houston-Downtown Criminal Justice Training Center (UHC). He's certified by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE).

The UHC provides basic peace officer training courses in a professional environment for those attempting to become peace officers in the State of Texas in accordance with the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement.

UHC provides today's officers with the tools they need to serve their communities safely, effectively, and professionally according to the standards of the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement.

KINGWOOD HOSPITAL

New Level II Trauma Center to serve Northeast Harris County

By David Taylor Northeast News Editor

NORTH HARRIS COUNTY - HCA Houston Healthcare Kingwood has earned Level II trauma center designation by the Texas Department of State Health Services and received verification of its trauma status by the American College of Surgeons. The designation allows Emergency Medical Services to transport patients to a closer hospital without a time-consuming trip downtown.

The Kingwood hospital received the designation in June and becomes one of only 27 facilities in the state of Texas to earn the



Kingwood Hospital is now certified as a Level II Trauma Center.

designation and the fourth HCA hospital in the Gulf Coast area including Clear Lake, Northwest, and Conroe in Montgomery Coun-

"We are excited to re-

ceive our Level II trauma verification and designation," said John Corbeil, CEO of HCA Houston Healthcare Kingwood. "We have assembled an excellent trauma team and are

proud to work with our EMS partners to offer advanced trauma care close to home for the communities we serve."

The State of Texas Department of Health Services assigns trauma designations from Level I (highest) to Level IV (lowest). Levels I and II provide the same level of care for trauma patients. Both must provide a comprehensive trauma program with a wide range of specialists and life-saving equipment available 24 hours a day. The only difference between a Level I and Level II facility is Level I facilities offer teaching and research.

To receive this designa-

tion, facilities must first achieve verification from the American College of Surgeons (ACS). ACS does not designate trauma centers but confirms that a trauma center has demonstrated its commitment to providing the highest quality trauma care for all injured patients.

"It took incredible teamwork and dedication by the hospital staff and administration, who made a huge investment in procuring equipment and securing specialists to meet the requirements of Level II designation," says Neil Grieshop, M.D., medical director of trauma services at HCA Houston Healthcare Kingwood.

critical, and North Houston area residents will greatly benefit from having a higher-level trauma center nearby."

"With trauma care, time is

Location strategy was key to the mission at King-

"Currently, there are no Level II Trauma centers between Kingwood and downtown and going north, nothing all the way to Tyler, Texas. That's a very large area we'll be able to serve and with the addition of AirLife helicopters, which we've been able to station out north of here (in Liberty), we'll be able

Continued. See LEVEL II TRAUMA CENTER, Page 5

SHELDON ISD NEWS

Sheldon hosts annual Blue Card Luncheon

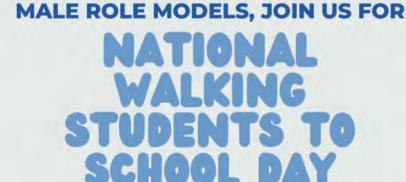


On September 11, Sheldon ISD hosted its second annual Blue Card Luncheon for Blue Card members. To be a Blue Card member, you must be a resident of Sheldon ISD and 65 years of age or older. Blue Card members receive a free luncheon each year and free entry to all home sporting events and fine arts performances.

At this year's luncheon, attendees heard a presentation from Superintendent Dr. Demetrius McCall and enjoyed performances from King High School and King Middle School fine arts students.

We have nearly 150 Blue Card members since the program began in 2021," said Executive Director of Communications Emily Conklin, APR. "To sign up for the program, residents can visit our website at www.sheldonisd.com and click the Community tab on the menu section. We are so thankful and appreciative of the support we receive from our Blue Card members. Many members are grandparents within our school district and some are even King High School graduates."

Walk your Child to School in **Sheldon ISD on Sept 22**







A DISTRICT-WIDE **EVENT** HAPPENING ON

ENTER A DRAWING FOR A CHANCE TO WIN A PARTY PACK FOR THE C.E. KING HIGH SCHOOL **HOME FOOTBALL GAME ON SEPT 29**

Sheldon ISD Every Child, Every Day

Calling all male role models! Join Sheldon ISD for National Walking Students to School Day on Friday, September 22. This district-wide event encourages parent engagement throughout the 13 schools in Sheldon ISD. Families can enter a drawing at their child's campus to win a party pack for the September 29 King High School Panther football home game.

> In North Shore, nearly everyone reads the NORTH CHANNEL STAR. Your Hometown Newspaper.

Sheldon to host Sheldon Shuffle 5K race and Fun Run



Lace up your running sneakers and get ready to run in the annual Sheldon Shuffle. This 5K race and fun run will take place on Saturday, October 28 at Panther Stadium. The cost is \$20 for adults and \$10 for students. Proceeds benefit the Sheldon Education Foundation who raises funds for innovative teaching grants for Sheldon ISD educators. To sign up for the race, visit www.sheldonisd.com. Immediately following the race the second annual Sheldon Community Fall Festival will be held in the King High School gymnasium. Join in the fun for bounce houses, resources by community partners and more.

GALENA PARK ISD NEWS

Friday Night Teacher Lights



Two of Galena Park ISD's (GPISD) Teachers of the Year were a part of "Friday Night Lights" on September 1st. Just as the North Shore Mustangs took on the Spring Lions, the College Football Playoff National Championship Foundation's 2024 Host Committee (under the direction of the Harris County Sports Authority and the support of Houston Loves Teachers-a citywide campaign for the recruitment, retention, recognition, and professional development of educators) awarded an Extra Yard for Teachers Game Ball to Camryn Goodman and Tyneasha Turk. Goodman and Turk are GPISD's 2023 Secondary and Elementary Teachers of the Year [respectively]. Their dedication, passion, and resilience inside and outside of the classroom were recognized and applauded!

For more information about the College Football Playoff National Championship and its partners, visit www.houston2024.com.

Story Credit: Dr. Tommie L. Smith Photo Credit: Jerome Delafosse

GPISD Celebrated Grandparents



Friday, September 8, 2023, was the observation of Grandparents' Day in Galena Park ISD (GPISD), and it was a special day for students to show appreciation and love for their grandparents. Like many other districts, GPISD schools recognized this special day by inviting grandparents to join their grandchildren for breakfast and lunch. This was also an opportunity for grandparents to spend quality time with their grandchildren and to see firsthand what their daily lives are like at school. Overall, Grandparents' Day was a wonderful opportunity for families and schools to come together and celebrate the entire family. By welcoming grandparents to join their grandchildren at school, GPISD honored these special bonds and created lasting memories for generations to come. Grandparents make GPISD...A Great Place to

Story Credit: Dr. Tommie L. Smith

Photo Credits: Christopher Gause and Co M Lam

CHARLOTTE'S WEB By Charlotte Jackson

S

Homecoming

t is funny how different celebrations can have different meanings as we age. My granddaughters are excited that North Shore Senior High will be celebrating their Annual Homecoming this week. While it has been forty-three years since I graduated from North Shore, I have talked to even younger adults who have expressed sticker shock over some of the "must have" items that are being promoted for the game.

We were fortunate to have Pizzini's Italian Restaurant in Jacinto City as well as Steak and Ale for choices for an after-game meal. While our communities have grown and we have many more choices, there are still some couples who will be leaving the area and spending upwards of fifty dollars per individual for the meal. Had we ever thought about asking our parents if an unlicensed driver could borrow their car, we would not be here to talk about it today. Yet, this football season, I have heard parents discussing the vehicles and the costs of them renting a car in their name for their child to drive. Wow, what a change

Often, many friends will get together and go out as a group. No longer are homecoming mums only purchased by boys for their dates, but now you find parents buying them for their daughters, friends purchasing them for each other and even students purchasing their own. Long gone are the days of live flowers on the corsage. Now, many are made with plastic or silk flowers and the streamers are adorned with the student's name, the year of the celebration, the mascot name, cowbells, and glitter, but you will often see stuffed animals and pictures on the streamers as

Homecoming celebrations were once for those who had graduated and were returning home for the football game. Now there are alumni, current students, younger students, parents and thanks to the vast improvements in our athletic programs, you often see college scouts in the crowd. As in years past, you will see administrators, faculty, support staff and plenty of bus drivers. One thing that can be said for the communities, is that we support the athletic teams. I remember meeting someone who had lived in North Shore for just a few months. I was surprised to see him at a Homecoming game. When I asked why he was there, considering he drew up in another state, had no children and no ties to the school, he told me that he had heard that "if you really wanted to fit in, you needed to support the team". Not only did his neighbors welcome him to the game, but the real estate agent who sold him the house, had shared about the State Championship Mustangs. With him being an alumnus of University of Texas, by the time Cory Redding's Annual 3D Football Camp opened registration, he was the first to sign up his nephews to attend.

Homecoming has changed in many ways, yet I hope you get out and enjoy the activities this week.







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Jacinto City Police Report,

By Allan Jamail

September 18, 2023 – The Jacinto City Police were very busy the month of July according to Police Chief Joe Ayala's report.

The police department response time to citizen's calls is very good, approximately 2 minutes, they responded to 309 citizens calls and issued 1,084 citations.

The department's officers made 52 arrests as: 4 assaults, 1 theft, 9 public intoxications, 21 for traffic warrants, 1 interference with public duties and 1 narcotics possession (misd), 2 unlawful carrying weapon (misd), 1 interference with public duties, 1 evading arrest, 1 resisting arrest, 3 traffic arrests, 1 criminal mischief, 1 criminal trespass, 1 terroristic threat, 5 DWI's.

To see if known sex offenders live near you click on the red link button at:

http://www.jacintocity-tx.gov/

Citizens are encouraged to report any suspicious activity in their neighborhood to 713-672-2455. If there's an emergency call 911. Support your local police.

A Symbol of Hispanic Heritage,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ored with a star on Hollywood's Walk of Fame, and several years later, the city of Miami gave Calle Ocho, the main street of its Cuban community, the honorary name of Celia Cruz Way. She was also inducted into the International Latin Music Hall of Fame in 1999. In the same year, she was presented with the ASCAP Latin Heritage Award becoming the first recipient of the accolade. She was also recognized with a star on Boulevard Amador Bendayán in Caracas, Venezuela, and a figure in the Hollywood Wax Museum.

In 2003, a music school was opened in the Bronx, named the Celia Cruz Bronx High School of Music. On June 4, 2004, the heavily Cuban-American community of Union City, New Jersey heralded its annual Cuban Day Parade by dedicating its new Celia Cruz Park (also known as Celia Cruz Plaza), which features a sidewalk star in her hon-

On June 2, 2021, the City of New York honored Celia Cruz by co-naming the intersection of Reservoir Avenue and East 195th Street, "Celia Cruz Way" near the High School that is named in her honor.

Through a formidable work ethic, Cruz rose to the very top in her genre. In February 2004, her last album, Regalo del Alma, she won a posthumous award at the Premios Lo Nuestro for best salsa release of the year. It was announced in December 2005 that a musical called ¡Azúcar! would open in Tenerife before touring the world. The name comes from Cruz's well-known catch phrase of "¡Azúcar!" ("Sugar!").

Cruz also received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Smithsonian Institution and in 1994, U.S. President Bill Clinton honored her with an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Allan Jamail Looking Back Locally: As we look around us today we can see how much the Hispanic Community has grown and contributed all over the nation and especially so in the communities of Jacinto City, Galena Park, Channelview, Sheldon, Cloverleaf and the entire North Channel area.

As a teenager I can remember both in my hometown of Galena Park and nearby Jacinto City there were only about six Hispanic families. Many of them were families of some of my best friends and still are.

in the 1980's as Mayor of Jacinto City I appointed Rachel Nunez as the city's first Hispanic female official in our city government. I saw the need for the fast growing Hispanic Community to be able to have better communications with the city. I asked her if she'd volunteer to serve as a liaison to the Hispanics and she eagerly accepted my offer. She and I planned and had many weekend meetings at city hall with the city's Hispanics. She explained to them the laws and policies of our city which paved the way for them to be able to become more productive citizens.

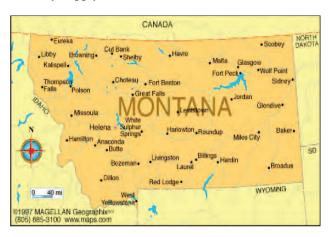
When I appointed Rachel I gave her the title, "Mayor's Liaison to the Hispanic Community". She was very happy and excited to have the volunteer position. She treasured her gold badge with her name on it with her official identification card up until her death of January 2013. Rachel in 2000 became the city's first female Hispanic to serve as a council member and also as mayor in 2011.

To learn more about Celia Cruz visit: www.wikipedia.org/wiki/ Celia_Cruz

ASK DIAMOND JIM

Diamond Jim: "Are Sapphires Mined in the United States?"

As the only source of sapphire mining in the United States, the mines of Montana have established a reputation for producing stunning sapphire gemstones and a steady supply.



Although sapphires can be found throughout Montana today, the majority of the finds can be attributed to four major locales: Yogo Gulch, Rock Creek, Dry Cottonwood Creek, and the gravel bars along the Missouri River northeast of Helena.

Sapphire production in Montana was, at least initially, a byproduct of the *gold rushes* of the 1860s. Early prospectors searching for gold in the gravel of the Missouri River repeatedly discarded the annoying blue pebbles that continually clogged their sluices without much thought to what they may be.

The discovery that these stones had value is attributed to Ed "Sapphire" Collins who forwarded samples of these pebbles to Tiffany & Co. in 1895. When Tiffany purchased the lot for \$3,750 (approximately \$110,300 as of 2018) and declared that the stones were "sapphires of unusual quality," a small-scale sapphire rush began.

A year later, a part-time prospector and sheep farmer, John Ettien, discovered the source of the sapphires – an igneous dike about five miles in length.

Gold prospectors quickly learned that turning their operations to sapphire mining was proving more lucrative than gold. Stakes claimed along the 5-mile vein of the Yogo dike exchanged hands many times until 1899 when a trio of British businessmen purchased what had been coined the New Mine Sapphire Syndicate for \$100,000 (approximately the equivalent of \$2.9 million as of 2018).

Montana Sapphire Mining in 2020

The Missouri River, Rock Creek, and Dry Cottonwood Creek deposits are associated with high yields of high-clarity *fancy sapphires*, with colors ranging from light pinks, purples, oranges, yellows, and greens, to pale blues. These sapphires are extremely unique in that they are free of *cavities* and *inclusions* and feature high uniform clarity and even coloring.

Untreated Yogo sapphires are famous for their excellent blue color and exceptional clarity; and many believe their natural qualities surpass heat-treated stones from all over the world. However, their primary drawback is their small size. Cut gems from Yogo Gulch are very rarely more than one carat in size.

As we moved into 2020, the <u>Rock Creek</u> region of Montana continued to show the richest deposits of natural sapphires. Two areas of the region, known as Eureka Gulch and Sapphire Gulch, are being mined with practices that show an incredible amount of respect and responsibility to protecting the land and environment. Sapphire rough from here usually measures in from 2mm to 1 inch in size with a variety of <u>unique and rare colors</u>.

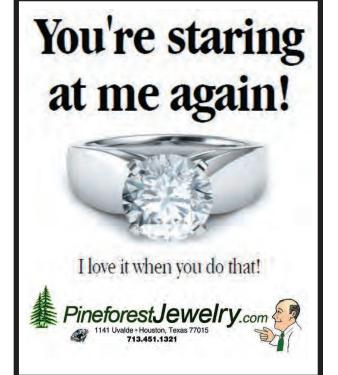
Really, the only color you won't find termed a "Sapphire" is red, because red sapphire is called Ruby. For a more in-depth look a Sapphires, Diamonds and other gemstones, visit is online at PineforestJewelry.com.

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.





★ OPINION PAGE ★



Judge Hidalgo says she will return to work on October 2nd

Letter from Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo

Dear People of Harris County:

Thank you to my colleagues, family, and the Harris County community for the outpouring of support that I received after I announced I was seeking inpatient mental health treatment for depression. I have been deeply touched by all the messages that I have received, not only from Harris County residents but from across the country. So many people wrote to me to share their own struggles with mental health and their support for my decision to be public about my journey. I am encouraged that so many in our community agree that treatment for mental illness should be normalized just as seeking treatment for any illness is accepted and expected.

After my time in a fantastic inpatient facility, I am feeling a lot better. I am looking forward to being discharged this Saturday, September 16, 2023, starting outpatient care, and re-acclimatizing to life outside a mental health facility. My initial treatment plan had me returning to my regular schedule in September, but my discharge date was moved back, which moves back the reacclimatization period. The way my doctors explained re-acclimatization to me is that you would not go from heart surgery straight to running a marathon, in the same way that they do not want me to go straight back to my usual schedule.

I am feeling great and looking forward to returning on Monday, October 2, 2023. Thanks to the incredible medical team that has cared for me over the past several weeks, I feel so much stronger than I have ever been.

I continue to maintain lines of communication with my staff and the Harris County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management remains fully prepared to respond to any potential incident, as well as request my presence if necessary.

I am grateful for your continued support. I look forward to sharing more about my experience, and most of all, I am eager to return to the community and the job that I love.

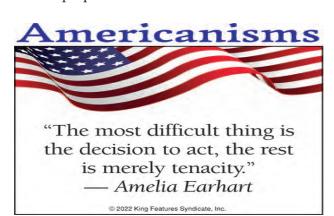
Sincerely,

Lina Hidalgo Harris County Judge



About Judge Hidalgo

Harris County's governing body and Director of the Harris County's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management. Judge Hidalgo, alongside four County Precinct Commissioners, oversees a budget of approximately \$5 billion that funds services and institutions for the thirdlargest county in the nation, home to nearly 5 million people.





STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS By Gary Borders

Paxton Acquitted on all Impeachment Counts

Ken Paxton has been reinstated as Texas Attorney General after the Texas Senate on Saturday acquitted him of charges of bribery and misuse of office. Only two Republican senators joined the 12 Democrats in voting to convict him of some of the 16 charges heard by the Senate, with four other charges dismissed by the Senate, The Dallas Morning News reported

"Today, the truth prevailed," Paxton said in a statement issued immediately after the verdict. "The truth could not be buried by mudslinging politicians or their powerful benefactors."

Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick, who presided over the impeachment trial, scolded the House for voting overwhelmingly for impeachment of the embattled attorney general in late May. House Speaker Dade Phelan responded that Patrick was "confessing his bigs"

"The inescapable conclusion is that today's outcome appears to have been orchestrated from the start, cheating the people of Texas of justice," Phelan said.

Paxton is not out of legal hot wateryet. He faces a trial in March on an eight-year-old indictment for securities fraud. He is also the focus of a federal probe into his relationship with developer Nate Paul that led to some of the impeachment charges.

OUT-OF-STATE FIREFIGHTERS HEAD TO TEXAS

As drought and high temperatures continue to contribute to wildfires in Texas, more than 1,400 firefighters from 38 states and territories have arrived this year to help with response, the Texas Tribune reported. The number of wildfires that the Texas A&M Forest Service responded to in July and August skyrocketed to 163 in July and 501 in August, far above the average since 2005 of 103 in July and 151 in August.

"Drought development and the number of consecutive 100-plus degree days has contributed to critically dry vegetation across much of the



state, which is supportive of wildfire activity," said Erin O'Connor, program specialist for the Texas A&M Forest Service. "With current conditions, we have wildfires that are more complex and show extreme fire behavior, hold heat longer and require more time and effort to suppress."

As of Sunday, the service reported six active wildfires, most of which are nearly contained. Recent rainfall has lowered the state fire level from 4 to 3.

There are currently 215 counties with burn bans in place. Luckily, widespread rainfall in the Hill Country, North and East Texas and much of the Rolling Plains is reducing the risk.

TEA DELAYS RELEASE OF 2023 ACCOUNTABILITY RATINGS

The Texas Education Agency is delaying the release of A-F district and campus accountability ratings for about one month. The ratings were to be released on Sept. 28. The postponement allows for re-examination of "the baseline data used in the calculation of progress to ensure ratings reflect the most appropriate goals for students," the news release said.

The delay is a result of further study being made into the impact of the pandemic on student progress.

"Maintaining high expectations helps guide our efforts to improve student learning and support," said Texas Education Commissioner Mike Morath. "The A-F system is designed to properly reflect how well our schools are meeting those

high expectations, and the adjustments we are making this year will ensure it continues to serve as a tool for parents and educators to help our students."

NEW COVID-19 BOOSTERS NOW AVAILABLE

A new vaccine booster for COVID-19 is now largely available, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is recommending all people over the age of six months get the new shots as the number of new COVID cases and hospitalizations increase across the state, the Austin American-Statesman reported.

"There's a lot of thought that COVID is over, but...we've seen over the last few weeks an increase in cases, hospitalizations and death," said Dr. Brian Metzger, medical director of infectious diseases at St. David's HealthCare in Austin. "While it's not nearly what we were seeing, ... there's still a significant burden of illness. We can't ignore it"

The CDC noted the immunity garnered from the original vaccination, like other seasonal illnesses such as the flu, wanes over time. After a year, the antibodies produced by the vaccine "have waned enough that you really aren't protected to where you were before," Metzger told the Statesman.

AUGUST WAS FOURTH HOTTEST AND DRIEST ON

This comes as no surprise to those of us living through it, but August in Texas was the hottest and driest in Texas since records began being kept in 1895, according to Andrew Weinberg, geoscientist with the Texas Water Development Board.

At the end of the month 76% of the state was in drought, up 27 percentage points from the end of July. Storage in the state's water supply reservoirs is about 69% of capacity, more than 13 percentage points below normal for this time of year.

The hopeful news is that El Niño weather conditions should bring cooler and wetter weather to the state this fall and winter. That should ease drought conditions across the state before the end of the year.

LOST MAPLES RANKED AS HAVING BEST FALL FOLIAGE

The leaves will begin to change in coming weeks, and the Statesman reports a Central Texas natural area has been ranked as having the best fall foliage in the country. Lost Maples Natural Area in Vanderpool, about two hours northwest of San Antonio, garnered the top spot from New York Travel Guides.

Lost Maples boasts 2,000 acres filled with bigtooth maple trees, which display brilliant colors most autumns. It also features 10 miles of hiking and 30 campsites with water and electricity. Park officials recommend visitors reserve passes online to guarantee entry.



Up North With Mom and Dad

I'm staying "up north" with Mom and Dad, and that is always good.

My mom and dad have built a life that is pretty much exactly the way they like it. They have rituals and habits they do almost without thinking. But the amazing thing—to me—is that just about every one of these daily routines ends up giving them a healthier and much happier life.

At this point, my dad would snort, and my mom would say I was making them sound like saints, and they'd both shake their heads in unison and say that I like to exaggerate, and so I guess you'll have to take my word for it.

My dad turns 90 at the top of next year, and my mom isn't far behind. They still live in the beautiful home they designed and built together more than 30 years ago in the Northwoods. The house is not large, but it is perfectly suited to them. It sits high above the lake in the woods, so their nearest neighbors are squirrels and deer and raccoons, a variety of birds and the occasional bear. Loons fly over their home and land in the lake. My mother keeps dozens of pots of flowers blooming outside the house. My dad keeps enough wood chopped and split to keep them in firewood all winter, and they are out biking or walking or snowshoeing every single dav.

"We don't eat as much as we used to," my mother notes.

But what they eat is healthy. They've got a vegetable garden in town, as it is too shady in the woods for vegetables. Yesterday, they picked up fresh sweet corn and a cantaloupe from the farmers market.

And I feel as if this is the part of the story where I should tell you the really amazing thing about my parents. But, as I write this, I realize the really amazing thing is not any one thing. It is all of it. As their needs and desires have changed, their habits have remained positive and healthy and filled with joy.

I think I've known for most of my life I would never be as consistent or disciplined or sensible as my parents. They were this way when I grew up, and they remain every bit as remarkable now that I am getting old. I've even thought, from time to time, that it was a lot to live up to. Their marriage, lasting many decades, was not one I could emulate in my first marriage. My moods fluctuate far more wildly. I require regular "reboots" to stay on track.

But I am no longer envious. I am now simply admiring. And I am grateful. I am so grateful they have taken such good care of themselves and so grateful that they are still here with me, active and happy and as practical as ever.

My dad says he's slowed down a lot, and turning 90 certainly gives a person plenty to think about. But just as I learned how to paddle a canoe and ride a bike by watching him, I now watch him managing the perils of aging with grace and elegance. And I am, once again, learning.

What I've just written, my father will dismiss. He'll say he wasn't so elegant the other day when he tripped over the doorsill and cut his hand open while bringing the laundry in from the line. He'll say he's doing nothing out of the ordinary, nothing worth writing about.

And that's why you'll have to take my word for iT.

Till next time, Carrie



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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON TAX INCREASE

A tax rate of \$0.146195 per \$100 valuation has been proposed by the governing body of San Jacinto Community College District.

PROPOSED TAX RATE \$0.146195 per \$100

NO-NEW-REVENUE TAX RATE \$0.140269 per \$100

VOTER-APPROVAL TAX RATE \$0.150555 per \$100

The no-new-revenue tax rate is the tax rate for the 2023 tax year that will raise the same amount of property tax revenue for San Jacinto Community College District from the same properties in both the 2022 tax year and the 2023 tax year.

The voter-approval rate is the highest tax rate that San Jacinto Community College District may adopt without holding an election to seek voter approval of the rate.

The proposed tax rate is greater than the no-new-revenue tax rate. This means that San Jacinto Community College District is proposing to increase property taxes for the 2023 tax year.

A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED TAX RATE WILL BE HELD ON October 2, 2023, AT 7:00 PM AT 4624 Fairmont Parkway, Pasadena, Texas 77504.

The proposed tax rate is not greater than the voter-approval tax rate. As a result, San Jacinto Community College District is not required to hold an election at which voters may accept or reject the proposed tax rate. However, you may express your support for or opposition to the proposed tax rate by contacting the members of the Board of Trustees of San Jacinto Community College District at their offices or by attending the public hearing mentioned above.

YOUR TAXES OWED UNDER ANY OF THE RATES MENTIONED ABOVE CAN BE CALCULATED AS FOLLOWS:

Property tax amount= (tax rate) x (taxable value of your property)/100

FOR the proposal:

Marie Flickinger

Keith Sinor

Dan Mims
Larry Wilson

John Moon Jr.

Erica Davis Rouse

Michelle Cantú-Wilson

AGAINST the proposal:

PRESENT and not voting:

ABSENT:

Visit Texas.gov/PropertyTaxes to find a link to your local property tax database on which you can easily access information regarding your property taxes, including information about proposed tax rates and scheduled public hearings of each entity that taxes your property.

The 86th Texas Legislature modified the manner in which the voter-approval tax rate is calculated to limit the rate of growth of property taxes in the state.

The following table compares the taxes imposed on the average residence homestead by San Jacinto

Community College District last year to the taxes proposed to be imposed on the average residence homestead by San Jacinto Community College District this year.

	2022	2023	Change
Total tax rate (per \$100 of value)	\$0.155605	\$0.146195	decrease of -\$0.009410, or -6.05%
Average homestead taxable value	\$157,169	\$170,800	increase of \$13,631, or 8.67%
Tax on average homestead	\$244.56	\$249.70	increase of \$5.14, or 2.10%
Total tax levy on all properties	\$119,907,550	\$126,169,595	increase of \$6,262,045, or 5.22%

For assistance with tax calculations, please contact the tax assessor for San Jacinto Community College District at 713-274-8000 or tax.office@tax.hctx.net, or visit www.hctax.net for more information.

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FOR the proposal:

Marie Flickinger

Keith Sinor

Dan Mims

Larry Wilson

Marie Flickinger

John Moon Jr.

Erica Davis Rouse

Michelle Cantú-Wilson

AGAINST the proposal:

PRESENT and not voting:
ABSENT:

ABSENT:

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Water District Notice of Public Hearing on Tax Rate

Harris County Fresh Water Supply District No. 47 will hold a public hearing on a proposed tax rate for the tax year 2023 on September 28, 2023 at 5 p.m., at 210 Brookview, Channelview, Texas. Your individual taxes may increase at a greater or lesser rate, or even or decrease, depending on the tax rate that is adopted and on the change in the taxable value of your property in relation to the change in the taxable value of all other property determines the distribution of the tax burden among all property owners.

Visit Teas.gov/PropertyTaxes to find a link to your local property tax database on which you can easily access information regarding your property taxes, including information about proposed tax rates and scheduled public hearings of each entity that taxes your property.

FOR the proposal: Dennis Hamala, Jack Dauzat, Nick Shankle, Michael Oballe

AGAINST the

None

proposal:

PRESENT and not voting:

None

ABSENT:

The following table compares taxes on an average residence homestead in this taxing unit last year to taxes proposed on the average residence homestead this year.

, , , ,		•	
Total tax rate (per \$100 of value)	Last Year \$0.7549/\$100 Adopted	This Year \$0.7056/\$100 Proposed	
Difference in rates per \$100 of value	-\$0.0493/\$100		
Percentage increase/decrease in rates			
(+/-)	-6	5.53%	
Average appraised value	\$139,777	\$154,775	
General exemptions available			
(excluding 65 years of age or older or			
disable person's exemptions)	\$132,978	\$15,478	
Average taxable value	\$125,799	\$139,298	
Tax on average residence homestead	\$949.66	\$982.89	
Annual increase/decrease in taxes if			
proposed tax rate is adopted (+/-)	+\$3	33.23	
and percentage of increase (+/-)	+3.49%		
1 &			

NOTICE OF VOTE ON TAX RATE

If the district adopts a combined debt service, operation and maintenance, and contract tax rate that would result in the taxes on the average residence homestead increasing by more than 3.5 percent, an election must be held to determine whether to approve the operation and maintenance tax rate under Section 49.23602, Water Code.

The Harris County Fresh Water Supply District No.47 proposes to use the tax increase for the purpose of making improvements to the water and wastewater system.

The 86th Texas Legislature modified the manner in which the voter-approval tax rate is calculated to limit the rate of growth of property taxes in the state.

Trauma Level II at Kingwood Hospital,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

to extend that reach as well," Corbeil said.

Work on the Level II achievement began in 2018 when HCA Kingwood didn't have any trauma designation.

"We applied for Level III pursuit and achieved that successfully in 2020. It's been about a four-year process to achieve Level II, some of that delayed in the middle of the pandemic," he said.

In December 2022, the hospital successfully passed the American College of Surgeons rigorous survey to acquire the Level II distinction.

"We passed that with zero deficiencies and received the designation

last month," Corbeil said. Staffing was another significant component addressed by the hospital.

"I think the biggest component and leveling up for trauma was physician staffing, ensuring that we have all the adequate specialties represented," said Joel North, chief operating officer for the hospital.

That includes a roundthe-clock trauma surgeon, orthopedic and neurosurgeons available.

They also have a residency program that assists and learns the processes.

"We began that process in 2019 with our first class of residents with a graduate medical education program in affiliation with the University of Hous-

ton," Corbeil said.

The first class was focused on surgery and internal medicine. They have since added emergency medicine and transitional year programs.

"We look at how those two really synergistically support each other, probably the main differences are research and residency within the Level I versus a Level 2 program," the CEO said.

Corbeil said they have aspirations of becoming a Level 1 hospital having a robust residency program including research but doesn't have a timeframe for execution of that goal.

Currently, in the Harris County area, only three hospitals are rated as Level 1—Memorial Hermann, Ben Taub, and Texas Children's—all of which are located downtown.

"I've been fairly bullish with our strategy out here and closer to the community outside of the Texas Medical Center. If we do have the ability to pursue Level 1 and as part of a plan in which we want to deploy, it would be the first of its kind here outside of the TMC," Corbeil said.

The designation has also brought increases with inpatient surgeries. The hospital is currently undergoing an expansion to increase their number of operating rooms to 14 with the ancillary services connected.



FOOTBALL SCORES & SCHEDULES

LAST WEEK'S SCORES

Barbers Hill 49, Crosby 34 Clear Lake 36, Channelview 13 Kingwood Park 34, Baytown Sterling 7 La Porte 48, Baytown Lee 20 Navasota 35, Huffman Hargrave

Aldine, bye
C. E. King, bye
Davis, bye
Dayton, bye
Eisenhower, bye
Galena Park, bye
Goose Creek Memorial, bye
MacArthur, bye
Nimitz, bye
North Shore, bye

NEXT WEEK'S SCHEDULE

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 21
Texas City at Galena Park, 7
p.m., Galena Park ISD Stadium
in Houston
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

Baytown Sterling at Port Arthur Memorial, 7 p.m., Memorial Stadium in Port Arthur **Beaumont United at North** Shore, 7 p.m., Galena Park ISD Stadium in Houston C. E. King at Humble, 7 p.m., Turner Stadium in Humble Channelview, bye Dayton at Santa Fe, 7 p.m., Indian Stadium in Santa Fe Eisenhower at Spring DeKaney, 7 p.m., Planet Ford Stadium in Goose Creek Memorial at Baytown Lee, 7 p.m., Stallworth Stadium in Baytown Huffman Hargrave at Columbus, 7:30 p.m., Cardinal Field at Columbus Stadium in Columbus La Porte at Barbers Hill, 7 p.m., Eagle Stadium in Mont Belvieu Nimitz at MacArthur, 7 p.m., Leonard George Stadium in Spring

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23
Aldine at Aldine Davis, 7 p.m.,
Leonard George Stadium in
Spring
Crosby at Kingwood Park, 6
p.m., Turner Stadium in Humble



★ SPORTS PAGE ★

SEASON FOOTBALL WEEK 4

Notre Dame looks to make statement against Ohio State

While the high school action begins league play, the college Game of the Week will feature No. 6-ranked Ohio State traveling to South Bend to take on No. 9-ranked Notre Dame on Saturday evening in prime time on NBC. This is perhaps the biggest game for second-year Irish head coach Marcus Freeman and his high scoring squad. ND has averaged 47 points in their first three games but definitely takes a step up in competition when they face the Buckeyes. The Fighting Irish are led by quarterback Sam Hartman, who transferred in from Wake Forest and was Freeman ever happy to have him. Hartman has already tossed 10 TD passes in his team's first three games and gives ND a big-play signal caller. Ohio State is breaking in a new QB in Kyle McCord. McCord has played so-so thus far, but has a lot of talent around him to help him ease into the starting spot.

In other big games this weekend, No. 3-ranked Florida State visits Clemson, while No. 10-ranked Alabama has a tough start to its SEC West season when they face high-scoring Mississippi in Oxford on Saturday. Two weeks ago, Nick Saban's team lost at home to Texas, 34-24, which was the worst home defeat for a Sabancoached team since 2004 when they fell by double digits to South Carolina. Ole Miss will enter the

game ranked No. 17 in the nation. In the NFL, the Texans have another tough road contest when they travel to Jacksonville to take on Trevor Lawrence and the Jaquars. First-year head coach DeMeco Ryans team suffered a 25-9 at Baltimore in their season opener. Rookie QB C.J. Stroud played well, passing for 242 yards, but Houston needs to get more out of its rushing game if it hopes to pull off the upset against the Jags who opened the season with a 31-21 win at Indianapolis. Running back Dameon Pierce was held to just 38 yards on the ground and that's got to improve if the Texans hope to take pressure off of their rookie QB

In other action, the Dallas



Cowboys and their stifling defense will visit an Arizona team that played hard in their 20-16 opening season loss at Washington. The Cowboys rolled to a 40-0 smashing of the Giants in The Meadowlands as Micah Parsons and his defensive teammates recorded seven sacks, returned an interception for a touchdown and blocked a punt for another score. It could be a long day in the desert for the rebuilding Cards.

Sunday Night Football features the Steelers, who lost 30-7 at home to the 49ers, visiting Las Vegas. The Raiders opened with a 17-16 win at Denver. The NFL is giving us two more Monday Night Games as Philadelphia will visit Tampa Bay at 6:15 p.m. on ABC, followed by the Los Angeles Rams visiting Cincinnati at 7:15 p.m. on ESPN.

Before we take a look at this weekend's games, let's review last week's record. A 5-7 week brought the season record to 12-12 (50%). Now, onto this weekend's

NCAA

Florida State at Clemson:
Florida State takes its No. 3
national ranking to Death Valley to
face a Clemson team that is still
trying to find its identity. Dabo
Swiney's team opened the season
with a 28i-7 loss at Duke, but
followed that embarrassment up
with a 66-17 shellacking of
Charleston Southern two weeks
ago. So, the question is, which
Clemson team shows up on
Saturday? The one that struggled
against an average Duke team, or

the one that blew out an inferior opponent? Clemson fans are waiting to find out. The Tigers defense will have its hands full with FSU QB Jordan Travis (517 passing yards, 6 TDs in first two games), running back Trev Benson (126 yards, 3 TDs) and big-play wide receiver Keon Coleman (12 receptions, 170 yards, 4 TDs). Clemson will need a big day from sophomore QB Cade Klubnik (524 vards, 5 TDs). He should get help from a strong running game led by Will Shipley (187 yards) and Phil Mafah (124 yards, 2 TDs). If the Seminoles want to be in the CFP conversation, they need a big road win against a quality foe. My pick, Florida State 31, Clemson 26

Alabama at Mississippi: This is a big game for Nick Saban and his No. 10-ranked Crimson Tide. Two weeks ago, Texas waltzed into Tuscaloosa and left with a 34-24 win as QB Quinn Ewers threw for 349 yards and three TDs against the shocked Tide defense. Things won't get any easier this Saturday when Saban's team has to play the high-scoring Rebels on the road. Ole Miss is led by veteran QB Jaxson Dart (601 yards, 6 TDs), running back Quinshon Judkins (108 yards, 3 TDs) and speedy wide receiver Tre Harris (8 receptions, 188 vards, 5 TDs) 'Bama QB Jalen Milroe (449 passing yards, 5 TDs/92 rushing yards, 2 TDs) has got to do a better job of protecting the football. He threw two interceptions against Texas and if that trend continues. you can bet Saban will find someone else to start at QB. 'Bama knows it can't afford to lose again if

it hopes to remain in contention for the CFP. Look for the Crimson Tide to get a big road win on Saturday. My pick, Alabama 34, Mississippi

Ohio State at Notre Dame: This

is the Game of the Week in college football as No. 4-ranked Ohio State visits No. 9-ranked Notre Dame in prime time on NBC. The Buckeyes won their first two games, but struggled in both of them against inferior opponents, while Notre Dame has rolled in their first three games averaging 47 points. OSU is breaking in a new quarterback in Kyle McCord (497 yards, 3 TDs) and he's been so-so thus far. ND has received stellar play from Sam Hartman (731 yards, 10 TDS), at QB and is head coach Marcus Freeman ever happy that Hartman left Wake Forest for South Bend during the spring. McCord has a strong running game to rely on led by TreVeyon Henderson (103 yards, 2 TDs) and two big-play wideouts in Marvin Harrison Jr. (9 receptions, 178 yards, 2 TDs) and Emeka Egbuka (8 receptions, 110 yards, 1 TD). Hartman has some playmakers as well in running back Audric Estime (345 yards, 4 TDs), wide receivers Chris Tyree (6 receptions, 127 vards, 1 TD) and Javden Thomas (8 receptions, 128 yards, 1 TD) and tight end Holden Staes (5 receptions, 119 yards, 3 TDs). The Irish are tough at home under the lights and come Saturday night, Freeman will get the biggest win of his young head coaching career. My pick, Notre Dame 36, Ohio State 28

NIEL

Houston at Jacksonville: The Texans hit the road for the second time in three weeks to face the Jacksonville Jaguars in an AFC South contest. Houston opened the season with a 25-9 loss at Baltimore as rookie QB C.J. Stroud (242 yards) and the offense struggled against a solid Ravens defense. The offense must get more out of the running game if Stroud is going to have a chance to make plays down field. Starting running back Dameon Pierce was held to just 38 yards on the ground and that won't get it done in the NFL. While the Texans struggled on offense, Jacksonville QB Trevor Lawrence (241 yards) tossed two

TDs passes in his team's 31-21 at Indianapolis. He has a new weapon in wide receiver Calvin Ridley (8 receptions, 101 yards, 1 TD), which should make the Jags even more dangerous on offense. Ridley was suspended by the NFL for the entire 2022 season because of a gambling allegation. If he picks up where he left off as Atlanta's best receiver, the Jags could make a lot of noise in the AFC this year. Look for them to roll on Sunday against the Texans. My pick, Jacksonville

34. Houston 17 New Orleans at Green Bay: The Saints visit the Packers on Sunday in what should be an interesting matchup. Two weeks ago, NO opened with a 16-15 win over Tennessee giving new QB Derek Carr (305 yards, 1 TD) his first win in a Saints uniform. The Packers opened with an impressive 38-20 win over their long-time rival Chicago in the Windy City as new QB Jordan Love had a big day throwing for 245 yards and 3 TDs) Running back Aaron Jones added 126 yards of total offense along with a TD run and reception as the GB offense looks like it didn't miss former starter Aaron Rodgers a bit. Rodger's New York Jets debut ended in horrible fashion as he sustained what could be a seasonending injury on just his fourth snap. Look for the Packers to get the win in Lambeau. My pick, Green Bay 26, New Orleans 23 Dallas at Arizona: This one

could get ugly, early. The Cowboys opened the season with a 40-0 thumping of the Giants as the defense recorded seven sacks. forced three turnovers, returned an interception and a blocked punt for a touchdown two weeks ago. The offense really didn't have to do much because the defense dominated. Running back Tony Pollard rushed for 70 yards and two touchdowns as he is now the lead back after Dallas parted ways with former starter Ezekiel Elliott. The Cardinals are in a rebuild mode, but they played hard in their 20-16 season-opening win against Washington. Look for another big day from the Dallas defense as they make life miserable for Joshua Dobbs on Sunday. My pick, Dallas 33, Arizona 12

Pittsburgh at Las Vegas: The Steelers visit Sin City on Sunday to take on a Raiders team that won at

Denver (17-16) in their season opener, while Pittsburgh was waylaid at home by the 49ers, 30-7. A lot of experts thought the Steelers might be a playoff contender this year, but they've got a lot of improving to do to make that happen. Second-year QB Kenny Pickett threw for 242 yards and one TD in the SF game, but the rest of the offense did little else. The Raiders played hard on defense and got a decent game from new QB Jimmy Garoppolo (200 yards, 2 TDs). Jimmy G may have found a new weapon to go along with All-Pro wide receiver Davante Adams (6 receptions, 66 yards) in fellow wideout Jacobi Mvers, who had nine catches for 90 yards and two TDs. Look for the Raiders to take care of the Steelers on Sunday. My pick, Las Vegas 24, Pittsburgh 16

Philadelphia at Tampa Bay: Game one of the Monday Night Football doubleheader pits the Eagles against the Bucs. Philly slept walked through its 25-20 season-opening win at New England. QB Jalen Hurts (170 yards passing, 1 TD) had a subpar performance, as did wide receiver A.J. Brown (7 receptions, 79 yards). The secondary got burned for three passing touchdowns. TB opened the season with a 20-17 upset win at Minnesota as new QB Baker Mayfield tossed two touchdown passes as Tom Brady's replacement. Look for the Eagles to find their wings on Monday night to the chagrin of Tampa Bay fans. My pick, Philadelphia 26, Tampa Bay 20

Los Angeles Rams at Cincinnati: The Rams opened the season with an upset win at Seattle, while the Bengals got curb stomped at Cleveland, 24-3. In the Rams' 30-13 win at Seattle, QB Matthew Stafford passed for 334 yards, and running back Kryen Williams (2 TDs) and Cam Akers (1 TD) took care of business on the ground. The Bengals offense was stymied by the Browns defense as QB Joe Burrow, who became the highest paid player in NFL history a few days before the season opener, was held to a career low 82 passing yards in the loss to the Browns. Cinci fans will demand more of Joe Cool and what a better stage than Monday Night Football to showcase his talents. My pick, Cincinnati 24, Los Angeles Rams 20

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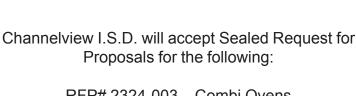
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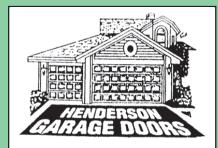
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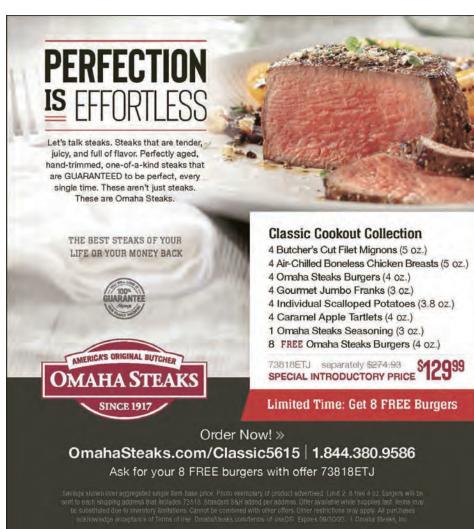
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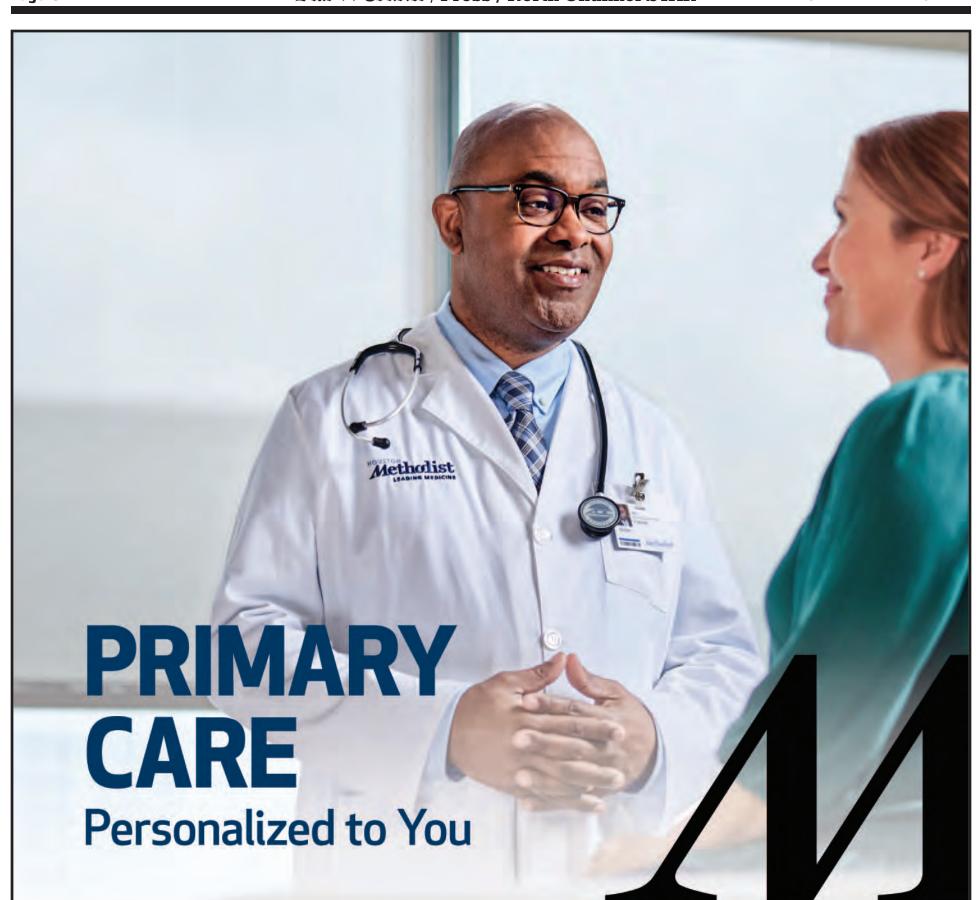
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